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Agenda item 2

**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner  
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the  
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

**Situation of human rights of Rohingya Muslims and other  
minorities in Myanmar**

**Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights\***

*Summary*

The present report, prepared pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 53/26 and 56/1, presents findings based on the monitoring and verification activities conducted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the implementation of the recommendations made by the independent international fact-finding mission on Myanmar, including those on accountability, and on progress in the situation of human rights in Myanmar, including of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities.

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\* The present report was submitted to the conference services for processing after the deadline so as to include the most recent information.

## I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 53/26, the Human Rights Council requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to monitor and follow up on the implementation of the recommendations made by the independent international fact-finding mission on Myanmar, including those on accountability, and to continue to track progress in the situation of human rights in Myanmar, including of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities, and to present a report to the Council at its fifty-ninth session. In its resolution 56/1, the Council requested the High Commissioner to present that report at its sixtieth session.

2. The report presents findings from monitoring and verification activities conducted remotely by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) between 1 April 2024 and 31 May 2025. During the reporting period, limitations on financial resources affected the capacity of the Office to gather and verify information to the applicable standard, limiting the number of incidents and patterns of violations that could be reflected in the report. Reference is made to previous reports, where appropriate.

## II. Methodology

3. To verify allegations of violations and abuses of human rights and other grave breaches of international law committed by all parties, OHCHR conducted 289 interviews with victims and witnesses and held regular consultations with local and international organizations, United Nations entities, thematic experts and others. OHCHR analysed other available primary sources, such as satellite images and official documents, and systematically monitored the media and social media. OHCHR submitted questionnaires to the Myanmar military, the National Unity Government and several ethnic armed organizations to ensure that all parties had the opportunity to express their views. Inputs were analysed and attributed in the report when incorporated.

4. Accounting for grave protection concerns, OHCHR prioritized full respect for the “do no harm” principle over other considerations. Factual determinations of incidents and patterns were made where there were reasonable grounds to believe that relevant incidents had occurred. The figures of verified deaths represent an underestimation of realities on the ground, as military-imposed Internet shutdowns and other restrictions hampered the ability to document fully all violations.

## III. Human rights situation in Myanmar

### A. Conflict-related developments

5. Over the four years since the military coup, escalating violence continued to take an insufferable toll on the civilian population. According to credible sources,<sup>1</sup> as at 31 May 2025, the military had killed a minimum of 6,764 civilians over that time period, including 1,409 women and 810 children. The military had arrested 29,209 individuals on political grounds, of whom 22,074 remained in detention, including 4,234 women and 235 children. Military-controlled courts had sentenced 172 detainees to death without respect for due process, fair trial rights or judicial guarantees of independence.

6. Despite calls by the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations for the de-escalation of violence, the military reportedly continued to carry out killings, disappearances, arbitrary deprivations of liberty and the conscription of civilians.<sup>2</sup> Reflecting a trend that emerged during the reporting period, OHCHR received 26 allegations of the use of chemicals, including fertilizers, attached to explosive devices in six states and regions, with 22 incidents reported in Shan State.

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://aappb.org>.

<sup>2</sup> See [A/HRC/54/59](#) and [A/HRC/56/23](#).

7. Natural disasters, including flooding and landslides caused by Typhoon Yagi in September 2024 and the earthquake that struck central Myanmar on 28 March 2025, compounded already widespread and systematic human rights violations in the context of armed conflict.<sup>3</sup> In September 2024, over 440 people died in floods that displaced over one million across 70 townships, causing widespread devastation to communities, crops, farmland and livestock. In March 2025, the earthquake caused nearly 4,000 deaths across central Myanmar. Despite the destruction, the military – without taking precautions to protect civilians – persistently launched air strikes and heavy weapons in civilian-inhabited and earthquake-affected areas, despite its announcement of temporary ceasefires in April and May 2025 to allow for rescue operations. Military forces had reportedly launched over 550 attacks as at 31 May 2025 and open sources indicated that, since the earthquake, over 481 civilians had been killed in military attacks. Credible sources verified 285 civilian deaths. Emblematic of that trend was the launch by the military of an air strike on 15 April in Kanni village, Kawkareik Township, Kayin State, which severely damaged a Buddhist monastery, killing six civilians, including four children, and wounding over 20 others. In that and numerous other incidents, OHCHR found no information justifying the air strike. The military persisted<sup>4</sup> in restricting humanitarian access to earthquake-affected communities in areas outside of their control and in ethnic minority areas.

