



Press Release

1. It is regrettable that Malaysia, a fellow ASEAN member, considers it fit to convene an extraordinary session of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to take up Myanmar's Rakhine Issue.
2. Malaysia's concern regarding the situation in Rakhine State is no doubt based on prodigious media reports alleging dire human rights situations as well as deliberate misinterpretation of the situations obtaining on the ground. What is more regrettable is that the sensitive issue has been exploited to promote a certain political agenda.
3. Malaysia's action disregards the genuine efforts being made by the Myanmar Government to address the issue. There is no attempt to persecute a community on grounds of religion. The Government has been endeavouring to safeguard lives and ensure the security of the people from the violent attacks of new extremists. The Government has instructed security personnel to strictly adhere to the laws and exercise maximum restraint.
4. It is disturbing to note that the OIC meeting held in Kuala Lumpur on 19 January 2017 failed to acknowledge that the situation was a direct result of the well planned and coordinated attacks on police outposts in the northern Rakhine State on 9 October 2016 by extremist elements both funded and inspired from abroad. It resulted in the loss of lives of 9 police officers and large cache of arms and ammunition.
5. No one is more concerned about peace and stability of Rakhine State than the Government and the people of Myanmar. The Government is genuinely committed to resolve this issue and ensure that security

prevails in Rakhine State. All necessary steps are being taken. The Government is focused on finding practical means to solving the issue and has constituted a number of mechanisms to comprehensively address the issue. They include the establishment of the Central Committee on Implementation of Peace, Stability and Development of Rakhine State with four Working Committees focusing on the relevant areas, including the citizenship verification process. In addition, the Rakhine Advisory Committee headed by Dr. Kofi Annan has been set up to buttress Myanmar's efforts and help find a solution to the long standing issue. An investigation commission headed by a Vice President has also been formed to look into the causes of recent incidents and the allegations. With the improvement of the security situation, the areas of humanitarian access have been gradually expanded.

6. The interest of the two communities in Rakhine State will be best served by focusing on lasting solutions to the issue rather than asserting undue external pressure. Such action would only make a complicated issue worse. It is essential that the international community lends their understanding and extends cooperation to the Myanmar Government in addressing the issue of Rakhine State.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Nay Pyi Taw

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