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ORAL STATEMENT

ITEM 4: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar

UN Human Rights Council
Forty-fourth session
30 June – 17 July 2020

Madam President,

We thank the Special Rapporteur for his first update to this Council.

Amnesty International has continued to document serious human rights violations – including war crimes – committed by the Myanmar military, such as indiscriminate attacks killing or injuring civilians, the burning of homes and villages, arbitrary arrests, torture and other ill-treatment.

Despite mounting international pressure on the military's operations in Rakhine State, the clear evidence we published last week, including shocking testimonies, show just how deep impunity continues to run within Myanmar military ranks.

In Kachin and northern Shan States, unilateral ceasefires have not stopped the fighting and reports of violations against civilians continue.

Madam President,

Despite the International Court of Justice (ICJ) order for provisional measures, nothing has changed for the estimated 600,000 Rohingya who live in Rakhine State in dire conditions, including around 126,000 whom the authorities are holding indefinitely in camps. They [who] continue to be denied their rights to nationality, freedom of movement and access to services, including adequate healthcare.

Internet blackouts have deprived ethnic minorities in Rakhine and Chin States of potentially life-saving information in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic and impeded monitoring of the humanitarian situation on the ground.

Ahead of the elections in November, we remain deeply concerned by the continued arrests, prosecution and detention of peaceful protesters, government critics and independent journalists across the country. We urge Myanmar to release all those detained or facing imprisonment solely for exercising their rights, and to repeal or amend laws which unduly restrict the rights to freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly.

Until there is genuine accountability for those responsible for crimes under international law, there is little hope for improvement in the lives of ethnic minorities in Myanmar. For that reason, we urge the Security Council to refer the situation to the ICC. We also urge this Council to remain seized of the situation, particularly in the context of the upcoming elections.

Mr Andrews,

What further concrete actions could the international community take to protect minorities from abuses and end the cycle of impunity in Myanmar?

Thank you.