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**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

Written statement* submitted by 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.

[19 August 2019]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



Presentation of report of International Investigative Mechanism on Myanmar

The Rohingya persecution in Myanmar occurred in late 2016 when Myanmar's armed forces and police started a major crackdown on Rohingya people in Rakhine State in the country's northwestern region. The military and the local Buddhists brutally and systemically killed at least 24,000 Rohingya people¹ and there was gang rapes and other forms of sexual violence against 18,000 the Rohingya Muslim women and girls, 116,000 Rohingya were beaten, 36,000 Rohingya were thrown into fire. The military drive also displaced a large number of Rohingya people, spurring a refugee crisis.² Of approximately 500,000 Rohingya children in Bangladesh, many fled alone after their parents were killed or after being separated from their families.³

Moreover, impunity is deeply entrenched in the State's political and legal system.⁴ Humanitarian agencies have been extremely limited or found no access to the affected communities in Rakhine and Chin States.⁵ These horrors rise to the level of both war crimes and crimes against humanity.⁶ Such atrocities are labelled as "Classic example of ethnic cleansing" and "Hallmark of genocide" by the UN and agreed by humanitarian organisations and ICC officials.⁷

Although the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar is continuing its investigations into serious human rights violations and abuses, human rights violations against ethnic Rakhine communities have largely gone unnoticed and human rights violations have not stopped, nor are victims seeing justice. Some aspects of the dispute between the government and people are historical, but the brutal violence against Rohingya population is not what we can ignore.

The gross human rights violations and abuses committed in Kachin, Rakhine and Shan States are shocking for their horrifying nature and ubiquity. They are shocking for the level of denial, normalcy and impunity that is attached to them. Myanmar has a heavy responsibility to remedy the situation as a matter of the utmost urgency.

Addressing situations like that in Myanmar touches on the very purpose of the United Nations. Therefore, the Organization for defending victims of violence (ODVV) calls upon Myanmar government to implement the following recommendations and to hold those responsible for serious human rights violations and abuses to account.

Due to the gravity of the past and continuing violations, attention must be given to the political, economic and financial ties of the Myanmar military. Thus, Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV) urges the international community to cut off all financial and other support to Myanmar's military.

Also, the international community must take a united stand both to condemn the violations and to assist Myanmar in addressing the root causes of its recurrent problems.

ODVV requests the United Nations to take collective actions in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, as necessary.

Myanmar must take confidence-building measures, including lifting restrictions on freedom of movement and humanitarian access, providing livelihood opportunities and ensuring safety.

¹ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/07/chief-bangladesh-continue-hosting-rohingya-190710191318011.html>.

² <https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/7857480>.

³ <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G18/274/54/PDF/G1827454.pdf?OpenElement>.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=24608&LangID=E>.

⁶ <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=23575&LangID=E>.

⁷ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/myanmar-rape-human-rights-watch-rohingya-1.4404729>.

Myanmar's government should focus on the real betterment of the remaining Rohingya community in Myanmar and should advance accountability, ensure justice and promote the right to safe, voluntary and dignified return.

ODVV calls on the International Criminal Court to conduct its own examination on this genocide.

ODVV calls on the Security Council to adopt targeted individual sanctions, including travel bans and asset freezes, against those who appear most responsible for serious crimes under international law.

ODVV requests all social media platforms active in Myanmar to enhance their capacity to combat the use of their platforms for the spread and promotion of threats and the incitement to violence, hostility and discrimination.

ODVV believes that no business enterprise active in Myanmar or trading with or investing in businesses in Myanmar should enter into an economic or financial relationship with the security forces of the country.

ODVV believes that religious leaders and organizations should lead initiatives for interfaith and intercommunal dialogue and confidence-building.
