



BURMESE ROHINGYA ORGANISATION UK (BROUK)

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International Rohingya Youth Conference Statement

Rohingya Youth Call on the International Community to Act at Landmark Conference

Young Rohingya people and other ethnic minority activists have come together at a landmark conference to demand justice and an end to human rights violations in Myanmar, the Burmese Rohingya Organisation UK (BROUK) announced today.

The first-ever International Rohingya Youth Conference was held between 29 November and 1 December at Queen Mary University in London, UK. More than 45 participants from 9 countries attended, representing not just Rohingya but also Karen, Kachin, Burman, Tibetan, and Uyghur groups.

“With the survival of the Rohingya people at stake, young people are more important than ever. They are our future leaders, who can provide ideas, energy, and urgency to our cause. This week’s conference was a unique opportunity not just to listen to their voices, but also to foster solidarity with other minority groups living through oppression,” said Tun Khin, President of BROUK.

“Young people are united in their calls to end all abuses against Rohingya, and for those responsible to be brought to justice. It is time for the world to listen and take action.”

At the conference, whose theme was “Cultivating and Mobilizing a Rohingya Youth Movement”, Rohingya youth leaders from around the world to discuss a range of social and political issues that affect their communities. These include how to strengthen the movement’s capacity, how to support refugee and IDP communities, and how to build solidarity and create learning opportunities with other civil society allies.

“Rohingya are oppressed in Myanmar today, just as Kachin people are oppressed. We are the same victims. It is time for us to join forces in solidarity to get justice. This youth conference was extremely encouraging. It helped build bridges between communities united in their desire for a life in dignity and safety,” said Hkanhpa Sadan, Foreign Affairs Secretary of the Kachin National Organization.

“What Rohingya are facing today, Karen people have also faced more than 60 years. Massacres, rape, burning of villages, killing of children. When the government and military say the reports of human rights violations against the Rohingya are false, we remember they said the same thing about the same human rights violations against us. That is why we are standing in solidarity with our Rohingya brothers and sisters, and we hope our combined efforts will bring positive change for all our communities.” said Nant Bwa Bwa Phan Karen activist.

The conference participants:

- Express their commitment to form an international Rohingya youth movement that works for all Rohingya and actively engages refugee communities and the diaspora.

- Express their strong support for the development of international justice mechanisms and legal proceedings, including through the UN Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar (IIMM), the International Criminal Court (ICC), the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and Universal Jurisdiction (UJ). Only through sustained support of and engagement with these international legal efforts will the Myanmar military perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes finally be brought to account for their crimes against the Rohingya people.

- Acknowledge the systematic and long-term nature of the Myanmar military's crimes and persecution against all of the country's ethnic minorities. The Rohingya people stand in solidarity with our ethnic Karen, Kachin, Shan, Rakhine and many other brothers and sisters in Myanmar who have suffered at the hands of the military. We firmly believe that international justice for the Rohingya represents a victory for all of the

country's ethnic minorities. We are ready and eager to work together to achieve our shared goal of creating a democratic and federal Union of Myanmar where human rights including citizenship are enjoyed by all of our country's people.

-Demand that the long-term struggle for justice and accountability must be comprehensive. Resources and engagements in international justice should be expanded to include restorative and transitional justice efforts that directly support grassroots survivors, refugees, and IDP communities in Bangladesh, Myanmar, and beyond.

-Advocate that international governments, NGOs, and other actors ensure that their programs aimed at assisting Rohingya communities empower Rohingya organizations and individuals – particularly youth and women – to take the lead in their communities and participate in broader policy and development decisions. The Rohingya community has faced exclusion, marginalization, and discrimination in nearly every aspect of its existence, and only through active support and cultivation of Rohingya leaders can the community finally realize justice, equality, and human rights.

At the conference, it was agreed that for the 2020 elections to be credible it is essential that Rohingya in Burma are once again able to take part in the election.

Conference delegates discussed the need for domestic and international action on military-economic interests in order to reduce their income, which is used for the commission of violations of international law.

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