



Ministerial to Advance **RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

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Statement on Burma

As representatives of the international community, we stand together in expressing deep concern about ongoing restrictions on religious freedom, including those on members of minority ethnic and religious groups in Burma. We call on authorities to pursue accountability and uphold equal rights for all. Many Burmese religious minorities – including Muslims, Christians, and Hindus – face discrimination because of their beliefs.

We are appalled by the ethnic cleansing of Rohingya in northern Rakhine State, where Burmese security forces and others have engaged in shocking and brutal violence that caused more than 700,000 Rohingya to flee to Bangladesh and many others to be displaced within Burma. The government continues to restrict access to citizenship and freedom of movement for Rohingya who remain in Rakhine State. We are also deeply concerned by the widespread reports of human right violations committed by the military in Kachin and Shan States, which have contributed to the displacement of more than 100,000 members of ethnic minorities. In other regions, religious minority communities have reported that authorities have unduly restricted religious practice and travel, destroyed religious property and texts, denied or failed to approve permits for religious buildings and renovations, and discriminated in public employment.

We urge Burmese authorities to protect the religious freedom of all in Burma, hold accountable those responsible for abuses, provide unhindered humanitarian access to all in need, and ensure equal protection under the law for all. In Rakhine State, we call upon Burmese authorities to create conditions so that those displaced are able to return to their places of origin voluntarily, and with safety, security, and dignity.

Co-Signatories: Bangladesh, Canada, Djibouti, Oman, Jordan, Kosovo, Tunisia, UAE, United Kingdom, United States of America