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Agenda item 2

**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

Written statement* submitted by Organization for Defending Victims of Violence, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[23 May 2020]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.

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Interactive dialogue with the United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Human Rights: Rohingya Human Rights situation

Rohingyas represent the largest community of Muslims in Myanmar, with the majority living in Rakhine state. Effectively denied citizenship under the 1982 Citizenship Law, Rohingyas are also one of the largest stateless populations in the world.

In August 2017, a deadly crackdown by Myanmar's army on Rohingya Muslims sent hundreds of thousands fleeing across the border into Bangladesh, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand. They risked everything to escape a military offensive which the United Nations later described as a "textbook example of ethnic cleansing".

Myanmar's security forces opened fire on fleeing civilians and planted land mines near border crossings used by Rohingya to flee to Bangladesh. Up to now, more than 730,000 Rohingya have fled the country. At least 392 villages were partially or totally destroyed by fire in northern Rakhine state according to analysis of satellite imagery by Human Rights Watch.

Although the country's leaders, have repeatedly denied allegations of genocide, the UN's top court ordered the country to take measures to protect members of its Rohingya community from genocide.

Almost one million Rohingya refugees are in overcrowded camps in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh which is now home to the world's largest refugee camp. Recently, a total of 191 COVID-19 positive cases have been reported in Cox's Bazar district as of 17 May 2020.

The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV) is deeply concerned about ongoing crimes against humanity being committed against the estimated 600,000 Rohingya who are still living in Rakhine State. Rohingya rights to equality, a nationality, and access to adequate healthcare, and work opportunities are routinely violated and the situation that led to killings, rapes, torture, forced displacement and other grave rights violations in 2017 has remained unchanged.

ODVV is also worried about the precarious situation of refugee camps which are too crowded without having enough access to hygiene. The living conditions make it almost impossible to physically distance which is critical for preventing Covid-19. In addition, ODVV is greatly concerned about sexual violence against Rohingya population especially women and girls.

Recommendations

ODVV calls on Myanmar government to protect the Rohingya from being persecuted and killed and to hold those who ordered and committed these crimes responsible.

We request the International Criminal Court (ICC) to immediately start its full investigation into the case of the Rohingya minority.

ODVV request Myanmar government to combat violence against women and girls and submit a report on atrocities against them.

ODVV calls upon the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to facilitate the cooperation of member states with Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar (IIMM) in order to implement the requests and recommendations of the Mechanism and to put pressure on Myanmar government to act upon them.

The ODVV calls on the Security Council to pass a resolution directing Myanmar to lift restrictions on Rohingya's freedom of movement and ban practices that limit Rohingya access to education, health care, and livelihoods and eliminate unnecessary restrictions on humanitarian aids.

ODVV requests Bangladesh to continue efforts on promoting the sanitary situation in refugee camps and to facilitate sufficient equipment and health staff to prevent a catastrophe. We also urge the international community to provide financial support to aid organizations working for refugees in Bangladesh.