

ASEAN CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT ON THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN RAKHINE STATE

The Foreign Ministers of ASEAN expressed concern over the recent developments in Northern Rakhine State of Myanmar and extended their deepest condolences to all the victims and affected communities of the conflict. They condemned the attacks against Myanmar security forces on 25 August 2017 and all acts of violence which resulted in loss of civilian lives, destruction of homes and displacement of large numbers of people.

The Foreign Ministers acknowledged that the situation in Rakhine State is a complex inter-communal issue with deep historical roots. They strongly urged all the parties involved to avoid actions that will further worsen the situation on the ground. They are agreed that viable and long-term solutions to the root causes of the conflict must be found, including encouraging closer dialogue between Myanmar and Bangladesh, so that the affected communities can rebuild their lives. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the commitment by the Myanmar authorities to ensure the safety of civilians, take immediate steps to end the violence in Rakhine, restore normal socio-economic conditions, and address the refugee problem through verification process.

The Foreign Ministers welcomed the launch of the Myanmar Government-led mechanism in cooperation with the Red Cross Movement and the assistance from the international community in these endeavours. The Foreign Ministers also underscored the importance of increased humanitarian access to the affected areas and that assistance be given to all affected communities.

The Foreign Ministers supported Myanmar's humanitarian relief programme. The ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) will work with the Myanmar Government-led mechanism, which will deliver humanitarian assistance to all displaced inhabitants without discrimination.

The Foreign Ministers urged Myanmar to continue to implement the recommendations of the final report of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State. They welcomed Myanmar's establishment of a Ministerial Committee to implement the recommendations.

The Foreign Ministers were prepared to support the Myanmar Government in its efforts to bring peace, stability, rule of law and to promote harmony and reconciliation between the various communities, as well as sustainable and equitable development in Rakhine State.

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