



# ARAKAN

Arakan Rohingya National Organisation (ARNO)



- THE NEED FOR AN INDEPENDENT JUSTICE MECHANISM FOR MYANMAR
- TRADITIONAL HOMELAND OF ROHINGYA
- ROHINGYA WOMEN: A BEACON OF HOPE



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*Editorial*

**Voices Silenced: The Rohingya's Struggle for Recognition and Participation in Myanmar's Federal Politics**

The Rohingya's contribution to Myanmar's independence and the subsequent aftermath involves their participation in historical events, their socio-political engagement, and their role in the broader fabric of the nation. After Myanmar's independence in 1948, the Rohingya community initially had some involvement in the government and political processes. However, their participation and recognition progressively diminished over time.





## **Here is an overview of their involvement and systematic marginalization:**

### **Initial Involvement:**

Early Political Participation: In the early years following independence, the Rohingya were recognized as citizens of the newly independent Union of Burma and had had a degree of political representation and engagement in the government. Rohingya leaders were elected to the parliament and held various government positions. The Rohingyas were initially recognized as citizens and had the right to vote in elections. They participated in the political process alongside other ethnic groups.

### **Civic Engagement:**

Prominent Rohingya figures emerged in local and national politics. They were involved in civic activities, advocating for the rights and development of the Rakhine State and the Rohingya community. Some Rohingya leaders were involved in mainstream political parties, while others formed their own parties to represent their community's interests.

## **Systematic Marginalization**

**Military Rule and Policy Shifts:** The military coup led by General Ne Win in 1962 marked the beginning of a significant shift in the treatment of the Rohingya. The new regime adopted nationalist policies that increasingly marginalized the Rohingya and other minority groups. The most significant blow came with the 1982 Citizenship Law, which effectively stripped the Rohingya of their citizenship, classifying them as "foreign residents" and denying them basic rights and legal recognition. This effectively rendered them stateless and stripped them of their political rights.

**Exclusion of Political Participation:** Over time, the Rohingya were gradually excluded from participating in elections. Their ability to vote and run for office was severely restricted. As the Rohingya were stripped of citizenship and their political rights, their representation in government and local councils diminished. They lost their ability to influence policy and advocate for their community.

**Human Rights Violations and Persecution:** Over the decades, the Rohingya faced systematic persecution, including forced displacement, denial of basic services, and restrictions on movement, marriage, and education. The Rohingya have been subjected to periodic military crackdowns, notably in 1978, 1991-92, 2012, 2016, and 2017, resulting in mass exoduses and severe humanitarian crises.

## Current Situation

**Defenselessness:** The defenselessness of the Rohingya community significantly exacerbates their vulnerability, making them an easy target for various forms of exploitation and violence. Addressing their defenselessness is crucial to enhancing their safety and well-being. The Rohingyas with no defense capabilities or protection in Northern Rakhine state has become easy targets for violence and persecution by the Myanmar military and the Arakan Army. Addressing this issue requires a comprehensive approach that includes legal reforms, humanitarian assistance, security measures, empowerment initiatives, and robust international support. By taking these steps, the international community can help create a safer and more just environment for the Rohingyas, reducing their vulnerability and enabling them to rebuild their lives with dignity and hope.

**Statelessness and Disenfranchisement:** Today, the majority of the Rohingya population remains stateless and lives in dire conditions, either in Rakhine State under severe restrictions or in refugee camps in neighboring countries like Bangladesh. They face severe restrictions on movement, employment, education, and access to healthcare. Many Rohingya have been displaced internally within Myanmar or have fled to neighboring countries like Bangladesh, where they live in refugee camps under difficult conditions.

**International Advocacy:** International organizations and human rights advocates continue to call for the restoration of the Rohingya's rights, including citizenship and political participation. Efforts such as the case brought by The Gambia at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) seek accountability for the atrocities committed against the Rohingya and aim to improve their situation.

## Conclusion

While the Rohingya contributed to Myanmar's independence and engaged in the early political processes, their contributions have been overshadowed by decades of discrimination and persecution. Today, their political rights remain severely restricted, and they face significant humanitarian challenges. Their marginalization reflects broader ethnic and religious tensions within Myanmar and underscores the challenges of achieving a truly inclusive and federal union in the country. International efforts continue to advocate for their rights and seek justice for the persecution they have endured.

