

Sustaining Support for the Rohingya Refugee Response
Virtual donor conference, 22nd October 2020

Statement by the Republic of Malta

Excellencies,

This year marks the third year since the start of the largest and most recent forced displacement of Rohingya and other communities from Rakhine State.

It has become more important than ever for the international community to strengthen its support towards the vulnerable people who have been forced to leave their homes and livelihoods behind in search of a place where they are not persecuted simply because of their ethnicity.

It would be amiss not to commend the support shown by neighbouring countries, most notably Bangladesh, which has hosted a large number of refugees and has been incredibly generous throughout this crisis.

Malta acknowledges that the agreement reached in February 2018 by the Bangladeshi government, allows the UN to oversee the process of repatriation. This would ensure for a safe, voluntary and dignified return of Rohingyas once the conditions allow. The key to resolve the crisis lies with Myanmar, in addressing the root causes of the crisis and in recognising the Rohingya. Together with the international community, Malta calls upon the Government of Myanmar to address the root causes of displacement, fully in line with the Advisory Commission's on Rakhine State Recommendations, which the Government of Myanmar has committed itself to implement.

We must take this opportunity to reinforce our commitment to end the bloodshed and the suffering of the Rohingya people and to allow unconditional and unimpeded access for aid convoys to alleviate the humanitarian plight.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also made things significantly worse as it presented a new threat to ethnic minorities in Myanmar. The unfortunate conditions of displacement and marginalisation leave the Rohingya particularly vulnerable, even more so that they might not have direct access to necessary healthcare.

To this end, we fully support the objectives underlying the Conference today and I am pleased to announce that Malta is hereby pledging a contribution towards this worthy cause.

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