Call for a Truly Independent Investigation into the Situation in Rakhine State

There are several competing narratives attempting to explain the complicated situation of human rights and communal tensions in Rakhine State.

People from all ethnic and religious backgrounds in Rakhine State have endured decades of persecution and discrimination, and the outbreak of violence in Rakhine State in recent years is the latest chapter in a long history of human rights abuses. Despite concerns voiced by governments and human rights organizations, and despite commissions appointed by President Thein Sein, the situation across Rakhine State continues to worsen, and tensions continue to rise.

Many abuses happening in Rakhine State have also occurred in other parts of the country. However, the situation in Rakhine State has dominated the international community’s attention on Myanmar, diverting attention away from other ongoing human rights problems in the country.

Furthermore, we believe the situation in Rakhine State presents an obstacle for the development of Myanmar, and we are concerned that the situation will create obstacles for the new government.
For these reasons and others, we, the undersigned organizations, recommend an international and truly independent investigation into the situation in Rakhine State. Specifically, we recommend a commission of inquiry to fully assess the totality of the situation in Rakhine State and provide clear recommendations for the current government to effectively address and prevent further problems in Rakhine State.

We believe that a truly independent investigation would help Myanmar overcome the complicated problems in Rakhine State, and help re-balance the world’s focus on the overall human rights challenges faced by all the people of Myanmar.

We believe this will help the overall situation of human rights in Myanmar.

Signatories

1. Action Committee for Democracy Development (ACDD)
2. Action Group on Monitoring Communal Tension
3. Association of Human Rights Defenders and Promoters - HRDP
4. Bridging Rural Integrated Development and Grassroots Empowerment (BRIDGE)
5. Burmese Women's Union
6. C.T.U.M-Mandalay
7. Capacity Development Trainers Network (Mandalay)
8. Center for Youth and Social Harmony (CYSH)
10. Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO)
11. Coexist Myanmar
12. Election Observers Network - Mandalay (E.O.M-M)
13. Farmer Rights and Development Organization
14. Farmer Union (Magway Region)
15. Forum for Democracy in Burma (FDB)
16. Future Bright Library
17. Green Future Environmental Activities Group
18. Green Network Sustainable Environment Group
19. Hands of Unity Group
20. Human Rights Working Group (Myanmar)
21. Humanity Institute
22. Kachin Women's Association Thailand
23. ME Community Development Center
24. Magway EITI Watch Group
25. Mandalay Social Network
26. Metta-Campaign (Mandalay)
27. Metta-Campaign - Youth (Mandalay)
28. Network for Democracy and Development (NDD)
29. Nyein Chan Yar
30. Organic Agro and Farmer Affair Development Group
31. Progressive Voice (PV)
32. Rainbow Organization (Singu-Township)
33. Smile Education and Development Foundation
34. Women’s League of Burma (WLB)
35. Women Peace Network-Arakan (WPNA)
36. Yangon School of Political Science (YSPS)
37. Youth Current Group
38. Youth Pacemaker Organization
39. Yway Lat Yar Institute
40. 88 Open-Society Committee (Mandalay)