



One Hundred Fifteenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
www.foreignaffairs.house.gov

September 5, 2017

Her Excellency Aung San Suu Kyi
State Counsellor
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Dear Madame State Counsellor:

I write to you out of great concern over reports of violence against the Rohingya in Rakhine State. Your government and the military have a responsibility to protect all of the people of Myanmar, regardless of their ethnic background or religious beliefs. These atrocities, the latest and most severe against this minority group, must end. Those responsible, regardless of their affiliation with the government or the military, must face justice. I urge your government and the military to end the violence against the Rohingya, allow unfettered humanitarian assistance into Rakhine State, and provide access for journalists.

According to recent estimates, nearly 120,000 Rohingya Muslims have been forced from their homes in just one week. There are credible accounts of Myanmar state security forces and local residents engaging in mass killings in Chut Pyin village and Rathedaung Township, as well as reports that numerous other villages in Northern Rakhine State have been burned down. Compounding these atrocities is evidence of violence against Rohingya refugees fleeing their homes. As one refugee reported, "they are beating us, shooting at us and hacking our people to death...Many women were raped and killed." Others report that the military has fired machine guns at innocent civilians, even children, as they flee into Bangladesh. Aid workers in Bangladesh report new arrivals as having recent bullet wounds.

I strongly condemn the August 25th attack by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army on police outposts and a military base in Maungdaw. At the same time, I strongly urge your government and the military to exercise restraint and demonstrate professional standards in responding to this attack. As the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State recently made clear, "a highly militarised response is unlikely to bring peace to the area. What is needed is a calibrated approach...to ensure that violence does not escalate." I appreciate that your government has welcomed the recommendations made in this report, and underscore the need for their implementation.

Her Excellency Aung San Suu Kyi

September 5, 2017

Page 2

I recognize that Myanmar continues to face enormous challenges. Congress has welcomed the encouraging reforms that your government is seeking to make. However, these reports of atrocities against the Rohingya in Rakhine State severely undermine past progress and greatly hinder our ability to form a deeper partnership with your government. Simply put, Myanmar will fall far short of your aspirations until the fundamental human rights of all the people of Myanmar, including the Rohingya, are upheld.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Ed Royce". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ed" and last name "Royce" clearly distinguishable.

EDWARD R. ROYCE
Chairman