# TRADITIONAL HOMELAND OF ROHINGYA

A homeland is a place where a cultural, national, ethnic or racial identity has formed. The definition can also mean the country in which one was born or makes one's home; a country or region into which people of a specified group have relocated or may relocate, regarded as their ancestral land. It embraces a people's deep emotional attachment to a place that they call home with which they feel most connected.

Arakan was never a territory or region or country with one people. It was always a multicultural, multilingual place. The two major peoples of Arakan are Rakhine and Rohingya. Rakhine are largely Buddhists and Rohingya are a predominantly Muslim community. Other ethnic groups like Chin, Dinet or Mramagyi, Hindu, Kaman, Khami, Mro, and Thet also live in Arakan.

When Arakan was an independent kingdom, the Rohingya and Rakhine had enjoyed a long period of peaceful coexistence, particularly in the most glorious period of Mrauk-U dynasty (1430-1784) having close relations with the 'Bengal Sultanate' in the fields of culture, religion, education, trade and politics.

There were Muslim or Rohingya settlements all over Arakan before Second World War (1939 – 1945). But due to a surprise but premeditated massacre of Muslims by the well-armed Rakhines in 1942, about 100,000 unarmed innocent Muslims were massacred. A total of 307 Rohingya villages were completely destroyed during the pogrom in Akyab district. They were: 30 in Myebon township, 27 in Myinbya township, 25 in Pauktaw township, 58 in Mrohaung township, 78 in Kyauktaw township, 5 in Punnagyunt township, 21 in Rathedaung township, 55 in Buthidaung township and 8 in Maungdaw township. The area in the east of the Kaladan River with a large Rohingya population had turned into a Muslim minority zone. But the losses in term of human civilization and social organisation are larger with irreparable damages.

However, the region between the west bank of the Kaladan River and east bank of the Naf River, which demarcates the Myanmar-Bangladesh border, in North Arakan, has always remained as the stronghold of Muslims known as the "Traditional Homeland of Rohingya". It has been deeply implanted in the minds of the Rohingya people despite ups and downs and demographic changes due to the Muslim massacre of 1942 and continued systematic persecution and atrocity crimes, including crimes against humanity and genocide, perpetrated against them mainly by successive autocratic regimes in collaboration with local hostile Buddhist communities since military rule began in 1962 in Burma/Myanmar. Renowned historians such as the Burma Historical Commission's compiler Professor Dr. G.E. Luce and History Professor Dr. Than Tun have affirmed this traditional homeland of Rohingya stating that in North Arakan there was "possibility of Rohingya and their kings in the Mayu valley in the last 800 years back".[1]

Moghul fugitive prince Shah Shuja, then Viceroy of Bengal, was killed by Arakanese King Sanda Thudama in 1661 in violation of diplomatic norms while he was taking refuge in Arakan. Emperor Aurangazab was aggrieved over the cold-blooded murder of his brother. In 1666, under the order of Emperor Aurangazab, Moghul commander Nawab Shaista Khan conquered Chittagong (then under Arakanese rule) and the area up to the Kaladan River in Arakan.



In some of his write ups, including the article “Muslim of Burma” published in “The Nation Daily”, Rangoon, dated 12th April 1959, Former Health Minister Sultan Mahmud writes “Saista Khan had conquered up to the Kaladan River.”[2] He also mentioned it in several parliamentary debates and press conferences.

Sufi A.M. Waheed writes, “Under the order of Emperor Aurangazab, the Subedar of Bengal, Nawab Shaista Khan deputed his son Buzurg Umad Khan, and in 1666 he conquered Chittagong and annexed the area from Dhoom (the area with Feni River) in Chittagong to Bay of Bengal. The Buddhist (Magh) population of Chittagong then migrated to Mrohaung and started whispering campaign against the Muslims (Rohingyas).” [3]

Researcher M.A. Tahir Ba Tha writes, “There is historical observation that Buzurg Umed Khan had conquered whole Arakan but retreated soon”[4] as Bengal had no territorial ambition on Arakan. However, in the absence of clear information, who ruled over the region between the east bank of Naf River and west bank of Kaladan River, it may be inferred that it was under the firm control of the Rohingya people.”[5]

The conquest of Chittagong (by Moghul) changed the political landscape between Arakan and Chittagong or Bengal. The Buddhist Rakhines fled beyond the Kaladan River while the Bengal southern border was fixed at the west bank of the Naf River. “With the loss of Chittagong and Ramu the Arakanese Maghs were very terrified and fled from north to south Arakan.”[6]

