

# Attacks against Rohingya ‘a ploy’ to drive them away; prevent their return – UN rights chief

11 October 2017 – Brutal, well-organized, coordinated and systematic attacks have been carried out against the minority Muslim Rohingya community in Myanmar, with the intention of not just driving them away but also preventing their return, a new United Nations human rights report has revealed.

Based on on-the-ground interviews in Cox’s Bazar, in Bangladesh, where hundreds of thousands of Rohingya have sought refuge, the report also [draws attention](#) to a strategy to “instil deep and widespread fear and trauma – physical, emotional and psychological” among the Rohingya population.

“The [UN human rights] team documented consistent accounts of the Myanmar security forces surrounding or entering villages or settlements, sometimes accompanied by Rakhine Buddhist individuals firing indiscriminately at Rohingya villagers, injuring some and killing other innocent victims, setting houses on fire, and announcing in other villages that the same would befall them if they did not comply with the order to immediately abandon their homes,” notes the report, issued today by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights ([OHCHR](#)).

It also cites testimony from witnesses that security forces committed extrajudicial and summary executions, rape and other forms of sexual violence, torture and attacks on places of worship.

Efforts [taken] to effectively erase all signs of memorable landmarks in the geography of the Rohingya landscape and memory in such a way that a return to their lands would yield nothing but a desolate and unrecognizable terrain

Specific attacks particularly targeted the educated in the Rohingya society such as teachers, business men, religious and community leaders – “people with influence” – in an effort to diminish Rohingya history, culture and knowledge, said OHCHR in a news release announcing the grim findings.

“Credible information indicates that the Myanmar security forces purposely destroyed the property of the Rohingyas, targeting their houses, fields, food-stocks, crops, livestock and even trees, to render the possibility of the Rohingya returning to normal lives and livelihoods in the future in northern Rakhine almost impossible,” it added.

***UN rights chief urges authorities to end the ‘cruel’ security operation immediately***

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein, who described the Government operations in northern Rakhine state as “[a textbook example of](#)

[ethnic cleansing](#),” also urged the Myanmar Government to immediately end its “cruel” security operation.

By denying the Rohingya population their political, civil, economic and cultural rights, including the right to citizenship, he said, the Government’s actions appear to be “a cynical ploy to forcibly transfer large numbers of people without possibility of return.”

More than 500,000 Rohingya have fled to Bangladesh since the Myanmar security forces launched an operation in response to alleged attacks by militants on 25 August against 30 police posts and a regimental headquarters.

The report, however, suggests that the “clearance operations” started before that date – as early as the beginning of August.

UN agencies, meanwhile, are working to assist the hundreds of thousands in Cox’s Bazar and other locations in Bangladesh where conditions for the refugees are extremely challenging, including little protection against the elements, limited food, water and sanitation facilities, and the risk of outbreak of disease.

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## [Youth obesity increases 10-fold in four decades, UN-backed study reveals](#)

11 October 2017 – The number of obese children and adolescents aged five to 19 years worldwide has risen tenfold in the past four decades, and if current trends continue, there will be more obese children and adolescents than those moderately or severely underweight by 2022, a United Nations-backed study shows.

“These data highlight, remind and reinforce that overweight and obesity is a [global health crisis](#) today, and threatens to worsen in coming years unless we start taking drastic action,” Fiona Bull, programme coordinator for surveillance and population-based prevention of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) at the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)), said in a news release.

The study led by Imperial College London and WHO was published in *The Lancet*, ahead of World Obesity Day on Wednesday. It looked at body mass index (BMI) from weight and height measurements of nearly 130 million people, including 31.5 million youth aged five to 19.

Obesity rates in the world’s children and adolescents increased from less than 1 per cent – equivalent to five million girls and six million boys – in 1975 to nearly 6 per cent, or 50 million girls, and nearly 8 per cent, or 74 million boys, in 2016.

Combined, the number of obese five to 19 year olds rose more than tenfold globally, from 11 million in 1975 to 124 million in 2016. An additional 213 million were overweight in 2016 but fell below the threshold for obesity.

These worrying trends reflect the impact of food marketing and policies across the globe, with healthy nutritious foods too expensive for poor families and communities, said lead author Majid Ezzati, professor of Imperial's School of Public Health.

He said that the trend predicts a generation of children and adolescents growing up obese and at greater risk of diseases, like diabetes, stressing the need to make healthy, nutritious food more available at home and school, especially in poor families and communities, as well as the need for regulations and taxes to protect children from unhealthy foods.

