

**Statement on behalf of The Group of Friends on the Responsibility to  
Protect  
at the special session of the Human Rights Council on the human  
rights situation in Myanmar**

Mr. President

This statement is delivered on behalf of Members of the Group of Friends of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P).

Mr. President,

We condemn the reports of ongoing gross violations of human rights and abuses committed in Myanmar, in particular in Rakhine State, notably against Rohingya and other minorities.

We are deeply concerned about the dire situation of Rohingya refugees who fled to Bangladesh. More than 620,000 people – mostly Rohingya – have fled across the border since 25 August to escape violence, bringing the total number of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh to more than 800,000. We remain deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation in Rakhine and the lack of access for humanitarian and UN agencies. We call on the government of Myanmar to ensure safe and unhindered humanitarian access to populations in need.

We welcome the commitment of the government of Myanmar to implement the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State as well as the setting up of the Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development in Rakhine State. We also recognize initial steps that were taken by Myanmar regarding the return of refugees, by signing the Arrangement on Return of Displaced Persons from Rakhine State with Bangladesh.

The Myanmar State Counsellor's expressed commitment to bringing perpetrators of human rights violations and abuses and related criminal acts to justice is a welcome step towards starting a process of accountability. Those responsible for grave human rights violations and abuses should be held accountable in accordance with international law.

We welcome the generous hospitality of Bangladesh and the strong commitments made by the Government of Bangladesh to provide

temporary shelter, humanitarian assistance and protection to the refugees and other forcibly displaced persons.

We call on the Myanmar government to fully uphold its primary responsibility to protect its population, regardless of ethnicity, religion or citizenship status, to restore safety and security for all people in Rakhine State and to bring an immediate end to all violence.

As a necessary next step, a credible process should be established to enable and ensure the safe, voluntary, and dignified return of all refugees to their original places of residence. We encourage Myanmar to work with UNHCR and other humanitarian partners to enable safe, dignified and voluntary returns for Rohingya refugees, as well as informed and sustainable returns.

We also call on Myanmar to fully cooperate with the Special Rapporteur and the independent international Fact-Finding Mission – established by the Council - and allow them safe and unfettered access to all parts of Myanmar.

As the international community recognizes the dire situation in Rakhine State and the plight facing refugees who have fled to Bangladesh, this Human Rights Council has a clear responsibility to encourage and help Myanmar in ensuring that all its diverse populations – regardless of ethnicity, religion or citizenship status – are fully protected from further violence and human rights violations.

## **Supporters of the Statement on behalf of the Group of Friends of R2P**

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