8. Increased military reliance on air strikes continued to result in civilian casualties.<sup>5</sup> Credible sources indicated that nearly half of all verified civilian deaths occurring during the reporting period – 838 out of 1,811 civilians killed – were directly caused by aerial attacks. While 2024 was the deadliest year for civilians due to air strikes, with 642 verified deaths, by the end of May 2025, the total number of civilians killed had already surpassed the previous year's total by more than 67 per cent. A comparative analysis of the available figures highlighted that aerial attacks had increased by 63 per cent in the second half of the reporting period, with 1,665 incidents compared with 1,057 incidents in the first half.

9. In another concerning development, the military began deploying armed paramotors, which are powered tricycle paragliders with the capacity to carry up to three passengers and 120 mm mortar rounds. The aerial vehicles, traditionally used in reconnaissance, have been increasingly used to launch attacks, operating virtually silently as pilots drop munitions from high elevations without any capacity for precision targeting. Since December 2024, open sources have reported about 137 such incidents, the vast majority in areas within range of airbases. Some 46 attacks occurred in areas affected by the earthquake. Several such attacks also occurred in Rakhine and Chin States. Although their claims have not yet been verified, media sources reported that at least 81 civilians, including 19 women and 7 children, had been killed after munitions dropped by paramotors struck markets, houses, monasteries, hospitals and schools. Exemplifying protection concerns, on 10 May, in Thone Pan Hla village, Chaung-U Township, Sagaing Region, a paramotor bombed a civilian residential area where no clashes were occurring, killing three civilians, including a 12-year-old boy and injuring a woman and a 5-year-old girl.

## **B. Emblematic incidents**

10. Among the numerous documented incidents, the report presents four that exemplify patterns relating to the protection of civilians and the daily fears that civilians faced throughout the country as homes, villages, schools and camps for displaced persons were systematically targeted.

### **1. Si Par village, Budalin Township, Sagaing Region**

11. In the early hours of 17 October 2024, the military entered Si Par village as villagers prepared to celebrate a Buddhist holiday, prompting several residents to flee. Soldiers

<sup>3</sup> Across Myanmar, 288 townships reported experiencing tremors of 4.0 or higher intensity on the Richter scale.

<sup>4</sup> See [A/HRC/53/52](#).

<sup>5</sup> [A/HRC/59/57](#), para. 54.

promptly detained those who had remained behind or who were unable to flee, including older persons and persons with disabilities.

12. On 19 October 2024, after the withdrawal of the military, villagers began to return and described what they found as “carnage”. Six civilian men had been killed, some shot in the head or chest, and some displayed signs of brutal violence. Witnesses described seeing three male bodies that had been beheaded and eviscerated, with some body parts charred and either left in piles or spread across the village. One villager recounted: “They chopped the bodies like when we chop the chicken. The head, the legs, the arms, and they also opened their stomachs. The heart was put on a plate.” Photos received by OHCHR confirmed the accounts of carnage. Some 20 houses had also been torched. Interviewees stated that the village could not return to normal life after the incident and many villagers remain displaced at the time of writing.

13. While witnesses attributed the acts to soldiers from the Northwestern Regional Military Command, the military confirmed the raid to OHCHR but denied responsibility for the killings, stating that anti-military armed groups had “returned to the village on 18 October 2024 and brutally killed six villagers” as “punishment for being alleged informers to security forces”. According to the National Unity Government, “soldiers from Infantry Battalion 89 under Division No. 33” were responsible for the incident and for killings in nearby Aing Paung Chaung village on 18 October 2024 and Sai Pyin Lay village on 19 October 2024.

## **2. Let Pan Hla village, Singu Township, Mandalay Region**

14. On 14 March 2025, in Let Pan Hla village, the military carried out an air strike on a local market, killing at least 27 civilians, including 3 children, one of whom was 2 years old, and wounding some 30 civilians.

