

The status and safety of Rohingya people in Rakhine State, Myanmar

The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party convening in Amsterdam, the Netherlands on 1 to 3 December 2017:

Notes that:

- since the creation of Burma (now renamed Myanmar) out of British India in 1948, the governance system has always had a strong ethnic dimension, with the Burmese the largest ethnic group dominating power structures, a consequence of the indirect colonial rule of non-ethnically-Burmese states, prior to independence;
- since the Generals took power in 1962, Myanmar has seen nine major ethnic and religious conflicts, at least four of which still continue;
- the Rohingya, comprising half of the 4% Muslims in Myanmar, were the only ethnic-religious group which were never given official status as an ethnic entity and therefore were not issued with the standard, ethnically-based, identity documents;
- after the 'pro-democracy' liberalisations of 2011, peace negotiations in other ethnic conflicts were accelerated but the conflicts with Rohingya in Rakhine were escalated;
- in 2017, more than 600,000 Rohingya have been displaced internally or to refugee camps near Teknaf in Bangladesh. There are more than 150,000 displaced persons from other ethnic conflicts from within Myanmar;
- the cooperation of the Bangladesh authorities and the provision of services to the refugee camps, and the support given across Bangladesh in the assimilation of Rohingya, which do not lessen the need for proper provision by the Myanmar authorities to allow for the return of Rohingya refugees to their village areas.

Believes that:

- the Myanmar Government's claim that, relative to all other ethnic groups, the Rohingya have such a lesser claim to Myanmar citizenship that they should be regarded as non-nationals, is unacceptable;
- the assertion by the Myanmar Government that the Rohingya are linked to Al Qaeda and Daesh, is a crude ploy to weaken Western resolve to defend the Rohingya, and has no credibility. The grievances and violence on all sides are local;
- the Myanmar Government has taken insufficient steps to dampen down the violence, deal with its perpetrators and instigators, or address impartially the grievances.

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Calls for:

- the military and security forces to immediately stop the killings, harassment and rapes of Rohingya people, and the burning of their homes;
- the government of Myanmar to immediately remove all the landmines on the border with Bangladesh;
- Internationally-backed negotiations to ensure that the permission for the return of Rohingya refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP) is given to provide for the reconstruction of Rohingya villages, and to pave the way for the re-establishment of improved physical and electronic communications with the rest of Myanmar;
- an international peacekeeping force for Rakhine State, with a UN resolution mandate but managed by ASEAN with EU and Chinese support, alongside curtailment of Burmese Buddhist nationalist organisations like MaBaTha and national reconciliation over the protection of all religions;
- the international community to provide support for receiving of refugees from the Rohingya villages to surrounding countries and areas;
- the Myanmar government to allow humanitarian aid organisations to be granted access to conflict areas and displaced people, so that those in danger can receive help;
- the Myanmar authorities to allow full access for international observers, human rights organisations and media to ensure independent investigations of human rights violations;
- the State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi to condemn all racial and religious hatred and to combat discrimination and atrocities against the Rohingya;
- a robust and impartial local dispute mechanism under UN auspices to address underlying local grievances, especially land disputes, followed by the inclusion of candidates of all religious groups in elections;
- the VP/HR and the EU Member States to increase pressure on the Myanmar government and security forces and continue regular bilateral human rights dialogue to discuss the situation regarding problematic legislation and discrimination of the Rohingya;
- the international community, especially regional powers, to encourage Myanmar to find a path to settle all of its many ethnic conflicts and improve confidence among all ethnic groups, including the Burmese, that their culture will be protected and is not threatened by coexistence with other groups;
- the international community to put pressure on the authorities of Myanmar to make the necessary amendments to the National legislation in order to grant the citizenship of Myanmar to all Ethnic

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groups, including the Rohingya, having sufficient bond with the country without discrimination.

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