On 7th March 1947, Jamiatul Ulama of North Arakan under the leadership of Barrister Dr. Maulana Sana Ullah met British parliament member Ross William, head of the Rose William Commission, in Maymyo resort city in Shan State, Burma, and submitted a memorandum wherein they demanded that the area between the Kaladan River and Naf River should be declared as a state pertaining to Rohingya Muslims.[7]

In 1949, the Arakan Communist Party leader Tun Aung Pru, a Rakhine, met Mujahid Party leader Jafar Kawal and they had agreed to fight together until the fall of the Anti-Fascist People’s Federation League (AFPFL) government with the understanding that Mujahid would take the western side of the Kaladan River, whereas the rest of the Arakan would be under the control of Rakhine communists. It was a clear understanding between the two powerful rebel groups representing their respective peoples – Rakhine Arakanese and Rohingya Arakanese.

One of the seven demands of the Mujahid party was to form an Autonomous Muslim State named North Arakan with Buthidaung, Rathedaung and Maungdaw taking the region from the west of the Kaladan River up to the eastern part of the Naf River. This region would remain under the Union of Burma.[8]

# NORTHERN ARAKAN





To consider the seven-point demand there were discussions on three occasions between the government representatives and Mujahid leaders. In February 1950, Burmese Prime minister U Nu, Minority Minister U Aung Zan Wai (a Rakhine) accompanied by Pakistan Ambassador to Burma Sardar Aurangeb Khan came to Maungdaw in order to hold discussions on the seven demands of the Muslims of North Arakan and summoned the representatives of Arakani Muhajirs (Arakanese refugees) from Teknaf (East Pakistan) by the scouts.[9]

In an open letter, dated 10th June 1951, addressed to the President, Prime Minister and the Government of the Union of Burma, Mr. Saleah Ahmed, President, and Mr. Zahiruddin Ahmed, Secretary, of the Arakan Muslim Conference demanded, "North Arakan should be immediately formed a free Muslim State as other races of Burma." It indicates that the demand was for equal rights and freedoms within the Burmese federation.



At a Mujahid Conference held in late April 1954 at Taungbru in Maungdaw Township, the Mujahids reiterated their demand for an Autonomous State, comprising the area between the west bank of the Kaladan River and east bank of the Naf River measuring about 4,000 square miles, while the rest of Arakan with an area of 10,200 square miles would be under Rakhine. It may be mentioned that the total area of Arakan was about 18,000 square miles, which has now been reduced to 14,200 sq. miles.



It is worth mentioning that on 16th September 2000, Dr. Khin Maung, President of the National United Party of Arakan (NUPA) and Nurul Islam, President of the Arakan Rohingya National Organisation (ARNO) signed an agreement to form a political alliance declaring that "Rakhine and Rohingya are the two major peoples of Arakan and that NUPA and ARNO are legitimate representatives of their respective peoples in Arakan – Rakhine and Rohingya".



# Mayu Frontier Administration (MFA)

On 1st May 1961 the government of U Nu, a Burmese independence leader and Prime Minister of Burma/ Myanmar from 1948 to 1958 and from 1960 to 1962, created the Mayu Frontier Administration (MFA) in North Arakan, covering Maungdaw township, Buthidaung township and western part of Rathedaung township. The government said MFA was created for the development of the Rohingya people. However, as mentioned above, Mayu peninsula is not the whole area of the "Traditional Homeland of Rohingya" but a part of it.

The whole area of MFA, also called Mayu District/ Mayu Peninsula, is some ninety miles long and about twenty miles wide at its northern end, when it tapers to a point just short of Akyab/Sittwe Island. MFA was abolished and the area was put under the Ministry of Home Affairs, on 1st February 1964, by "Revolutionary Council" headed by the then Chief of Staff General Ne Win, who seized the power from Prime Minister U Nu on 2nd March 1962.

[1] Dr. G.E. Luce, "Phases of pre-Pagan Burma Languages and History, Oxford, 1985, PP 76-97.

Dr. Than Tun, "Chin, Mru, and Kami -North Arakan", "Kalya Magazine" (In Burmese) 1994, August Issue , PP 27-28

[2] AFK Jilani, "The Rohingyas of Arakan: Their quest for Justice", First edition, 1999, p.115.

