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EU condemns outbreak of violence in Rakhine and supports Rohingya refugees



EU High Representative Mogherini on 14 September reiterated the EU's position that the violence in Myanmar, which is causing a flood of Rohingya refugees into Bangladesh, is unacceptable. Mogherini called on the Myanmar leadership to show that democracy is for all beyond ethnic, social and religious boundaries.

EU High Representative Frederica Mogherini on 14 September participated in an urgency debate on Myanmar in the European Parliament in Strasbourg, condemning the violence and outlining the European Union's efforts to bring an end to the conflicts in the Rakhine State and provide emergency support for the refugees.

"Human rights must be respected and humanitarian aid should be brought to those in difficulty, urgently. There are 350,000 vulnerable people in Rakhine: they need to be urgently reached by humanitarian aid workers. For many of them, this is a matter of life and death," said Mogherini.

As an immediate response to the current situation, the European Union has decided to increase its support to Bangladesh with another €3 million on top of the €2 million aid already provided to Myanmar and Bangladesh together. This additional funding will help provide emergency shelter, water, food and health assistance for newly arrived refugees in Bangladesh and in Myanmar, as soon as humanitarian access to the latter is restored. This new funding will be channelled impartially by international NGOs, the United Nations or the Red Cross to the affected populations.

Mogherini recalled that EU condemned already the attacks by Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army but is also very much aware and concerned about the excesses during the security operations conducted by Myanmar's security forces, which led to a massive flow of refugees into Bangladesh and could destabilise the wider region. The EU has a responsibility to work on the political scene to determine the status of the Rohingya minority in Myanmar and to address the structural issues of Rakhine underdevelopment. "We will continue to work with everyone involved to find lasting peace in Myanmar, to the benefit of the whole population," declared Mogherini.

The High Representative underlined that in her recent consultations with Burmese leader Aung San Suu Kyi, the implementation of the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State, headed by Kofi Annan were clearly mentioned as a the point of reference to stabilise the situation in the region. Mogherini stated that the Government of Myanmar should make stronger its cooperation with the United Nations, including the option to deploy the UN Human Rights Council's Independent Fact-Finding Mission on the ground.

"During Myanmar's fight for democracy, the international community and Europe never left the people of Myanmar alone and we will not leave them alone now" said High Representative, concluding her speech in Strasbourg.

See also

Speech by the HR/VP at the European Parliament urgent debate on Myanmar, in particular the situation of Rohingyas

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