

Press Releases: Accountability for Human Rights Abuses in Rakhine State, Burma

Press Statement
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Burma in recent years has emerged from a half-century of authoritarian rule and undertaken a significant transition to an open, democratic society. The U.S. Administration supports this transition and the elected civilian government as important means to achieve peace, stability, and prosperity in the interests of all peoples of Burma and the U.S.-Burma partnership.

At the same time, we express our gravest concern with recent events in Rakhine State and the violent, traumatic abuses Rohingya and other communities have endured. It is imperative that any individuals or entities responsible for atrocities, including non-state actors and vigilantes, be held accountable. Accordingly, in addition to existing restrictions on our already-limited engagement with Burma's armed forces and our long-standing embargo on all military sales, the United States is taking the following actions in pursuit of accountability and an end to violence:

- Since August 25, we have ceased consideration of JADE Act travel waivers for current and former senior leadership of the Burmese military;
- We are assessing authorities under the JADE Act to consider economic options available to target individuals associated with atrocities;
- Pursuant to the Leahy Law, we find all units and officers involved in operations in northern Rakhine State to be ineligible to receive or participate in any U.S. assistance programs;
- We have rescinded invitations for senior Burmese security forces to attend U.S.-sponsored events;
- We are working with international partners to urge that Burma enables unhindered access to relevant areas for the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission, international humanitarian organizations, and media;
- We are consulting with allies and partners on accountability options at the UN, the UN Human Rights Council, and other appropriate venues; and
- We are exploring accountability mechanisms available under U.S. law,

including Global Magnitsky targeted sanctions.

We will continue to support Burma's transition to democracy, as well as efforts to resolve the current crisis in Rakhine State. The Government of Burma, including its armed forces, must take immediate action to ensure peace and security; implement commitments to ensure humanitarian access to communities in desperate need; facilitate the safe and voluntary return of those who have fled or been displaced in Rakhine State; and address the root causes of systematic discrimination against the Rohingya by implementing the Rakhine Advisory Commission's recommendations, which includes providing a credible path to citizenship. We are ready to support these efforts.

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