

# Sustaining Support for the Rohingya Refugee Response conference: closing statement

## **Joint closing announcement by Co-Hosts**

Statement from the United States, the United Kingdom, the European Union, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR):

We are grateful to all who have participated in today's conference, including those who have announced or pledged funding for the international humanitarian response, those who are supporting members of the Rohingya communities in other ways—not least by hosting them—and most importantly, representatives of Rohingya communities themselves.

The situation in the region remains an acute humanitarian and human rights crisis more than three years after the August 2017 violence, which caused hundreds of thousands of Rohingya people to flee their homes in Myanmar to seek safety in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. There are currently 860,000 Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar district. There are an estimated 600,000 Rohingya people in Myanmar's Rakhine State who face ongoing violence and discrimination, and Malaysia, India, Indonesia, and other countries in the region are together hosting nearly 150,000 Rohingya refugees.

The voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return of Rohingya refugees and others internally displaced to their places of origin or of their own choosing in Myanmar is the comprehensive solution that we seek along with Rohingya people themselves. To that end, we underscore the Secretary General's call for a global ceasefire and the cessation of fighting to enable safe and unimpeded humanitarian access to all communities in need of assistance. To resolve the crisis in Myanmar, the Government of Myanmar must take steps to address the root causes of the violence and displacement in Rakhine State and create the conditions for voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable returns. This includes providing a pathway to citizenship and freedom of movement for Rohingya, guided by the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State's recommendations and encouraged and supported by countries in the region. Myanmar must provide justice for the victims of human rights abuses and ensure that those responsible are held accountable.

We are grateful to the government and the people of Bangladesh and other countries in the region for their continued support and hosting of Rohingya refugees. We acknowledge the responsibility they have undertaken and we assure them of our continued donor

commitment to support the humanitarian needs of Rohingya refugees throughout the region, especially in Bangladesh. This support needs to go hand-in-hand with increased support to host communities. While we continue efforts to secure long-term solutions, a focus on more sustainable response planning and financing in Bangladesh could more effectively support the government's management of the response and maximize limited resources to benefit both Bangladeshi and refugee communities.

The crisis is having a devastating effect on vulnerable members of Rohingya communities, particularly women and children who require gender and age-sensitive interventions. The crisis is also affecting the wider region, with refugees, mainly women and children, desperately attempting to reach other countries in the region. We greatly appreciate the efforts of those governments that have allowed the safe disembarkation of Rohingya refugees in distress at sea. We assure governments hosting Rohingya that donors are committed to supporting these refugees.

We will continue to provide strong support for displaced and stateless Rohingya people, wherever they are in Myanmar, Bangladesh, and other countries in the region. The international community has demonstrated its strong commitment to the humanitarian response with the announcement of funding today totaling some USD 600 million, which significantly expands the nearly USD 636 million in humanitarian assistance already committed so far in 2020 under the Bangladesh Joint Response Plan and the Myanmar Humanitarian Response Plan. Since the outbreak of violence in August 2017, a total of nearly USD 2.8 billion has been provided to the Rohingya crisis response in Myanmar, Bangladesh, and the region. This is in addition to USD 700 million in development commitments to Bangladesh from the World Bank and Asian Development Bank.

We remain steadfast in our engagement with countries concerned towards finding solutions to the crisis. We will continue to work together to maintain international attention on the Rohingya crisis and to shift from short-term critical interventions to a more sustained and stable support.

## **Background**

The co-hosts, the United States, the United Kingdom, the European Union, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), recognize the following countries and agencies for their participation in the conference:

Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brunei, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, the Philippines, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, and Vietnam; the Asian Development

Bank (ADB); the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN), BRAC, InterAction, the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Coordination Office (UNDCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UN-Habitat, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the World Bank.