

Re: Request to Stop Ethnic Cleansing and Save Rohingyas in Myanmar

Respected Hon Malcolm Turnbull:

With due respect, I write this letter to you with great sorrow and pain in heart on observing the ongoing genocide and systematic ethnic cleansing of Rohingyas in Myanmar over the years and escalation of brutal mass killing of innocent civilians by the security forces of Myanmar in the Arakan region in the recent days. The stories of horrific indiscriminant murder and torture of men, women and children, gang rape of girls, and burning of thousands of homes of Rohingyas are beyond imagination in any civilized nation. Even animals wouldn't be subjected to this kind of inhuman cruelty without an international outcry.

There are a plethora evidences of Rohingyas being burnt locked in their homes, women raped and children murdered in horrific circumstances. Out fear of being killed families trying to flee from their villages till they reach the border with Bangladesh only to find that Border Guards of Bangladesh (BGB) is pushing them back or hand them over to Myanmar border guards police (BGP) to be killed. On the way, many of them died, dead-bodies were left in the jungle, and many drowned in the water when their escaping boat capsized in the river. Some of the surviving ones end up entering to Bangladesh, among them scores of girls crying in the hospitals in the boarder town of Teknaf due to injuries from rapes and other physical assaults. (We remember a photo of Vietnam war where a small girl was running on the street necked due to fear of bombs. That photo impacted huge among the international community and US had to stop war).

Bangladesh is not willing to accept the fleeing Rohingyas as refugees due to its limited capacity and resources, and fear that the entire Rohigya population will be pushed in side Bangladesh. Also, the Government of Bangladesh has been asking the international community to force the Myanmar Government to stop the ethnic cleansing of Rohingyas and grant them citizenship in the country they have been living for generations. Ironically, many Rohingyas are saying that "it is better to die in Bangladesh where the death will be peaceful and bodies will get buried, while if they die in Myanmar, it will be with torture and without burial."

As a regional leader and protector of Human Rights, Australia must act now to stop this humanitarian disaster and help resolve the ongoing crisis in Myanmar by forcing Ms Aung San Suu Kyi's Government to comply with the Universal Charter of Human Rights and prevent "silent genocide" of Rohingya people.

I request you, and your Government, to urgently ask the Myanmar Government to stop genocide and improve the situation of the Rohingyas in Myanmar ensuring their full safety and security as a matter of urgency. As a long term solution to the ethnic problem, the international community must force the Government of Myanmar to recognize the legitimate birth rights of Rohingyas to be citizens of Myanmar as they were born and living in the land for many generations.

Looking forward to seeing your urgent action and support for the helpless Rohingya people.

Professor Shahjahan Khan, PhD
University of Southern Queensland
Founding President, Islamic Society of Toowoomba & Former VP, Islamic Council of Queensland
Email: Prof.Shahjahan.Khan@gmail.com, Phone 0421081048
Address: 31 Ethan St, Middle Ridge, Q4350