



BURMESE ROHINGYA ORGANISATION UK (BROUK)

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Media release from Burmese Rohingya Organisation UK

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UN Human Rights Council Myanmar Review: Recommendations Must Be Enforced

Myanmar's human rights record will today be scrutinised by other UN Member States under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. The unique mechanism aims to improve the human rights situation on the ground of each of the 193 UN Member States. It is widely expected that Myanmar will face tough questions and strong recommendations from States during the Review, particularly for its ongoing persecution of the Rohingya Muslim minority. Myanmar's UPR is taking place against the backdrop of the ongoing genocide case brought by the Gambia against Myanmar at the UN's "World Court", the International Court of Justice.

Human rights defenders point out that for the third time in a decade since the UPR mechanism began, Myanmar's official report to the UN human rights body under the UPR omits the name 'Rohingya'. Successive Myanmar governments have failed to support any recommendation put forward by other States that mentions the Rohingya and their rights over the past three cycles of the UPR, effectively denying their existence.

"Myanmar officials repeatedly refuse to use our name 'Rohingya', instead calling us 'illegal Bengali'. This has the effect of dehumanising us and normalising the racism and violence we face. It is therefore critically important that other States recognise us and demand our protection as Rohingya," says Tun Khin, President of the Burmese Rohingya Organisation UK.

The Rohingya were almost entirely excluded and disenfranchised from Myanmar's November 2020 elections, which saw Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party increase its share of the popular vote and its majority in parliament.

“If the government really wanted to protect us it would have granted us citizenship and the right to vote and stand in the recent elections. Instead, Myanmar excluded us almost entirely from the election. Without that basic right to citizenship as Rohingya, in our name, our identity, we are still vulnerable to genocide,” continued Tun Khin.

The right to citizenship for Rohingya and other ethnic and religious minorities will be a key issue during Myanmar's UPR, with advance questions on the topic already submitted to the UN human rights body by Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States. Justice and accountability for atrocity crimes perpetrated against the Rohingya and other minorities are also expected to be high on the agenda.

“The key to preventing history from repeating itself yet again is ensuring accountability for atrocity crimes perpetrated against us in Myanmar, including genocide. Myanmar's intransigence is on full display again today, this time at the UN Human Rights Council. States should of course put forward strong recommendations to Myanmar during the UPR. But we also urge States to take concrete steps themselves, by publicly supporting the Gambia's genocide case at the International Court of Justice in line with the position adopted by the Netherlands, Canada and the Maldives,” said Tun Khin.

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