

UN Human Rights Council 41: Rohingya

Thank you, Mr President,

The UK thanks the Deputy-High Commissioner for her statement, and pays tribute to the vital work carried out by her office.

It has been almost two years since shocking crimes, perpetrated primarily by the Tatmadaw, took place against the Rohingya in Rakhine State. The atrocities against the Rohingya and other minorities, including their targeted persecution and expulsion has been ethnic cleansing on an industrial scale. Over the last six months the dire and desperate situation in Rakhine State has worsened with clashes between the Arakan Army and the Tatmadaw resulting in further civilian casualties, including the Rohingya, and an increase in internally displaced people. We call upon both sides to exercise restraint and engage in dialogue.

We continue to call for the safe, voluntary, and dignified return of the Rohingya, and it is vital that the government works to ensure that conditions on the ground allow for this

We continue to support the Rohingya, both in Rakhine and Bangladesh, through programmes that provide access to education, skills and livelihood opportunities. The UK has led the way in scale and speed of humanitarian aid, and we continue to be the largest bilateral donor in Rakhine State.

We continue to consider how we can best support the implementation of a credible accountability process which meets the needs and expectations of victims. While we note the establishment of the Independent Commission of Enquiry, we stress that it must be independent, transparent and credible. If domestic processes fail to live up to international standards, then we will push for effective international accountability.

Deputy-High Commissioner,

How can the international community help support the improvement of conditions in Rakhine, so the Rohingya are able to return, in safety and security?

Thank you, Mr President.