In "Muslim in Burma", an article by Sultan Mahmud (MP), Ex. Health Minister of Burma, published in the Nation Daily, Rangoon, dated 12 April 1959 and his several parliamentary debates.

[3] Ibid. p.116

[4] "Rohingyas and Kamans", (in Burmese) by M.A. Tahir Ba Tha, p.39.

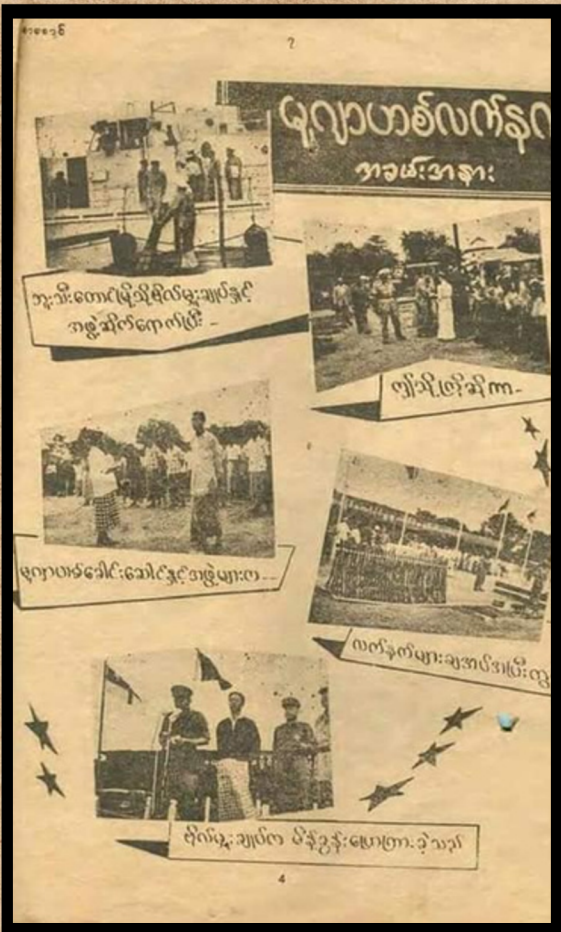
[5] AFK Jilani, "The Rohingyas of Arakan: Their quest for Justice", First edition, 1999, p.116

[6] Supra p.39

[7] Manifesto of Rohingya Jamiatul Ulama Arakan p. 4

[8] "The Muslims of North Arakan (Part-1) - What they are struggling for?" by Muzaffar Ahmed Arakani, President Anjuman-E-Muhajirin-E-Arakan, Chittagong., Feb.1955, p.6.

[9] Ibid. pp7-8



# The Need for an Independent Justice Mechanism for Myanmar

Given recent events in Rakhine State and the violence that has continued throughout Myanmar, discussions have started re-surfacing on the need for an independent justice mechanism for Myanmar. A Truth Commission may serve a significant benefit for all people in Myanmar, particularly the Rohingya.

Truth Commissions are generally defined as bodies which are established “to determine the facts, causes, and consequences of past human rights violations.”<sup>1</sup> In almost all cases, Truth Commissions are set up for a specific amount of time and produce at the end of their existence a well-documented report with findings and recommendation. There are different examples of Truth Commissions which have been created in response to significant human rights violations and international crimes.

One successful Truth Commission in response to international crimes took place in Guatemala. From the 1950s to the 1970s civilians in Guatemala experienced significant state repression as a result of unrest in national leadership. In 1982, the Guatemalan military, under the leadership of Dictator Rios Montt, conducted a “scorched earth” campaign against indigenous communities. In 1993, peace talks at the United Nations resulted in the creation of The Commission for Historical Clarification (CHC). The mandate of the CHC was to “clarify human rights violations” which were related to the internal conflict from 1960 until 1996, “to foster tolerance,” and “preserve the memory of victims.” The final report, published in 1999, interviewed 7,200 interviews. This particular report did not provide the names of perpetrators. However, since the publication of the report, it has been continued to be used in prosecutions against government officials responsible for the deaths of approximately 200,000 people during that time period. Rios Montt was tried publicly in 2013 and found guilty. This was the “first time that a former head of state was prosecuted for genocide in a national court.”<sup>2</sup>

Of course, there are other examples of Truth Commissions which have taken place in different parts of the world. Some people argue that Truth Commissions are not effective and others find that they are effective in helping society to heal. Regardless of how one views Truth Commissions from the past, the most important contribution is the participation of victims and survivors, the creation of a historical record, and the fact that these records serve as an important historical memory.