#### ***More youth will be obese than underweight by 2022***

The authors say that if post-2000 trends continue, global levels of child and adolescent obesity will surpass those for moderately and severely underweight youth from the same age group by 2022. In 2016, the global number of moderately or severely underweight girls and boys was 75 million and 117 million respectively.

In conjunction with the study, WHO is publishing a summary of the plan that gives countries clear guidance on effective actions to curb childhood and adolescent obesity. WHO has also released guidelines calling on frontline healthcare workers to actively identify and manage children who are overweight or obese.

Countries should aim particularly to reduce consumption of cheap, ultra-processed, calorie dense, nutrient poor foods. They should also reduce the time children spend on screen-based and sedentary leisure activities by promoting greater participation in physical activity through active recreation and sports, Ms. Bull said.

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## **[Security Council endorses UN plan on restarting political process in Libya](#)**

10 October 2017 – The Security Council today endorsed the United Nations' action plan to resume an inclusive political process in Libya.

In a Presidential Statement, the 15-member body [strongly urged](#) all Libyans to work together in a spirit of compromise and to engage constructively in the inclusive political process set out in the UN action plan, which was presented at a high-level event in New York on 20 September 2017.

Regarding the measures set out in the action plan, the statement said that the Council “looks forward to further sequential implementation” of the plan, ahead of the holding of parliamentary and presidential elections within a year.

The Council also reaffirmed that the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA), which was signed in December 2015, “remains the only viable framework” to end the Libyan political crisis, and that any attempt by Libyan parties to undermine the Libyan-led, UN-facilitated political process is unacceptable.

Welcoming recent efforts to strengthen an inclusive political dialogue among all Libyans, including important efforts by Libya’s neighbours, international partners and regional organizations, the Council stressed that “all such initiatives should be consolidated under the leadership of the UN.

In that regard, the Council emphasised the imperative for all Member States to support the primacy of the UN mediation in Libya.

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## [Security Council condemns attack on UN mission base in DR Congo](#)

10 October 2017 – The United Nations Security Council has called on the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to investigate into, and bring to justice those behind Monday’s attack on a peacekeeping mission base in North Kivu that resulted in the deaths of two “blue helmets.”

In a [press statement](#) today, the 15-member Council strongly condemned the attack, carried out by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), in which 18 peacekeepers were also injured.

“The members [...] condemned in the strongest terms all attacks and provocations against the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo [known by its French acronym, MONUSCO] by armed groups,” added the statement.

They also urged all armed groups in the country to lay down their weapons and underscored that attacks against peacekeepers may constitute war crimes under international law.

Further in the statement, Security Council members also expressed their deepest condolences and sympathy to the families of the peacekeepers killed, as well as to the Government of Tanzania – where the peacekeepers were from – and wished the injured peacekeepers a speedy recovery.

The members also reiterated their full support for MONUSCO and expressed their deep appreciation to MONUSCO’s troop- and police-contributing

countries.

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## [Housing 'most urgent need' for hurricane-ravaged Dominica, UN agency reports](#)

10 October 2017 – Three weeks since category 5 Hurricane Maria ripped through Dominica, the scope of the damage remains daunting, with islanders in dire need of water, electricity, food and supplies, the United Nations migration agency reported on Tuesday as it continued to carry out an array of activities as part of the response.

Noting that an estimated 23 per cent of the small Caribbean nation's homes have been flattened, Jean Philippe Antolin, head of response operations in the Caribbean for the UN International Organization for Migration ([IOM](#)) said: "Those houses do not exist anymore. They have either been [blown into the sea or totally scattered in pieces](#) across the island."

In addition, some 39 per cent of the houses have sustained severe damage, and a further 28 per cent have been affected to some degree said IOM, underscoring that the numbers reflect the painful human situations in the shelters where more than 2,000 Dominicans are still living, while the rest are staying with relatives and friends.

A mother and her children took cover in a local school just before the hurricane hit, and are still living in one of the classrooms with another family. "My home just vanished into thin air. Nothing, nothing left to remember from it. Everything is gone," she told IOM.

The agency has responded through promoting an array of activities, including supply delivery, coordination of shelter management, and pipelining international donations. IOM has released \$100,000 to scale up shelter response, and an additional \$350,000 has been secured from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund ([CERF](#)).

Many Dominicans are still returning to their homes to salvage their belongings and clear debris during the day, but sleep in shelters or with host families.