

IPHRC expresses grave concern at the deteriorating human rights situation of the Rohingya Muslim minority in Myanmar; calls for immediate cessation of violence and urges the Myanmar government to allow access of humanitarian aid to the affected population in the Rakhine State

Jeddah, 1st December 2016: IPHRC expressed grave concern and strongly condemned the deteriorating human rights situation of and violence against Rohingya and other Muslim minorities in Myanmar, which has resulted in destruction of their homes, torture and killing of innocent civilians. The latest spate of violence is the result of the ongoing security operation by the State armed forces in Rakhine State of Myanmar, where a large number of Rohingya Muslim minority lives. These incidences of violence have been confirmed in various credible reports from media, reputed international human rights organizations as well as United Nations. The reported violations include torture, rape and extrajudicial killings of Rohingya Muslims as well as burning of their houses and mosques in Maungdaw Township and other villages in Northern Rakhine State.

During its 10th Regular Session, which concluded today, IPHRC Working Group on Muslim Minorities extensively discussed the current situation of the Rohingya and other Muslim minorities. It noted that the destruction of homes and mosques has forced tens of thousands of Rohingya Muslims to flee their villages and the subsequent blockade in the region has further worsened the existing humanitarian situation creating extreme shortage of food, education, health and other nutrition assistance. As per reports by international human rights NGOs, approximately 1250 Rohingya homes were burned down by the authorities last month. Sadly, many satellite images have confirmed that the destruction in Rohingya villages is far greater and at more places than the Myanmar government has admitted in its official communications.

Contrary to the claims of the Government of Myanmar that it is addressing the situation based on the principle of rule of law, it appears that it is merely deflecting the criticism and remains in a state of denial to address the grave human rights violations. This assumption is strengthened by Myanmar authorities' assertions that civilians are themselves burning their homes to attract attention and that the security forces are merely attacking the militant groups.

The apparent arson attacks against Rohingya villages and ill treatment of civilians including torture, rape and extrajudicial killings is a matter of grave concern for the entire international community. IPHRC condemned these acts and called upon the Myanmar government to take immediate and effective steps to bring to an end all forms of human rights violations against innocent and unarmed Rohingya Muslim population. It urged the Government of Myanmar to initiate urgent, transparent and impartial investigations of all the allegations of violations of human rights and bring to justice the perpetrators of these violations. IPHRC also called upon the Myanmar Government to positively respond to its request for a fact-finding visit as well as allow the establishment of the OIC humanitarian office for disbursement of humanitarian aid.

Furthermore, IPHRC urged all OIC Member States, especially neighboring countries to continue engaging and urging the Myanmar government to uphold its obligation of ensuring the promotion and protection of human rights of all its citizens including its Rohingya and other Muslim minorities. It also called upon the international community and relevant organs of United Nations to take all necessary actions to ensure that the Government of Myanmar abides by its

obligations under international human rights law to prevent further deterioration of the crisis in Rakhine state.

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