In the case of Myanmar, a Truth and Clarification Commission similar to Guatemala could provide a significant benefit in terms of identifying patterns of significant abuse which has been taking place since the military took control of the country in the 1960s.



## A Truth and Clarification Commission could help

- 1) examine the root causes of violence in Myanmar;
- 2) examine all other actors which also contributed to the military's abusive policies; and
- 3) take direct testimony from survivors from all over Myanmar who have witnessed or survived events such as the 8888 uprising, the Saffron Revolution, and of course, the Rohingya genocide. Such a record would not only bring to light many of the human rights violations which have never been examined, but it would also go a long way in creating a permanent record to assist with transitional justice and healing.

In the case of the Rohingya, such a Truth and Clarification Commission could not only examine the root of the problems since the 1960s, it could help to create a record from victims and survivors who are still alive and have a memory of important events that have forever changed the way the Rohingya live. Further, it would be the only record not fueled with propaganda by the military and its cronies who have continually used the Rohingya as scapegoats. So many victims and survivors from the Rohingya community will never have an opportunity to share the cycles of violence that have been perpetrated, and a Truth and Clarification Commission could rectify this.

While some would argue that the Independent Mechanism for Myanmar is already creating a record, the role of the Mechanism is to gather evidence and assist with prosecutions, but it does not create a "record" like that of a Truth Commission. It does not publicly share the type of evidence it has unless it is sharing it directly with a prosecutor. In addition, the Truth and Clarification Commission could extensively look at situations which the Mechanism does not take evidence for (the Mechanism only takes evidence from 2011). A Truth and Clarification Commission in Myanmar could go a very long way in examining the long-lasting impact that impunity has had on many minority groups throughout Myanmar. Further, given the number of armed groups in Myanmar, a Truth and Clarification Commission may provide a secure alternative to discussions, considering the amount of time it will take for the justice system in Myanmar to recover from the 2021 coup and how long it will take for victims and survivors to trust the justice system again – assuming they ever trusted the justice system in the first place. ARNO has previously called for the creation of a Truth and Clarification Commission for these and hopes that people throughout Myanmar will join this call.

1. Hayner, Priscilla B. *Unspeakable Truths: Transitional Justice and the Challenge of Truth Commissions*. 2nd Ed. (New York: Routledge, 2010)
2. Jo-Marie Burt and Paulo Estrada, *Legacy of Guatemala Dictator Rios Montt Shows Justice is Possible*, WOLA, April 13, 2018, <https://www.wola.org/analysis/legacy-guatemala-dictator-rios-montt-shows-justice-possible/>





# Rohingya Women: A Beacon of Hope

The story of Rahima Akter, a Rohingya genocide survivor, who faced suspension from a university in Bangladesh and eventually made her journey to Canada, is a powerful narrative of resilience, determination, and the pursuit of education and freedom against all odds. Here's a detailed account of her journey:

**Early Life and Genocide:** Rahima Akter was born in a refugee camp in Bangladesh. Growing up as a Rohingya, her life was marked by systemic discrimination, lack of basic rights, and constant threats of violence. Despite these challenges, Rahima was a bright student, determined to pursue her education and dreams.

**The Genocide:** In August 2017, the Myanmar military launched a brutal campaign against the Rohingya, leading to mass killings, rapes, and the burning of villages. Rahima's parents' village was attacked in Myanmar, and she witnessed many of her relatives and community members leaving the country for Bangladesh during waves of the continuous genocide against the Rohingya people. She was able to help many of her community members during that time working with different local and international organizations, particularly in the public health sectors.

**Life in the Refugee Camps:** Life in the refugee camps was harsh and filled with challenges for her. Despite the dire conditions, Rahima's determination to continue her education never wavered. She participated in informal educational programs offered by NGOs and excelled in her studies and then managed to attend public school and college in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh.

**University Admission and Suspension:** Rahima's hard work paid off when she was accepted into a university in Bangladesh with a scholarship. This was a significant achievement, as few Rohingya refugees had the opportunity to pursue higher education. However, her joy was short-lived. When the university authorities discovered her Rohingya identity, Rahima was suspended. This decision was a severe blow, highlighting the pervasive discrimination faced by Rohingya even outside Myanmar.