15. According to witnesses, a jet fighter circled the area before dropping two 500-lb bombs on the crowded market. One witness stated, “I knew they were going to bomb looking at how they flew, diving down and going up again multiple times”. Interviewees described the aftermath as chaotic, with market stalls on fire and people screaming. One interviewee stated: “some bodies had their stomachs out, others had big holes in their backs from shrapnel. You could see human remains and body parts within the flames.”

16. Interviewees reported that anti-military armed groups had not been in the area at the time of the attack. The attacks also reflected the long-established pattern of the military’s use of air power against civilian targets as a means of engendering fear and breaking the morale of those resisting the military’s superior firepower. Villagers also noted that the site of the attack was easily identifiable on National Highway 31 as “a lot of [civilian] buses stop here to get food and travel to Mogok, it is a very crowded area”. The military did not provide information related to the incident, despite the request of OHCHR.

## **3. Oe Htein Kwin village, Tabayin Township, Sagaing Region**

17. At around 9.30 a.m. on 12 May 2025, an air strike struck a school, killing 24 civilians, including 16 girls, 6 boys and 2 female teachers, and injuring dozens. Witnesses indicated that an aircraft had circled the village before releasing two bombs, with one hitting a tree and the other destroying the school. One witness recounted: “The rooftop was completely gone, external walls had a lot of damage. There were four classrooms, all were destroyed except the roof of the last room.” An analysis of pictures and videos received by OHCHR corroborated witness accounts.

18. Multiple sources attributed the attack to the military, reporting that the plane had taken off from the Meiktila airbase. Military-affiliated news outlets denied the air strike, however, insinuating – without corroboration – that the explosion had resulted from the school’s use as a factory to make landmines. Conversely, an analysis by credible sources of on-site photos of remnants found two damaged tail fins from unguided air-delivered ordnance consistent with other air strike incidents.<sup>6</sup> Interviewees attested that no anti-military armed groups had been present at the time in the village.

<sup>6</sup> See <https://www.info-res.org/reports/conflicting-claims-an-analysis-of-the-tabayin-school-airstrike>.

19. While the motivations for the attack remain unclear, sources indicated that the military regularly targeted public administration sites, including schools, with the effect of instilling fear in the general public. There was already an established pattern of military attacks against schools, with over 640 instances since 2021.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, the National Unity Government has shut down several schools in its territories as a means of preventing further deaths among children.

#### 4. La Ei village, Pekon Township, Shan State

20. Between September 2024 and May 2025, the military bombed, on three separate occasions, a camp for displaced persons, commonly referred to as the “Bangkok camp”, at the border between Shan and Kayah States. An analysis of available information revealed no discernible military objective, reported fighting or the presence of anti-military armed groups in the vicinity to justify the attacks. Although OHCHR requested information, the military provided no response.

21. In the incident with the largest number of civilian casualties, on 5 September 2024 at around 9 p.m., two 500-lb bombs struck a residential area,<sup>8</sup> killing at least nine civilians, including three women, three girls and three boys, and wounding nearly 30 others. Photos reinforced accounts from witnesses showing significant destruction and large craters at the site. While some 50 houses were destroyed, the number of casualties was limited, reportedly since families tend to sleep in underground bunkers, evincing the intense fear of air strikes that is ever-present in many communities.

22. On 18 November 2024, two planes dropped four bombs that destroyed a parish priest’s house and a church in the camp, killing one civilian and causing further destruction. Local sources reported that the incident had followed repeated death threats on social media from pro-military accounts against the priest serving in the camp. The military carried out another aerial bombardment on 14 May 2025. Sources indicated that surveillance drones and an aircraft had circled the area before the aircraft dropped two large bombs that damaged two buildings that served as school dormitories and injured one civilian. Residents reported to OHCHR that, at the time of the third incident, only 250 people out of the 600 present before the first incident remained in the camp due to the repeated bombardments, as many people had decided to flee to other locations.

