



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CANADA DECLARES “GENOCIDE” IN BURMA

The Canadian government officially designates the massacre and mass displacement of the Rohingya a genocide

(Toronto, Canada, 9/20/2018) – Today the Canadian Government officially declared the persecution of the Rohingya in Myanmar to be a genocide. Canada is the first country to make the declaration, which came in the wake of mounting evidence that seems to prove, beyond any reasonable doubt, that the actions of the Myanmar military constitute genocidal crimes against a largely defenseless, innocent population.

Just this week, the United Nations International Fact-Finding Mission in Myanmar released a detailed report documenting the full extent of the military's crimes. According to the report, the Myanmar military, which is known as the Tatmadaw, has systematically engaged in a bloody campaign of terror and murder against the native Rohingya population of Myanmar's Rakhine State. It adds its findings to dozens of similar reports by other human rights and humanitarian agencies who have also concluded that, by any reasonable standard, the actions of the regime must be classified as genocide.

“This is a significant milestone for the cause of the Rohingya,” said Ahmed Ramadan, Executive Director of Burma Task Force Canada. “This official declaration of genocide reflects the Canadian Government's forward-thinking leadership on this issue when so many others have dragged their feet. Working with the Canadian government on this issue has been an honor and humbling, and I've seen real concern reflected in their dedication, from the over \$300 million they have pledged to the targeted sanctions they've placed, to now declaring it the ultimate crime, genocide. Sincere and huge thanks go out to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, MPs Iqra Khalid, Omar Alghabra, Gary Anandasangaree, Minister Freeland, the Honourable Bob Rae, and many more that have shown genuine concern, leadership, and commitment.”

“This is a major breakthrough for the Rohingya people,” Ramadan added.

Burma Task Force is the only organization dedicated full-time to ending the genocide in Burma. Founded in 2012, it advocates for the Rohingya in the media, government, and civil society organizations, pushing for a genuine resolution that would restore citizenship to the Rohingya and allow for a safe return to their ancestral homelands. “This is a tremendous achievement that reflects the tireless work of countless friends of the Rohingya the world over,” said Abdul Malik Mujahid, Chair of Burma Task Force USA. “It is a great step, but we must not become complacent. The U.S. government should follow Canada's lead in declaring this catastrophe a genocide so that, finally, justice and a humane future can be secured for the Rohingya.”

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“We thank Canada and Canadians for their leadership to end the genocide but it doesn’t end yet,” said Saifullah Rohin, Director of the Canadian Rohingya Development Initiative. “Now, we call on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Minister Freeland to call an emergency meeting of concerned governments and leaders to explore concrete measures designed to end the ongoing genocide and other protection mechanisms - with or without Security Council consensus.”

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Founded in 2012 and representing a coalition of 38 U.S. and Canadian Organizations, Burma Task Force is the only organization fully dedicated to ending the genocide in Myanmar.