**The Journey to Canada:** Determined not to give up on her dreams, Rahima sought other opportunities. Her story caught the attention of international organizations and advocates who recognized her potential and the injustice she faced. Through their support, Rahima applied for and was granted refugee status in Canada.

**Arrival and Settlement in Canada:** Arriving in Canada, Rahima was welcomed with open arms. The initial period was challenging, with cultural adjustments and the cold climate posing new difficulties. However, Canadian refugee support programs provided her with the necessary resources, including housing, and counseling, to help her integrate into society.

**Pursuing Education:** In Canada, Rahima resumed her education with renewed vigor. She has been offered enrollment in a Canadian university, where she pursues her passion for political sciences. Her experiences fueled her determination to advocate for marginalized communities and to bring attention to the plight of the Rohingya people.

**Advocacy and Empowerment:** Rahima became an active voice in the Rohingya diaspora and within the broader community in Canada. She participated in various forums, sharing her story to raise awareness about the Rohingya genocide and the ongoing struggles of refugees. Her advocacy work extended to supporting other refugees and marginalized groups, leveraging her experiences to influence policies and create a more inclusive society. Currently she is serving as a member of the Arakan Rohingya National Organization (ARNO).

**A Beacon of Hope:** Rahima Akter's journey from the genocide in Myanmar, through the struggles in Bangladesh, to a new life in Canada is a testament to her resilience and strength. Her story is an inspiration to many, demonstrating that even in the face of extreme adversity, one can strive for and achieve one's dreams.

Rahima's journey underscores the importance of education, resilience, and international solidarity in overcoming adversity. Her life is a powerful reminder of the ongoing struggles faced by Rohingya refugees and the transformative power of support and opportunity. Rahima Akter continues to be a beacon of hope, advocating for justice, education, and the rights of all marginalized communities.



# ARNO participates in Global Justice in Conversation: A Closer Look at the Role and Impact of International Courts and Tribunals

Dr. Habib Ullah participated in a panel session with Her Excellency Corinne Ciceron Buher, Professor Jennifer Trahan, Arie Mora, Alyn Ware, Rebecca Shoot, and Neshan Gunasekera.



H.E. Corinne  
Cicéron Böhler



Arie Mora



Neshan Gunasekera



Prof. Jennifer  
Trahan



Dr. Habib Ullah



Rebecca A. Shoot

The Citizens for Global Solutions, non-profit and non-partisan co-hosted the program with World Federalist Society commemorating international global justice. The Congress of Nations and States (CNS) invited Dr. Habib Ullah, Secretary-General from ARNO, leader within the Arakan Rohingya National Alliance, and a participating member of the CNS Convening Council, to participate in the panel to discuss justice and accountability for the Rohingya genocide.

The Ambassador of Switzerland to the Netherlands was present and opened with introductory comments. She emphasized that states should support international courts because they have clear frameworks and can set standards for international justice. The Ambassador stated that this conversation was important because “we all need to have a better understanding of the respective international judicial institutions, their competencies and also their functioning, and it helps also to identify potential duplicates or gaps in order to develop new ways of improving the whole system, and states are important, but they are not the only actors in this field, civil society, victims have also a very important role to play in increasing this fight against impunity.”

Dr. Habib Ullah spoke on the situation involving the Rohingya. Dr. Ullah explained the history of the Rohingya and how the persecution started. He stated that 80% of the Rohingya population have had to flee their homes. He stated that the 1982 Citizenship law is a key law that has fueled the genocide. Since 2017, more than a million Rohingya people have become displaced, and we continue to seek justice, despite the fact that Myanmar is not a state party to many international treaties. Dr. Ullah emphasized the fact that even though there are provisional measures in place by the International Court of Justice the violence has continued. Dr. Ullah said that the bottom line is that despite all the justice mechanisms that exist, the atrocities against the Rohingya have never stopped. It is high time to look at other mechanisms such as an independent tribunal or Truth Commission in order to save the lives of other Rohingyas. He asked people to help stop the Rohingya genocide and bring people to accountability and justice.



