



**44<sup>th</sup> Regular Session of the UN Human Rights Council**  
**Item 4: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar**

**Oral Statement Delivered by Ahmed Adam**  
**On behalf of the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)**

**Tuesday, 14 July 2020**

Madam President, FORUM-ASIA welcomes the Special Rapporteur's update.

Failure to hold the military accountable for grave crimes against ethnic minorities including genocide against the Rohingya remains a main cause of continuing human rights violations in Myanmar. Emboldened by impunity, the Myanmar military has escalated the armed offensive against the Arakan Army with indiscriminate airstrikes, torture and arbitrary detentions, and other violations that amount to war crimes under the cover of the world's longest internet shutdown. The conflict has resulted in hundreds of civilian casualties and displaced over 160,000 people in Rakhine and Chin states since 2018 and threatens the safety of remaining Rohingya in defiance of the provisional order of the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

Similarly, the recent escalation of tensions between the Myanmar military and ethnic armed organisations in the Northern Shan State has raised serious questions about the government's commitment to the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.

Meanwhile, increasing repression of civil and political rights, hate speech and incitement to violence against ethnic and religious minorities with overt support from the government and the military continue. For example, at least eight activists who protested the ongoing internet shutdown in Rakhine and Chin States face criminal charges under the repressive Peaceful Association and Peaceful Procession Law.<sup>1</sup>

Continuation of ethnic conflicts and violations of fundamental human rights undermine any possibility of credible elections in November. To hold credible elections, Myanmar must, at minimum, cease all ongoing armed conflicts, ensure fundamental freedoms, reform the Union Election Commission Law in line with international standards and guarantee equal opportunity for all, including Rohingya and other ethnic refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) to fairly contest and participate in the elections.

Finally, we call on the international community to hold the Myanmar military accountable for genocide against the Rohingya, war crimes and crimes against other ethnic minorities by referring Myanmar to the International Criminal Court or establishing an ad hoc tribunal. Thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://progressivevoicemyanmar.org/2020/07/03/myanmar-must-lift-internet-ban-with-elections-ahead/>