



36th Regular Session of the UN Human Rights Council
Item 4 Interactive Dialogue with the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar
Oral Statement Delivered by Khin Ohmar on behalf of
Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)

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Mr. President. We welcome the update of the Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar and its intention to look into all parts of the country including Rakhine State and Northern Burma/Myanmar. The recent escalation in Rakhine State is unprecedented. The military's response militant attacks on 25th August has been disproportionate. Three UN Special Rapporteurs expressed concerns on 31st August citing reports of indiscriminate firing as well as use of helicopters and rocket propelled grenades on civilian populations. We fear that the situation has worsened since then. Reports we receive indicate a systematic and targeted campaign to evacuate or exterminate the Rohingya population in Rakhine State including: burning down entire settlements; targeted killings; inducing starvation; and the intimidation of those belonging to Rakhine Buddhist communities who help or trade with Rohingyas.

Given this we agree with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights that what is taking place in Burma/Myanmar seems to be a text book example of ethnic cleansing.

Mr. President we are today witnessing one of the greatest human rights and humanitarian tragedies of our times.

We call on this Council to pass a resolution and call for: an immediate end to attacks on civilians; full and unhindered access for humanitarian aid, independent observers and the Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar.

The unforeseen nature of the current situation requires that the mandate of the Fact-Finding Mission be extended, allowing more time to gather facts. The urgent and evolving nature of the situation also demands that they are given an opportunity to present an interim update to the UN General Assembly this year.

It is imperative that the violence in Burma/Myanmar stops now. An estimated million odd Rohingya live in Rakhine State. Almost half a million have fled in less than three weeks. We don't know how many more have died. Those remaining inside face extreme danger. There is an immediate need for action and as the world's highest human rights body the Council has a duty to act.