



LOCAL EUROPEAN UNION STATEMENT ON ACCOUNTABILITY FOR INTERNATIONAL CRIMES COMMITTED IN RAKHINE STATE

Yangon, 27 January 2020

The EU Ambassador and EU Member States' Ambassadors and Heads of Mission resident in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar issue the following statement:

The European Union has consistently stressed the importance of accountability for crimes committed in 2016-2017 in Myanmar's Rakhine State.

On 20 January, the Commission of Enquiry established under the authority of the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar concluded that war crimes, serious human rights violations and disproportionate use of force took place during the security operations conducted by Myanmar's military and security forces between 25 August and 5 September 2017.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ), in its order on 23 January, confirmed its prima facie jurisdiction and indicated provisional measures with regard to the situation in Rakhine State. We expect the government of Myanmar to fully comply with the ICJ order in the interest of justice.

The EU welcomes these important first steps towards acknowledging the severity and scale of the violence that occurred, the gross violations of human rights and the disproportionate use of force by Myanmar's military and security forces. We hope that Myanmar will use these opportunities to make further progress on its democratic transition towards a society where the rights of everyone are fully recognised and protected.

The EU also welcomes and shares the expression of sympathy for all victims by the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. This now needs to be followed up with concrete actions.

As recommended by Myanmar's own Commission of Enquiry, there must now be adequate follow-up investigations, in line with international standards. Credible action must be taken to bring to justice those responsible for these serious violations, especially by Myanmar's security forces. We also welcome the recommendations for institutional reforms within Myanmar's defense forces to prevent the recurrence of human rights violations.

The EU stands ready to support the Government of Myanmar in any efforts to address the root causes of the multi-faceted conflict in Rakhine state, to implement in a comprehensive manner the recommendations of the Rakhine Advisory Commission and to achieve peace within Myanmar's borders.

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