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**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

Written statement submitted by Minority Rights Group, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status*

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[11 August 2025]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Violations to the Right to a Nationality and Other Human Rights in Myanmar

Following the adoption of Resolution A/HRC/RES/59/2 at the 59th Session of the UN Human Rights Council, the co-sponsoring organisations continue to express their ongoing concerns regarding the violations towards the right to a nationality and other human rights in Myanmar.

The Rohingya are one of the most persecuted minorities in the world. Having been arbitrarily deprived of citizenship by the 1982 Citizenship Law and its discriminatory implementation, they have faced decades of discrimination and repression, lacking access to the most basic rights. The deprivation of nationality and resultant statelessness of the Rohingya remains a significant obstacle to finding a sustainable and dignified solution to the crisis.

Ongoing Violence in Rakhine State

In November 2023, violence broke out in Rakhine State between the Tatmadaw, the State Administration Council (SAC) and the United League of Arakan/Arakan Army (ULA/AA). Caught between the military and the Arakan Army, Rohingya civilians are regularly subjected to killings, enforced disappearances, mutilations, arbitrary arrests, torture, village destruction, and mass displacement. Since November 2023, more than 350,000 people have been internally displaced (1). In December 2024, several Rohingya organisations reported that at least 2,500 Rohingya were killed during the fighting between ULA/AA and SAC, and the Arakan Army has forced over 118,000 Rohingya to flee to Bangladesh in recent months, with thousands more attempting to reach other neighbouring countries (2).

Arbitrary and Discriminatory Practices on Accessing Civil Documentation

SAC restricted the movement of Rohingya in several areas and refused to issue Form 4 travel permits for travel to other states or regions, regardless of the purpose — including medical treatment, personal visits or educational needs. Many Rohingya children are unable to obtain birth certificates, as the process requires at least one parent to present valid ID cards along with recommendation letters from both the police and village administrators to the Township Administration Department.

These developments occur amid pervasive digital surveillance operations tied to internal and foreign travel, including the rollout of a biometric e-ID system by the junta with backing from China and India (4). The system entails mass collection of sensitive biometric data, replicates existing discriminatory citizenship documentation categories and is entirely premised on the “national races” framework of the 1982 citizenship regime (5). Reports from SAC indicate that only Citizenship Scrutiny Card (CSC) holders are eligible to receive digital ID, needed to access basic rights, while other residents receive a Unique ID number (UID) (6). Citizenship status is reflected in the ID number itself, and the e-ID database is linked with an extensive population surveillance apparatus modelled on China’s Global Security Initiative (GSI). Enrolment in the e-ID system is mandatory for anyone seeking travel documentation and the system is connected with the junta’s Person Scrutinization and Monitoring System (PSMS) (7). In addition to excluding marginalized ethnic and religious minorities under the 1982 citizenship regime, the e-ID system will exclude populations living in conflict-affected areas who cannot enrol, with long-lasting political and economic ramifications for these vulnerable civilian groups (8).

Human Rights Conditions Affecting Rohingya in Myanmar

Since November 2023, formal education has been denied in Rakhine State, with schools being closed. Teachers have not reported to schools due to safety concerns, and some schools were damaged or destroyed by ULA/AA and SAC in 2024. As of June 2025, ULA/AA was

planning to reopen schools in areas under its control. However, Rohingya residents reported that there are no qualified teachers or adequate learning materials (9).

Rohingya have faced intensifying abuses. The ULA/AA has confiscated numerous Rohingya-owned homes, shops, and prawn farming lands, while denying the owners' property rights and in at least some cases making unsubstantiated allegations of links to Rohingya armed groups. Both the ULA/AA and the SAC have engaged in forced recruitment and labour of Rohingya civilians, while arbitrary arrests of Rohingya youth and men—accused of ties to armed groups—have become increasingly common (10).

SAC and ULA/AA have imposed severe movement restrictions and drastically limited access to food, healthcare, and other essential services, threatening community livelihoods. Since the military coup in February 2021, SAC has systematically obstructed humanitarian aid across Myanmar—including in Rakhine State—as a form of collective punishment. Only a small number of UN agencies are currently allowed to operate, and even then under highly restrictive conditions (11).

Human Rights Conditions Affecting Rohingya in Neighbouring Countries

The persecution of Rohingya in Myanmar has led to large-scale displacement across the region, with the largest hosting countries being Bangladesh, Malaysia, India, Indonesia and Thailand. While these countries are not parties to the 1951 Refugee Convention and lack formal refugee protection frameworks, they are bound by principles of customary international law. However, Rohingya refugees remain in legal limbo and are deprived of basic human rights.

