

Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
attn. Minister of Foreign Affairs Bert Koenders  
Bezuidenhoutseweg 67  
2594 AC DEN HAAG  
The Netherlands



Thursday, March 9<sup>th</sup> 2017

Subject: the Netherlands should support a UN Commission of Inquiry into Myanmar

Dear Minister of Foreign Affairs Bert Koenders,

On November 29th 2016, resolution 34550-V-38 from Dutch MP Tunahan Kuzu was accepted by the Dutch parliament with 136 out of 150 votes. The resolution asks the Dutch government to step up its political pressure on Myanmar via the European Union and the United Nations in order to improve the situation of the Rohingya.

The almost unanimous support for this resolution is no surprise. According to research conducted by the Early Warning Project nowhere on earth the risk of genocide is bigger than for the Rohingya in Myanmar. Various international human rights organizations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Fortify Rights and more have repeatedly reported mass atrocities committed against the Rohingya population in Myanmar. In fact, you explicitly stated before the voting took place that you strongly appreciate the importance of this matter.

The moment to act is now. I write to urge you to request the Dutch representatives at the UN to support calls by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, for the establishment by the UN Human Rights Council during its 34th session of a **Commission of Inquiry** to investigate alleged and apparent serious human rights violations and abuses against the Rohingya population in Rakhine State, Myanmar.

Dutch support for the call for an Commission of Inquiry would be the best way to adhere to the request from the Dutch parliament in the before mentioned resolution.

Myanmar has repeatedly stated it launched its own commissions to investigate the situation in Rakhine State. Regrettably, all of them lacked the independence, impartiality, human rights and technical expertise, and mandate necessary to conduct a credible and effective investigation. There is no reason to believe the country is willing and/or able to perform an independent and trustworthy analysis on alleged crimes committed by its military and police forces against the Rohingya.

Nobody – including our organization – wishes to alienate Myanmar from the international community. At the same time, we must understand that being a friend does not only mean to enjoin in celebration after success has been achieved, but also to prevent one another from committing grave mistakes. A UN-led Commission of Inquiry is not an act of aggression one would expect from an enemy, but much rather it is an act of involvement and mutual desire for justice one would expect from a friend. We must act now.

Kind regards,

Nourdeen Wildeman  
Chairman  
as-Salaamah wal'Adaalah Foundation  
the Netherlands