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SOLUTIONS FOR RAKHINE

Gov't welcomes recommendations by Advisory Commission on Rakhine State

THE Union Government welcomed the interim recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State to address the problems in Rakhine State.

Following the commission's press conference in Yangon yesterday, the State Counsellor's Office issued a statement welcoming the recommendations that include a renewed call for unimpeded access for humanitarian groups and journalists to the affected areas in northern Rakhine and for independent and impartial investigations of the allegations of crimes committed on and since 9 October 2016.

"The Government would like to express its sincere thanks to the Chairperson Dr Kofi Annan and members of the Commission for their visionary and constructive approach to the need for stability, peace and prosperity in Rakhine," said the press release. "The Government concurs with the recommendations set forth in the report and believes that these will have a positive impact on the process of the national reconciliation and development," said the press release.

"The large majority of the recommendations will be implemented promptly with a view to maximum effectiveness.



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Former U.N. chief Kofi Annan is seen in a video conference in Yangon, Myanmar, March 16, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Government welcomes recommendations by Advisory Commission on Rakhine State



Members of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State at the press conference in which the commission's recommendations for the Rakhine issue were released. PHOTO: PHOE KHWA

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The implementation of a few will be contingent upon the situation on the ground but we believe there will be speedy progress”.

Kofi Annan also recommended that Myanmar should allow the Muslim communities of Rakhine State to return to their villages and ultimately close down camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs).

More than 120,000 people have been living in what were meant as temporary shelters for IDPs since bouts of communal violence roiled the state in 2012.

“It’s really about time they close the camps and allow the people in the camps, particularly those who have gone through the

(citizenship) verification process, access to freedom of movement and all rights of citizenship,” Annan told Reuters by telephone from Geneva. Hundreds of displaced people, whose return home would be feasible and safe, should be moved back “immediately, as a first step and sign of goodwill,” the panel said. “The Government of Myanmar will be happy to cooperate with the Advisory Commission in its endeavours to assist us in finding viable and sustainable solutions to the complex situation in the Rakhine State,” said the statement from the State Counsellor’s Office released yesterday.

In related news, the European Union yesterday called for the

United Nations to send an international fact-finding mission urgently to Myanmar to investigate allegations of torture, rapes and executions by the military against the Rohingya Muslim minority.

The UN is scheduled to vote on the resolution on March 23-24.

If adopted, the Council would “dispatch urgently an independent international fact-finding mission” to Myanmar to investigate violations “with a view to ensuring full accountability for perpetrators and justice for victims”.—GNLM/Reuters contributed to this report

(Excerpts from the Interim Report of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State will be covered in tomorrow issue.)