Bangladesh hosts over 1.1 million Rohingya refugees, primarily within refugee camps in Cox's Bazar (12). As one of the most cramped refugee camps in the world, Rohingya refugees face severe restrictions on mobility, access to health, social services and education. In recent years, Bangladeshi authorities have destroyed thousands of refugee-run shops, tightened surveillance through construction of fences, checkpoints and curfews, and banned Rohingya-led community schools. Since December 2020, approximately 35,000 Rohingya have been moved to Bhasan Char, described by a refugee child quoted by Human Rights Watch in 2021 as “an island jail in the middle of the sea” (13). The Government of Bangladesh has also attempted to advance repatriation plans to Myanmar despite the threats of persecution, raising serious concerns about potential violations of the principle of non-refoulement (14).

Role of the International Community

The international community continues to have a critical role in upholding the right to a nationality and other human rights for Rohingya and other stateless communities in Myanmar. The co-submitting organisations therefore urge Human Rights Council members and observers to:

- I. Support Rohingya and other stateless communities through rights-based engagement without conferring legitimacy on any current actor asserting control of Myanmar.
- II. Initiate an emergency humanitarian aid platform for Rakhine State and denounce actions that deny humanitarian support and are used as a tool of persecution of Rohingya and other stateless communities in Myanmar based on ethnicity, religion or perceived political affiliation.
- III. Demand release of Rohingya who were arbitrarily arrested and detained.
- IV. Urge the Arakan Army to stop violations of human rights and humanitarian law against the Rohingya, including forced labour, forced displacement, coercive enrolment in military surveillance programs, extortion and arbitrary arrest, and call on both SAC and ULA/AA to stop forced recruitment on Rohingya and other stateless people in Rakhine State.

V. Support community-led documentation initiatives, particularly by Rohingya, that do not rely on recognition by current actors asserting control of Myanmar.

VI. Reject efforts by SAC to build mass surveillance tools and discredit false claims that the e-ID will expand access to government services and welfare on an inclusive, rights-respecting, and non-discriminatory basis.

VII. Demand accountability for discriminatory practices that have deprived Rohingya and other communities of their right to a nationality and rendered them stateless. Resist actions that further entrench these laws and practices through digital transformation projects, anti-fraud or election security initiatives, and regional migration control regimes.

VIII. Ensure meaningful participation of affected Rohingya communities and stateless-led and refugee-led organisations in the decision-making processes to pursue durable solutions and protection of human rights.

IX. Urge the repeal of the 1982 Citizenship Law and related procedures and the adoption of a new nationality law and comprehensive regulatory framework that is not discriminatory, protects against statelessness and prohibits the arbitrary deprivation of nationality, applied with retroactive effect.

X. Call on neighbouring states and demand their cooperation to ensure the rights of refugees who were rendered stateless, especially Rohingya in Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia, including access to documentation, education, healthcare, and release and protection from arbitrary detention or refoulement. Strongly condemn and demand cessation of Indian and Chinese foreign cooperation with military procurement of biometric-based surveillance technologies, including the e-ID.

XI. Create the necessary conditions for the voluntary repatriation of Rohingya refugees, namely, by ensuring consent, UN oversight, right to nationality, equality and human rights, normalisation, accountability, and rehabilitation and reintegration, before any further return efforts are carried out.

XII. Maintain regular accountability mechanisms that can document and report on the perpetration of violations in Myanmar and facilitate legal and other forms of accountability, ensure that affected communities are meaningfully included in informing and accessing these mechanisms, and act to protect Myanmar's people from the arbitrary and discriminatory actions of a wider strategy of persecution.

XIII. Urge states and international donors to conduct human rights due diligence prior to any provision of financial and military support, including e-ID and related digital surveillance systems, to the current actors asserting control of Myanmar, to prevent perpetuating statelessness and discrimination towards stateless communities in the country.

Free Rohingya Coalition, the Global Movement Against Statelessness, Nationality for All, Temple University Institute for Law, Innovation & Technology, the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion (ISI), NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.

(1) <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/myanmar/myanmar-humanitarian-update-no-45-28-march-2025#:~:text=This%20brings%20the%20total%20number,the%20camps%20established%20since%202012>

(2) <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/rohingya-muslims-face-new-threat-from-arakan-army-after-being-persecuted-by-myanmar-military/3412335#>

(4) <https://www.biometricupdate.com/202507/india-pledges-support-for-myanmar-digital-id-pilot;>
<https://www.techpolicy.press/fourth-year-under-myanmar-militarys-digital-iron-curtain-a-reflection-on-digital-repression-and-the-path-forward/>

(5) <https://www.biometricupdate.com/202308/myanmars-biometric-data-collection-sparks-rights-violation-fears>

(6) <https://www.gnlm.com.mm/uid-essential-for-people>

- (7) <https://eng.mizzima.com/2025/06/06/23126>
- (8) <https://globalvoices.org/2024/03/12/myanmars-e-id-system-progress-or-surveillance/>
- (9) <https://mmpeacemonitor.org/en/en-news/aa-bolsters-civil-service-to-rebuild-arakan-state/>
- (10) <https://k4dm.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/K4DM-MDR-14-Voices-Amid-Strife.pdf>
- (11) <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/06/20/myanmar-junta-blocks-lifesaving-cyclone-aid>
- (12) <https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/bgd>