



One Hundred Fourteenth Congress  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Foreign Affairs  
2170 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
[www.foreignaffairs.house.gov](http://www.foreignaffairs.house.gov)

July 27, 2016

The Honorable Samantha Power  
U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations  
U.S. Mission to the United Nations  
799 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Ambassador Power,

The Rohingya in western Burma continue to be among the most persecuted people in the world. I urge you to demonstrate U.S. leadership by making clear that the mistreatment of the Rohingya will remain not only a key part of U.S.-Burma bilateral relations, but will also be addressed at the highest levels by the United Nations. Toward that end, I urge you to request an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council to address the dire humanitarian and human rights situation faced by the Rohingya in Burma.

The recent elections in Burma and the transition to a new government led by Aung San Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy are welcome developments. While progress has been made with the enactment of much-needed reforms in many areas, the treatment of the Rohingya has been a glaring exception. It is far from clear whether the new government will work to improve the deplorable humanitarian and human rights situation faced by the Rohingya in Rakhine State.

As noted in the State Department's recent report to Congress on atrocity prevention in Burma, nearly 200 Rohingya were killed and 140,000 were displaced by violence in 2012 and the situation remains "grim." Today, most of those 140,000 Rohingya remain in squalid displacement camps. The UN's humanitarian chief visited the camps in February and described "dreadful conditions." More than one million Rohingya living in Burma face continued restrictions on their fundamental rights to move freely, marry, or have children. Access to emergency health care and humanitarian aid remains highly restricted, leading to numerous reports of preventable deaths. Hate speech and violent propaganda continue to imperil Rohingya, as well as other Muslims in the country. National laws that egregiously restrict human rights in Burma particularly harm the Rohingya. These include the Race and Religion Protection Laws and the 1982 Citizenship Law. As the Department's report makes clear, the government has "enabled discrimination and targeting of members of the Rohingya population."

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United States efforts have been integral in keeping the dire situation of the Rohingya and other severe human rights abuses in Burma on the agenda in the UN General Assembly. Unfortunately, there has been significant resistance in these bodies and the human rights situation in Burma has not been on the agenda of the UN Security Council since 2009. Given the dire situation, it is time for the Security Council to actively engage on this issue.

An emergency meeting would provide a long overdue opportunity to consider and adopt the numerous recommendations made by the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Myanmar, the Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review, UN General Assembly resolutions, and multiple human rights groups. Unfettered humanitarian access to the displacement camps should be demanded, while efforts to improve conditions for local populations should also be pursued. Moreover, the special meeting should result in the establishment of an independent international investigation into the situation in Rakhine State, as called for by countless human rights leaders, including Burma's Catholic Cardinal Charles Bo.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



EDWARD R. ROYCE  
Chairman