### C. Human rights abuses by anti-military armed groups

23. While not comparable in scale, scope, intensity and brutality with the violations committed by the military, multiple sources raised concerns about abuses perpetrated by anti-military armed groups. Persistent communications shutdowns, security concerns and occasional reports of media gag orders by anti-military groups hampered verification by OHCHR. Occasional reports were received of anti-military groups reportedly launching attacks that destroyed civilian objects, such as schools, with inconsistent warnings to civilians prior to attacks, and using command-detonated roadside bombs and anti-personnel landmines. According to data provided by the military, although not independently verified, anti-military armed groups have been accused of having “claimed the lives of 8,878 civilians including 330 children, 112 teachers, 24 healthcare workers, 121 monks, 2 nuns and 1,208 administrative staffs in different townships” since the coup.

24. Of increasing concern was the trend of anti-military armed groups conducting targeted killings of individuals suspected of association with the military, particularly killings of civil servants, including in their homes or in tea shops or restaurants. Anti-military groups frequently claimed responsibility for such incidents and OHCHR recorded 169 reports of killings of administrators, their family members and other civilians, including religious personnel, by anti-military armed groups from eight states and regions. Bago, Magway and

<sup>7</sup> See <https://data.humdata.org/dataset/63605720-f0da-454d-89a6-552f1acc3a53/resource/7203e9a6-daa7-4eb5-9f88-0d03c9bc284a/download/2020-2025-mmr-education-in-danger-incident-data.xlsx>.

<sup>8</sup> See <https://karenihumanrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/KnHRG-Statement-Condemning-Airstrike-in-Pekon-1.pdf>.

Mandalay Regions had the highest number of reported incidents. In one emblematic incident, on 14 February 2025 in Kan Gyi village, Shwebo Township, Sagaing Region, members of an anti-military armed group killed a Catholic priest in the Our Lady of Lourdes church with a sword after accusing him of being a military informant. Responding to OHCHR, the National Unity Government reported that the “alleged perpetrators were detained by PDF Battalion No. 5 in Shwebo District” and that it had established an ad hoc court to investigate the killing. At the time of writing, the court has not issued a sentence.

25. Other reported cases included the deaths of and other abuses against individuals detained by anti-military armed groups, the extensive use of landmines, seizures of land and the violent suppression of peaceful protests against the extraction of natural resources. Complaints were also received with respect to areas under the control of the National Unity Government, including several allegations of corruption and instances of abuse of power by local security forces.

#### **D. Other human rights and associated protection concerns**

26. Beyond such incidents, civilians, especially ethnic minority communities in areas where pervasive fighting continued, remained exposed to multiple human rights violations, abuses and associated protection risks, including through conscription and forced recruitment, arbitrary deprivation of liberty, sexual violence, the denial of humanitarian assistance, particularly during natural disasters, food insecurity and the spread of communicable diseases due to a lack of services and inadequate living conditions. Also of serious concern was the increase in reports of trafficking in persons in relation to scam centres. Such centres are reportedly enabled by entrenched impunity, rampant corruption and a weakened rule of law since the military’s seizure of power. Further investigation and analysis of the impact on the civilian population of the transnational criminal networks that run the centres are needed.

27. Waves of military conscription, which have to date forced an estimated 65,000 young people into military service, have exacerbated protection concerns, causing widespread fear, displacement and negative gender and socioeconomic impacts. Many families increasingly have had to rely for their livelihood on mothers, wives and daughters, who undertake exhausting, low-paid labour in the absence of their husbands and sons – the traditional breadwinners.<sup>9</sup>

28. During the reporting period, fear of conscription led many to flee to areas outside of military control and abroad, while fear of retaliation uprooted whole families, disrupting livelihoods and social cohesion. OHCHR received reports of the military entering villages, rounding up men and arbitrarily arresting them, then releasing those above the conscription age while detaining others, who were either taken to military bases or forced into portering and other duties. Interviewees reported cases of the military threatening or extorting civilians to pay between 7 and 10 million kyats (\$3,300–4,700) to avoid conscription or to secure the release of relatives apprehended for conscription. Mental health impacts on conscripts were also reported, with many feeling that their futures had been stolen, as they had been prevented from pursuing educational or professional opportunities.

