

**Rohingya Conference 22 October 2020**  
**Statement**

Thank you Madam/Mr Chair, and thank you to the United States, the European Union, the United Kingdom, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for co-hosting this important event.

Norway commends the Government and people of Bangladesh for the generosity and solidarity they have shown in providing protection and life-saving humanitarian assistance to nearly one million Rohingya refugees.

We are aware that this crisis has placed a heavy burden on local communities in the Cox's Bazar district and beyond.

The efforts of the other countries in the region that are hosting Rohingya refugees are also greatly appreciated. We are grateful to governments in the region for allowing the disembarkation of Rohingya refugees in distress at sea.

The primary responsibility for creating an environment that allows for the safe, dignified and voluntary return of the Rohingya refugees lies with the Government of Myanmar. The Governments of Myanmar and Bangladesh, the UN and regional actors such as ASEAN need to work together to achieve this.

Madam/Mr Chair,

Although some progress has been made, we remain worried about the fact that many refugees still lack access to essential services, education and livelihood opportunities.

In particular, we are concerned about the precarious situation of women and children. Their protection needs have increased during the COVID-19 crisis, and all actors must continue to give this priority. In this regard, I would like to highlight the important work being done to fight sexual and gender-based violence in the camps.

I would also like to mention the effective action taken by the authorities, the UN and the humanitarian organisations in Bangladesh to ensure a coordinated response to the pandemic. As a result, there has been no major outbreak of COVID-19 in Cox's Bazar.

Since August 2017, Norway has contributed approximately 53 million US dollars (NOK 412 million) to the humanitarian response to the Rohingya crisis. We will continue to provide core support to UNHCR. This includes support for UNHCR's cooperation with countries hosting Rohingya refugees in the region.

Norway also provides funding for the SAFE Plus programme, which makes gas stoves and fuel available for refugees and local communities, and rehabilitates deforested areas.

It is vital that the international community supports the Government of Bangladesh in its efforts to achieve durable solutions for the Rohingya refugees and the host communities.

I can assure you that Norway will do its part.

Thank you.