



HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL 56th REGULAR SESSION

HRC, Interactive Dialogue on the High Commissioner's Report on Myanmar

Statement by Legal Action Worldwide (LAW)

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Mr. Chairpersons, distinguished representatives, colleagues

We thank the High Commissioner for the report.

We are deeply alarmed by the ongoing human rights crisis affecting the Rohingya both in Rakhine State, Myanmar, and refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

In Rakhine State, fighting between the Myanmar military, the Arakan Army, and Rohingya armed groups has escalated to an alarming level. Facing mounting losses on the battlefield, the Myanmar military has resorted to forcibly conscripting and coercing Rohingya to fight against the Arakan Army and to act as human shields, putting Rohingya communities at further risk of reprisals from civilian and armed actors alike. Thousands of Rohingya civilians are now caught in the middle of the ongoing hostilities and are displaced as their villages are destroyed.

This crisis extends to the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar where nearly one million Rohingya face routine abductions and extortion by armed groups. We have received first-hand reports indicating that simply leaving shelters puts Rohingya men and boys at the risk for forced recruitment.

While no ethnic peoples are left unaffected by the on-going fighting, we are deeply concerned with the Myanmar military's systematic campaign to fuel ethnic tensions that leave the Rohingya more vulnerable to intercommunal violence. The propaganda and misinformation campaign directed against the Rohingya is rampant and reminiscent of the vicious narratives used to incite horrific violence against the Rohingya in 2012 and 2017.

Despite the once-celebrated provisional measures set by the ICJ in the *Gambia v. Myanmar*, the Myanmar military has continued to act with impunity, and Rohingya communities now face the most significant threat of wide-scale violence since 2017. At this time, Rohingya face little prospect of finding safety inside or outside Myanmar.

No genocide survivor should live in such fear of reoccurrence.

We urge member states to immediately refer the situation to the Security Council to identify concrete preventative measures.

High Commissioner,

What specific steps can member states take to ensure protection for Rohingya civilians in both Rakhine State and the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, and what specific actions is your Office undertaking to pursue accountability?

Thank you for your attention.