29. Concerns for civilians were exacerbated by instances of forced recruitment by ethnic armed organizations in Kachin, Shan and Rakhine States. Interviewees described anti-military armed groups organizing recruitment drives and imposing household quotas for recruits, coupled with punishments for families or communities that refused to comply. Although such policies appeared primarily to target people sharing an armed group’s own ethnic identity, several incidents were reported where individuals from other ethnicities had been forcibly recruited to satisfy recruitment targets.

30. Food insecurity continued to increase, linked to armed conflict, economic instability and natural disasters. An estimated 15.2 million people, nearly a third of the country’s population, were projected to face high levels of acute food insecurity in 2025, a sharp

<sup>9</sup> See <https://ndburma.org/the-enlistment-of-women>, p. 10.

increase from 13.3 million in 2024.<sup>10</sup> That deterioration was the result of compounding shocks, including the devastating impacts of Typhoon Yagi in September 2024 and the March 2025 earthquake, persistent inflation and military operations that have destroyed agricultural lands and displaced millions, disrupting livelihoods across the country.

31. Of utmost concern, food prices soared to record levels. In 2024, the cost of an average diet rose by almost 30 per cent, outpacing wage growth and eroding purchasing power, particularly in urban areas, where poverty rose as food affordability deteriorated, with a drop in real household incomes of 15 per cent in urban areas compared with 4 per cent in rural areas.<sup>11</sup> During the reporting period, rice prices increased by 87 per cent in Chin State, 72 per cent in Shan State and over 50 per cent in Sagaing Region.<sup>12</sup> Limited food accessibility and availability have been most pronounced in the conflict-affected central regions and ethnic states due to restrictions on and challenges regarding transportation, blockades of goods, including agricultural equipment and fertilizers, the presence of landmines and unexploded ordnance and the collapse of market chains.

32. In northern Rakhine and Chin States, logistical disruptions, roadblocks and insecurity cut off entire townships, leading to shortages of such essential goods as rice, cooking oil and animal feed. In Chin State, food accessibility was particularly constrained and prices of such staples as rice, pulses and cooking oil have been the second highest in 2025<sup>13</sup> after Sagaing Region. Transport and logistics issues, including movement restrictions and damaged infrastructure, have made it nearly impossible for many to obtain fresh produce and other staples. Dietary diversity has declined significantly, reflecting diminished access to food and indicating a broader deterioration in socioeconomic conditions. Chin, Rakhine and Kachin States were particularly affected by the erosion of food security, raising serious concerns about the right to health, as malnutrition has particularly detrimental impacts on women and children.

33. Female-headed households were most frequently landless and reliant on daily labour, making them among the most food-insecure groups. Women have reportedly also resorted to negative coping strategies, such as borrowing money, selling assets, reducing food consumption<sup>14</sup> or becoming sex workers, with heightened risks of exploitation. Conflict and displacement have further limited women's access to income-generating opportunities, increasing their vulnerability to abuse, exploitation, gender-based violence and starvation.

34. Humanitarian agencies have estimated that, in 2025, 12.9 million people would require emergency food assistance and 11.5 million would need agricultural and livelihood support. With only 12 per cent of the 2025 United Nations humanitarian response plan funded as of May 2025, humanitarian actors have had to reprioritize and focus only on the most urgent life-saving needs and could reach fewer people in need overall. Continued conflict, political instability ahead of elections planned by the military and the impact of natural disasters risk further deepening the crisis and exacerbating an already critical humanitarian situation.

#### **IV. Human rights situation of Rohingya Muslims**

35. Hostilities in Rakhine State have escalated since November 2023, creating profound protection concerns for communities of all ethnicities, including the Rohingya. According to open sources, at least 1,633 conflict-related incidents occurred during the reporting period, including 409 air strikes and 274 artillery barrages. Credible sources verified 374 civilian casualties, almost certainly an underestimation. Extending its control steadily over nearly all of Rakhine State, the Arakan Army captured the Western Military Command in December 2024 and expanded its offensive into neighbouring Magway, Bago and Ayeyarwady Regions.

