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BHRN WELCOMES UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL STATEMENTS FROM YANGHEE LEE

London, UK -- Burma Human Rights Network applauds the July 3rd statements at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva by the UN Special Rapporteur on Myanmar, Yanghee Lee. In her statements to the council, the Special Rapporteur directed strong criticism against both the Burmese Military and Government for crimes committed in conflict and systematic failures and abuses by the central government and authorities.

“Ms. Lee’s statements are greatly appreciated in a time where many in the international community struggle to speak the truth. Her acknowledgment of the ongoing crimes and wrongs done to religious and ethnic minorities is heartening for these communities to know that they have not been forgotten”, said BHRN’s Executive Director, Kyaw Win.

Among her many criticisms, Ms. Lee called out the Burmese Government’s discrimination and harassment of Burmese Muslims, atrocities carried out by the Burmese Military in Rakhine State, attacks and arrests of peaceful protesters and activists, and the governments major shortcomings in business pursuits negatively impacting the environment and safety of villagers in affected areas. Ms. Lee also took the time to remind the world of the dire situation of the Rohingya living as refugees in Bangladesh who continue to suffer as the world neglects their needs.

Most importantly, Ms. Lee reiterated a call for Burma to be referred to the International Criminal Court for crimes outlined in her statements.

BHRN urges Ms. Lee to also address further the issue of Burmese Muslims living on the Thai side of the border who have been denied citizenship and documentation by Burma, leaving them in limbo and vulnerable to undo punishment by Thai authorities.

The international community should hear Ms. Lee’s calls and act upon them. The recommendation to refer Burma to the ICC or the establishment of a separate tribunal is both necessary and just. The powers of the world should act to pursue these referrals and ensure they can pass. The international community must cease business as usual with Burma as long as these crimes are ongoing and until justice is obtained for the victims of their crimes. While many hoped for reform in Burma with the rise of the National League for Democracy, it is past time that we view the country with clear eyes and admit that the free and democratic Burma the world hoped would emerge will not come from the current establishment.

Background on the Burma Human Rights Network (BHRN)

Burma Human Rights Network (BHRN) is based in London and operates across Burma/Myanmar works for human rights, minority rights and religious freedom in Burma. BHRN has played a crucial role advocating for human rights and religious freedom with politicians and world leaders.

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