



Arakan Rohingya National Consultative Council (Convening Committee)

Statement on the Critical Situation in Maungdaw

August 8, 2024

Concerning Maungdaw: Urgent Appeal for Protection of Rohingya Civilians

The situation in Maungdaw has reached a critical juncture, with escalating conflict between the State Administration Council (SAC) and the Arakan Army (AA) over the past two months. We are deeply concerned about the increased targeting of Rohingya civilians by both sides.

The Arakan Army's use of heavy weaponry, including shock missiles, machine guns, and drone bombs, has resulted in catastrophic consequences for civilians. Indiscriminate attacks have claimed hundreds of lives and left thousands injured among our fellow Rohingya. Fearing for their lives, many have attempted to cross the Naf River into Bangladesh. Tragically, AA's drone usage in pursuit of fleeing civilians led to the drowning of four boats, each carrying more than 30 people.

We unequivocally condemn the Arakan Army's targeting of innocent civilians, which flagrantly violate international laws governing armed conflict. Armed parties have an obligation under International Humanitarian Law (IHL) to uphold the principle of distinction between combatants and the civilian population at all times. Civilians, including children, men, women, and the elderly, should never be targeted in armed conflicts. We urge the United Nations Secretary General, the United Nations Security Council and the international community to take urgent measures to protect the Rohingya population in accordance with Pillar 3 of the Responsibility to Protect and to prevent genocide.

We also condemn in the strongest terms the State Administration Council's forced recruitment, arming and training of some Rohingyas as well as their deliberate efforts to foment distrust, fear and hatred between Rakhine and Rohingya communities. The SAC's manipulation of various armed groups has severely undermined the security of the Rohingya community, and has directly fuelled indiscriminate attacks on Rohingyas. These armed groups collaborating with the

SAC do not represent the Rohingya people. We demand an immediate cessation of attacks on civilians and their protection. In addition, the principle of proportionality must also be applied to limit civilian harm.

Our view is that dialogue is essential for a peaceful and inclusive future in Rakhine State. We call upon the Arakan Army to engage in talks with key Rohingya stakeholders aimed at mutual respect and coexistence. Violence must cease, and a path toward reconciliation must be forged.

Furthermore, we appeal to the National Unity Government (NUG), ASEAN, the international community, and human rights groups to exert pressure on the Arakan Army. Urgent protection of civilians and unhindered humanitarian access is needed to safeguard affected individuals during this conflict.

The Convening Committee for the Arakan Rohingya National Consultative Council remains committed to advocating for peace and justice for all communities in Rakhine State. We stand firm together with fellow citizens in ending the military dictatorship in Myanmar and work together toward building an inclusive federal democracy.

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