<sup>10</sup> See <https://www.fao.org/giews/countrybrief/country.jsp?code=MMR>.

<sup>11</sup> See <https://cgspace.cgiar.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/de1e5461-c020-48ff-bd8f-f567b50c7d56/content>.

<sup>12</sup> See <https://fpma.fao.org/giews/fpmat4/#/dashboard/tool/domestic>.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> World Bank Group, *Myanmar: Agricultural Resilience amid Deepening Food Insecurity*, Agriculture and Food Security Monitoring Report, June 2024, p. 2.

Consistent with identified patterns, the military responded to the territorial losses with aerial, naval and ground attacks, primarily against ethnic Rakhine and Rohingya civilians. Among numerous episodes of retaliation, on 29 May 2024, the military entered Byaing Phyu village, Sittwe Township, rounding up Rakhine civilians whom they suspected of aiding the Arakan Army and killing some 80 people. In addition, they arrested around 300 people and displaced civilians from over 20 surrounding villages. By September 2024, over 240 of those detainees had been sentenced to prison terms under the Unlawful Association Act. As the military lost ground, it also increasingly resorted to aerial attacks against civilians in southern Rakhine State. On 8 January 2025, air strikes on Ramree Island killed at least 26 civilians, including 12 women and 7 children in Kwak Ni Maw village, which is mostly inhabited by ethnic Kaman. Satellite images confirmed that 362 buildings had been destroyed in the attack. Responding to OHCHR, the military confirmed its attack, claiming that the “aircraft observed fire flashes from the target area’s building, confirming the presence of military activity”.

36. In northern Rakhine State, the Rohingya continued to suffer many human rights violations and abuses, some of which were reminiscent of the 2017 atrocities. Both the military and the Arakan Army reportedly carried out air and artillery strikes, resulting in the killing of civilians and the destruction of civilian objects, and killings, enforced disappearances, torture and ill-treatment, arbitrary deprivation of liberty and the damage and destruction, looting and occupation of civilian property, in addition to the forced recruitment of Rohingya. While conflict-related violence affecting the Rohingya has decreased in 2025, the Arakan Army has reportedly perpetrated numerous abuses and violations against the Rohingya with impunity. Conduct by Rohingya armed groups, including the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army, have heightened protection concerns and contributed to widespread fear and further displacement.

37. Pervasive restrictions and surveillance on communications imposed by both parties, including Internet shutdowns and the seizure of mobile phones, hampered deeper investigation into violations and abuses in Rakhine State. As a result, no verifiable figures or estimates of civilian casualties or displacement could be compiled during the reporting period. Claims were received of over 1,000 Rohingya that may have been killed and tens of thousands forced to flee their homes. Rohingya civilians, particularly, were caught between positions of the Arakan Army and of the military, whose forces had included deployments of Rohingya recruits since March 2024. That intentionally and necessarily exacerbated intercommunal tensions and fuelled further violence. Since 12 April 2024, the military have burned hundreds of ethnic Rakhine homes in Buthidaung town, including in Ward 6, and deployed conscripted Rohingya in those operations. As Rakhine-owned homes burned in Buthidaung, the Arakan Army burned surrounding Rohingya villages, with as many as 25 villages burned in the following weeks.<sup>15</sup> In an incident still under investigation, on 15 April 2024 in Buthidaung, the offices and pharmacy of Médecins Sans Frontières were burned along with all medical stock, further depriving people of essential medical services after the closure of hospitals in Maungdaw and Buthidaung.<sup>16</sup> The availability and accessibility of healthcare services continued to decline, with numerous reports received of preventable deaths of children and displaced persons due to the absence of basic services and assistance.

38. Displacement reportedly increased significantly, with Rohingya leaving their homes ahead of clashes or because of targeted violence by the Arakan Army, whose fighters threatened or attacked those who refused to leave, leading to further casualties. According to the United Nations, 350,000 people in Rakhine State and Paletwa Township, Chin State, have been displaced since the resumption of conflict in November 2023,<sup>17</sup> although the real number is believed to be significantly higher. Survivors have faced repeated displacement, moving from village to village, in a desperate search for safety. As humanitarian assistance has been severely limited, survivors have been left to rely exclusively on the support of other Rohingya families.

