

Joint response to the formation of the Arakan Rohingya National Alliance (ARNA)

For decades, Rohingya people have been systematically oppressed and persecuted by the Myanmar military and successive Myanmar governments. International community, including the UN mechanism and the United States, determined that continued persecution, killings, torture, mass rape and arson against Rohingya amount to genocide. Decades of persecution forcibly changed the demography of Rohingya, resulting in forced displacement of Rohingya in the region and beyond. Experiences of persecution, displacement and suffering of Rohingya are diverse, as much as their concerns, aspirations, and alternative options.

As Myanmar stands at a critical juncture the outcome of which will affect all people of Myanmar including the Rohingyas, Rohingya must come together to support designing a new country based on equality, inclusivity, and diversity. Implementation of such principles should start among us.

We learned that a group of Rohingya diaspora launched Arakan Rohingya National Alliance and claimed itself as the sole representative of the Rohingya people. While we welcome any initiative to try to bring our voices and fight for our future, it is regrettable that the formation of the group was neither consultative, diverse nor inclusive, especially as it tries to claim exclusive representation of diverse Rohingya communities, and it is an abuse to Rohingya people.

Recognizing the critical need for a **political** platform where Rohingya from diverse situations can come together, coordinate, mobilize and represent, formation of a representative group or organization should be process-oriented and diverse in representation. We, in particular, consider the following points to be crucial:

- I. Formation of any representative body of Rohingya should be an outcome of inclusive consultative processes which aim to integrate and cater for diverse voices of Rohingyas.

- II. One practical way to start such a consultative process is to establish a coordination body which initiates mapping and identifying diverse Rohingya groups as a part of the due diligence process to sufficiently include diverse voices.
- III. Initiation and facilitation of the coordination body has to be transparent and accountable to Rohingya public.
- IV. Women and youth should be significantly and meaningfully represented in the coordination body both in numbers and functions.
- V. The process should ensure core involvement of Rohingya youths, elders, and women leaders from Rohingya camps and Myanmar from the outset of the process, who are the largest and primary victims of the genocide and cost-bearers of the consequences.

Considering the decades of fragmentation of our community, we do not approve any group which unilaterally claims to be the sole representative of Rohingya unless due diligence process to meaningfully engage and represent diverse Rohingya voices is implemented.

We thus raise our strong condemnation that the Arakan Rohingya National Alliance serves as the sole representative of Rohingya. We urge the domestic and international community to help support Rohingya unity, not division and fragmentation.

We thank all domestic and international actors for keeping the Rohingya agenda at the core of Myanmar's democratization process and appreciate the continued support.

Endorsed by

1. Arakan Rohingya Society for Peace and Human Rights – ARSPH
2. Burma Peace and Development Foundation - BPDF
3. European Rohingya Council - ERC
4. Education and Wisdom Development for Rohingya Women
5. Rohingya Youth for Legal Action
6. Los Angeles Rohingya Association – LARA
7. Rohingya Refugee Committee - RRC India
8. Rohingya Society for Greater Houston
9. Rohingya Unity Movement - RUM
10. Rohingya Student Network - RSN

11. Rohingya Women Association for Education and Development
12. Rohingya Women Development Forum
13. Rohingya Union for Education and Development
14. Rohingya Cultural Center of Chicago
15. Rohingya Progressive Network
16. Rohingya Action Ireland
17. Rohingya Progress Initiative Malaysia
18. Rohingya Youth Unity Team
19. Rohingya Peace Initiative - RPI
20. Literature and Handicrafts for Rohingya Women
21. Youth for Rohingya Development - YRD
22. Mawlana Hashim, District Member, Islamic Religious Affairs Council , Maungdaw District
(Principle of Islamic School , Bangladesh Refugee Camps)
23. U Aung Kyaw Moe, Advisor Ministry of Human Rights, NUG
24. Hon U Shwe Maung, Member of Parliament (2010 - 2015)

CC:

National Unity Government - NUG

National Unity Consultative Council - NUCC

Committee of Representative of Phyithu Hluttaw - CRPH

United States Department of State

European Union - EU

Organization of Islamic Cooperation - OIC

Association of Southeast Asian Nations – ASEAN

ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights – APHR

UN Human Rights Council

Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar - IIMM

United Nations Secretary General 's Special Envoy on Myanmar - UNSSE

United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights

U.S. Embassy in Burma

Embassy of Canada to Myanmar

British Embassy in Myanmar

Embassy of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in Myanmar

Embassy of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in Washington D.C.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh

Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Republic of Indonesia

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