Republic of the Union of Myanmar

National Unity Government

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Statement on the 6th Anniversary of the atrocities committed against the Rohingya people in 2017

25th August 2023

The National Unity Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar commemorates with great sadness the sixth anniversary of the egregious atrocities committed against the Rohingya people by the Myanmar military in 2017.

Thousands of Rohingya were killed and disappeared. Rape and sexual violence, including mass gang rape, were used systematically to intimidate, terrorise and punish Rohingya women and girls. Hundreds of villages were razed. Lives were destroyed, and histories were erased. Last year, the United States Government determined that these crimes amounted to genocide.

Today, over one million Rohingya people remain displaced not only from their villages and homes but from the country to which they belong. Many live in crisis and deep poverty as refugees, including in camps in Bangladesh. A growing number of Rohingya denied any foreseeable prospect of a return to their homes and livelihoods in Myanmar have resumed treacherous sea voyages, placing their lives in the hands of traffickers. This shows just how desperate they are.

The National Unity Government recognises the Rohingya people as an integral part of Myanmar and as nationals. We acknowledge with great shame the exclusionary and discriminatory policies, practices, and rhetoric that were long directed against the Rohingya and other religious and ethnic minorities. These words and actions laid the ground for military atrocities, and the impunity that followed them emboldened the military's leaders to commit countrywide crimes at the helm of an illegal junta.

Acting on our 'Policy Position on the Rohingya in Rakhine State', the National Unity Government is committed to creating the conditions needed to bring the Rohingya and other displaced communities home in voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable ways.

We are also committed to social change and to the complete overhaul of discriminatory laws in consultation with minority communities and their representatives. A Rohingya leader now serves as Deputy Minister of Human Rights to ensure that Rohingya perspectives support the development of government policies and programs and legislative reform.

Furthermore, the National Unity Government is committed to delivering justice to survivors of historic and continuing military atrocities. Truth-telling and accountability are essential. So too is recognising the true extent and scale of the crimes committed against the Rohingya and other minorities and ending the history of denial. We pledge our full cooperation with national and international accountability mechanisms, including the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.

Myanmar's new Federal Democracy Charter promises a nation founded on peace, justice, equality, human rights, and the protection of minorities. We urge Myanmar people of all ethnicities, religions, social groups, and communities to join in making it a reality.

National Unity Government