
Media Statement
25 August 2023

6th Commemoration of the Rohingya Genocide: A Call for Justice and Action

On August 25, 2023, marking the six-year remembrance of the horrific military attacks on the Rohingya community in Myanmar, the Myanmar Campaign Network urges Australia to take immediate action to halt the atrocities committed by the Myanmar junta and ensure that those responsible for human rights violations are held accountable.

While Australia took measures to address the Rohingya genocide by imposing sanctions on five members of the Myanmar military in October 2018 and extending sanctions to 16 individuals and 2 entities (MEHL and MEC) as of 1st February 2023, these actions only contribute to a mere 6% of the total international sanctions on Myanmar.

The brutal clearance operations in Myanmar's Rakhine State in 2016 and 2017 drove over 730,000 Rohingya individuals to flee violence and persecution, seeking refuge in Bangladesh. The actions perpetrated by the Myanmar military were characterised by calculated and methodical brutality, including killings, torture, sexual assaults, [mass rape](#), and the destruction of villages.

Since the military coup on 1 February 2021, the units responsible for the heinous crimes committed against the Rohingya have been strategically deployed throughout the country.

“As long as the military regime continues to terrorize the country, the Rohingya will never experience a safe and dignified return to Myanmar,” Campaign Manager Tasneem Roc said, “Australia must do everything to cut the inflow of foreign revenue to the military regime, and support the pro-democracy movement towards a federal democracy where the rights of the Rohingya are reinstated.”

Six years on, the Rohingya are facing immense challenges. The camps in Cox Bazaar, housing more than 1 million refugees, are rife with [armed gangs](#), with refugees exposed to killings, extortion, sexual assault, forced marriage, and human trafficking.

In India, there is [mass detention](#) of Rohingya refugees in Jammu. Reports of shootings, tear gas attacks, and violence at the hands of Indian authorities have been documented. More than 269 refugees, the majority of whom are women, including several who are elderly, disabled, or pregnant, have been unlawfully detained, despite holding UNHCR identity cards.

Within Myanmar, there are 600,000 Rohingya individuals who are stateless and subjected to a system of [apartheid](#), denied their basic rights. Since the 2021 coup, the junta has continued the use of the National Verification Card (NVC) to erase Rohingya identity and rights, in what has been described as [genocide by attrition](#).

The junta continues to block aid to Rakhine state, despite the recent devastation of Cyclone Mocha in May, in which 200,000 buildings were [destroyed](#). IDP camps and sites are severely affected, with 85 percent of shelters destroyed.

Myanmar Campaign Network identifies the Myanmar military as the key cause of the humanitarian and human rights crisis in Myanmar. We urge the Australian Government to issue a second round of sanctions on the state-owned enterprises and banks that fund the junta's atrocities, as well as sanctions and travel bans on the State Administration Council, and senior military officials. Justice and accountability must be served to those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.

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