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Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Written statement* submitted by the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[12 February 2017]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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Crimes against Humanity Committed by Myanmar Security Forces

We note the investigations of the team sent by the High Commissionaire for Human Rights to the borders of Bangladesh to access the situation of Myanmar Rohingya minorities. The systematic extensive, cruel and heinous nature of the crimes as well as the magnitude of the atrocity is reflected in the horrible findings of the team based on 204 single interviews.

The detailed finding that indicate the "Mass gang rapes, killings including of babies and young children, brutal beatings, disappearances and other serious human rights violations by Myanmar security forces."[1] The atrocities amount to crimes against humanity according to the Article 7 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,[2] and the Court has the jurisdiction to "prosecute individuals for the international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes".[3]

The widespread crimes have taken place while the world has ignored the early warnings of an occurrence of a genocide by Myanmar civil society group on first of December 2016. The group witnessed early signs of a large scale crime on the ground. Being troubled by the fact that the "systematic violations" of human rights in Myanmar is overlooked by the world and especially by the "western powers", the group called the International community to immediate action in order to prevent a genocide in the conflicted region[4].

In addition, in the HRC regular sessions within the past years, the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV) has frequently raised concerns about the situation of Rohingya minorities in Myanmar, attracting the world's attention to the necessity of elimination of the long term violence against minorities in the country.

Unfortunately, the cries for help received no effective answers and the deteriorating situation has continued to take toll on the people's life and health.

On 8th February 2017, while the UN has considered the atrocities as crimes against humanity, Pope Francis also criticized Myanmar leadership for its inhuman policies toward the Muslim minorities including the torture and killings of the people who would only "want to live their culture and their Muslim faith.[5]"

This is while the press briefing of the UN team detailed the heinousness of the nature and magnitude of the crimes on Feb, 3, 2017.
Deeply troubled by the fact that time is running out for Justice in Myanmar, our organization echoes the High Commissioner Zeid's voice and calls on the international community, to join the High Commissionaire in putting pressure on Myanmar government to stop the cruel military operations[6].
We call on the ICC to start investigation and prosecution of all the perpetrators of genocide and crimes against humanity in Myanmar, because the process will certainly make the criminals reconsider their future crimes.

We call on all civil society members to urge all member states to join the United Nations in finding and implementing effective intervention methods to put the crimes into an end.

[1] . http://webtv.un.org/watch/un-rights-office-reports-unprecedented-cruelty-against-minority-in-myanmar/5309217487001
[2] . https://www.icc-cpi.int/nr/rdonlyres/ea9aeff7-5752-4f84-be94-0a655eb30e16/0/rome_statute_english.pdf
[3] . https://www.icc-cpi.int/iccdocs/PIDS/publications/UICCEng.pdf
[4] . http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/12/rights-group-act-avoid-rohingya-genocide-161201082950460.html
[5] . http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/pope-francis-burma-myanmar-rohingya-muslims-genocide-claims-un-report-latest-a7568496.html
[6] . http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21142&LangID=E

We call on all NGOs interested in defending Myanmar victims to run awareness raising online campaigns to inform the Myanmar leadership of the strong possibility of being tried in court for committing crimes against humanity so as to help them think twice before making any future decisions on their choice of policy against Rohingya minorities.

We call on the Security Council, as a peace keeping tool, to utilize its punitive measures such as sanctions to discourage Myanmar government from continuation of the crimes.

We urge the Security Council to take serious action before there is a chance for the commitment of more crimes and established an international tribunal the same as the International War Crimes Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and the Rwanda Tribunal to hunt down and punish the perpetrators of Myanmar crimes against humanity.