

Virtual Donor Conference on Sustaining Support for the Rohingya Refugee Response

October 22, 2020

Statement of support – FRANCE –

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of France, let me warmly thank UNHCR, the US, the UK and EU for taking the initiative of this donor conference. More than 3 years after the initial violence that forced them to flee, the situation of the Rohingya refugees remains dire and unresolved and we have a collective duty to provide sustained and sufficient support.

Children need particular attention and full access to education. Women and girls must be protected from gender based violence. France is deeply grateful to Bangladesh and other countries for welcoming these refugees and will keep its humanitarian commitment to support them. To this end, this year, France has allocated 2,25 million euros in programmed food assistance, and close to 2 million euros for other

humanitarian aid. France also contributed up to 1,5 million euros to UNHCR and will earmark an additional contribution of 500 000 euros by the end of the year.

2/ As some of you may remember, in his speech at the UNGA in September 2017, President Emmanuel Macron, called on the international community to address the tragic suffering of the Rohingyas, victims of persecutions and of what we all knew amounted to ethnic cleansing. Today France remains fully committed, alongside its partners, to help resolve this crisis and sees at least 5 priorities to that end: (i) first, the dialogue between Bangladesh and Myanmar must be strengthened in order to achieve progress and, ultimately, the voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable return of the Rohingya populations (ii) restrictions on access to humanitarian organisations, particularly in Rakhine, must be lifted (iii) Myanmar needs to address the root causes that have led to the current crisis, in particular with regard to the issue of access to citizenship and elimination of discriminations (iv) France also calls on Myanmar to fully implement the International

Court of Justice's order of 23 January 2020 and to guarantee the inclusiveness and transparency of the elections on 8th November (v) the crimes committed must not remain unpunished. In conclusion, let me reaffirm that we must be clear that progress in all these areas is essential to promote the return of the Rohingya refugees to Myanmar