## *Press Releases*

# CNS Statement on Violence in Burma

**July 3, 2024**

The Congress of Nations and States (CNS) notes that since the February 2021 coup, the people of Burma have continued to suffer at the hands of the Myanmar military. A large portion of ethnic and religious groups within Burma, among them women, children, and the elderly are suffering as a result of the military junta's vicious aerial attacks and diversion of humanitarian aid. Media reports indicate that there

is a probability that chemical weapons are being utilized against civilians. Despite the violence since the February 2021 coup, CNS continues to maintain that the best solutions for peace will come from indigenous ethnic groups who work together. CNS continues to support all avenues for dialogue between the people of Burma in order to bring about peace and put a stop to impunity.

CNS has recently learned that since January 2024, the situation in the Rakhine (Arakan) state of Burma has continued to deteriorate due to an internal armed conflict between the military junta and the Arakan Army, a rebel armed group vying for territorial control of the Rakhine state. Both armed factions fight each other in places where the Rohingya minority group resides. As the fighting escalates, villages have been cleared out and Rohingya people are forcibly displaced and are unable to leave Burma as Bangladesh has closed the border to prevent the conflict from spilling into its territory. This has now created opportunities for smugglers to make money, many of whom work for one of the armed factions. The Rohingya are caught in a terrible predicament which intensifies the genocide against them. CNS has learned that there are more ethnic groups in the Rakhine that are also suffering at the hands of the military junta, who are also subjected to forcible displacement, torture, and death. However, due to the media blackout and the confiscation of VPN's, the international community is left to decipher the veracity of claims based solely on the propaganda by either the military junta and the Arakan Army. It is clear that even international statements about the Rakhine are influenced by one or more parties and

therefore the full truth of the matter will require an independent investigation. Further, within the last two weeks, the World Food Programme and Medicins Sans Frontieres have also had their operations impacted due to the violence.

## *Press Releases*

# CNS Statement on Violence in Burma

**July 3, 2024**

CNS expresses its continued disappointment with the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and regional actors, such as ASEAN, at their inability to bring a calm to this treacherous storm. The flagrant violations by the military junta and the Arakan Army are clear breaches of every international human rights treaty. In addition, it is clear that the people of Rakhine State have lost their fundamental right to life and dignity. The war against the military junta by the Arakan Army or any other armed actor in the region does not in any way justify genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes against a civilian population, and all actors involved should understand that they too can be held accountable under international law, regardless of whether they deem themselves the winner or the loser of this conflict.

CNS calls upon ASEAN, UNSC, and the United Nations General Assembly to immediately call for a ceasefire throughout all of Burma and implement more sanctions against the military junta, if needed. CNS calls upon the permanent members of the UNSC to stop using the threat of their veto or their

veto in cases related to mass atrocity violations. CNS calls upon the international community to hold all actors, specifically the Myanmar military and the Arakan Army, accountable for bloodshed and violence. For decades, rampant impunity has allowed armed factions in Burma to show no respect for any laws. CNS further calls upon independent actors to provide humanitarian aid through neutral corridors and work with credible, un-armed groups, to deliver aid to the people throughout Burma so that more people in Burma do not continue to perish.



# ARNA Extends Gratitude to the United States Congress

**July 16, 2024**

On behalf of the Rohingya community, we extend our deepest gratitude and heartfelt appreciation to the United States Congress for the passage of the Rohingya Genocide Accountability and Protection (GAP) Act. This monumental legislation symbolizes hope and justice for our people, who have endured immense suffering and displacement.

The passage of the Rohingya Act is not only a recognition of the genocide committed against us but also a powerful message of solidarity and support. It provides us with the assurance that our voices are heard, our struggles acknowledged, and our rights defended on the international stage. This act will have a lasting impact on the lives of countless Rohingya, ensuring access to vital humanitarian aid, facilitating resettlement opportunities, and holding perpetrators of violence accountable.

As we express our sincere thanks, we also renew our commitment to working alongside the global community to achieve lasting peace, justice, and equality for all. Together, we can build a world where no community suffers persecution and where human dignity is upheld.

Thank you for standing with us and for your unwavering support.

With gratitude,

Arakan Rohingya National Alliance

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PHOTO COURTESY OF DFID UK

## About ARNO

The Arakan Rohingya National Organisation (ARNO) emerged in 1998 as a broad-based organisation of the Rohingya people with a pledge to promote 'Rohingya unity' and to realise the hopes and aspirations of the Rohingya people.

**[www.rohingya.org](http://www.rohingya.org)**

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