



ARAKAN ROHINGYA UNION

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August 24, 2016 (#A8A16)

Arakan Rohingya Union Welcomes the Establishment of the Advisory Commission on Arakan/Rakhine State by the Government of Burma

The Office of the State Counsellor of the Government of Myanmar announced that the Government of Burma is committed to finding lasting solutions to the complex and delicate issues, and will establish an Advisory Commission in Arakan/Rakhine State. A Memorandum of Understanding is reportedly to be signed between the Ministry of Office of the State-Counsellor and the Kofi Annan Foundation. The Advisory Commission, will be chaired by former UN Secretary-General and Nobel laureate, Kofi Annan. The Commission will be composed of three international dignitaries and six prominent Burmese nationals.

On behalf of Rohingya people, Arakan Rohingya Union (ARU) warmly welcomes the positive step taken by the Government of Burma to address the issues faced by Rohingya, Kamen, and other ethnic minorities in Arakan. ARU commends the State Counsellor for the initiative to establish the Commission to consider humanitarian and development issues, access to basic services, the assurance of basic rights, and the security of the people of Arakan.

In order to find a just and durable solution in Arakan, it is imperative that the Commission thoroughly reviews the plight of the Rohingya and Kamen people and the situation on the ground faced by the groups in Arakan.

Arakan Rohingya Union strongly urges the Commission to undertake the assessments in Arakan with objectivity, and make the recommendations based on the “*root cause*” of the problem in Arakan. ARU appeals the Commission to extensively review:

- The basic human right issues faced by Rohingya: freedom of movement, freedom of worship, freedom to marry, two-child policy imposed only on Rohingya, access to education and healthcare, land confiscation and building settlements/Natala, atrocities by BGP, arbitrary arrests, unjust imprisonment, and numerous other violations
- The controversial “Verification” process in Arakan that is aimed at downgrading the Class I Full and Equal Citizenship of Rohingya to Class III Naturalized Citizenship with limited rights or no citizenship
- The NRC (National Registration Certificate) of the Rohingya people issued by the post-independence democratically elected Government of Burma, and recognition of “Rohingya” as a national race of Burma
- Dire situation in Rohingya IDP camps in Arakan and urgent needs for increased humanitarian aid and repatriation to their original homes in Arakan
- Access to IDP camps by the national and international relief groups, right groups, and the media
- Conditions in Rohingya refugee camps in South and Southeast Asian countries and their repatriation to their homes in Arakan
- Disenfranchisement of Rohingya’s voting rights
- Great number of Rohingya students (high school graduates) waiting for permission to attend higher education institutions in Burma

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