<sup>15</sup> See <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/they-left-a-trail-of-ash-decoding-the-arakan-armys-arson-attacks-in-the-rohingya-heartland>.

<sup>16</sup> See <https://www.msf.org/msf-office-destroyed-fire-amid-ongoing-violence-rakhine-myanmar>.

<sup>17</sup> See <https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/myanmar-humanitarian-update-no-45-28-march-2025>.



39. In an incident in Htan Shauk Khan village, Buthidaung Township, Rakhine State, on 2 May 2024, in which hundreds of civilian casualties were reported, multiple sources alleged that over 1,000 Rohingya villagers had fled in fear of possible clashes. Witnesses described having been stopped by Arakan Army elements, divided into three groups in paddy fields and fired upon, with the death of scores. One interviewee depicted the scene as “a river of blood. ... I saw shooting. I saw mass killing. It was a lot of guns, people were shot in the legs and chest”. Another survivor recounted the killing of 20 relatives, including 3 children.

40. The situation deteriorated further with the Arakan Army’s offensive to capture Buthidaung town on 17 May 2024 and Maungdaw town in mid-June 2024. In early May, tens of thousands of Rohingya took refuge in Buthidaung town, including in a school downtown reportedly sheltering over 10,000 civilians. On 6 May, artillery shelling reportedly carried out by the Arakan Army hit the school, killing 4 and wounding 15 others. Another attack struck the school on 17 May 2024, after the Arakan Army had captured the town and Rohingya areas, including in Wards 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7, were torched. Interviewees described the burnings of people locked inside houses, summary executions, the targeting of fleeing civilians and disappearances. Rohingya from or displaced to Buthidaung tried to flee towards Maungdaw, but the Arakan Army prevented them from travelling farther. Victims described spending the night along the road with, reportedly, tens of thousands of people. Describing the fear and chaos of the situation, one interviewee stated: “Everyone was crying – father cannot find son, son cannot find father, husband and wife separated, children cannot find their parents. People were crying for the whole night.” In the morning, the Arakan Army forced displaced Rohingya to travel to villages under their control, with accounts of civilians walking all day in searing heat carrying small children and through villages razed to the ground. OHCHR documented killings, arrests, beatings, disappearances, extortion and looting as regular occurrences during that period.

41. In the weeks following the burning of the Rohingya areas of Buthidaung, clashes intensified in Maungdaw Township, killing numerous Rohingya. On 10 June 2024, in Pan Taw Pyin village, an attack by a military helicopter killed at least eight Rohingya, while in Thi Ho Kyun village, a drone attack – that interviewees attributed to the Arakan Army – killed six. Local sources reported that the military had taken up positions in civilian homes, schools, mosques and madrasas and that the subsequent clashes had resulted in numerous Rohingya deaths and property damage. Using drones, the Arakan Army had reportedly killed dozens of Rohingya who had not left their villages. In the morning of 13 July 2024, in Habi Anarwa village, the military carried out an air strike on a Rohingya house, killing eight, including two women and two children. Clashes continued in the surrounding cluster of villages until 24 July 2024, endangering the civilian population, causing a reportedly high number of casualties and extensive destruction and prompting civilians to flee.

42. Such escalation culminated in the reported killing of several hundred Rohingya in Maungdaw at the beginning of August 2024. On 4 August, in Maung Ni ward in southern Maungdaw town, the Arakan Army took over positions abandoned by the military and started killing and wounding scores of civilians through executions and artillery fire. Interviewees stated that, in one incident in Maung Ni village, Arakan Army elements had entered the house of an imam, where eight families, up to 36 people, including 10 women and 18 children, were sheltering. The 36 individuals have not been seen since and their fates are unknown.

43. Multiple sources provided consistent testimony of the events of 5 August 2024 in Maungdaw town, when thousands of Rohingya gathered along the Naf riverbank to the west of the town, hoping to flee the fighting by crossing into Bangladesh. Drone and artillery strikes starting in the late afternoon had resulted in the deaths of possibly hundreds of Rohingya civilians. As one interviewee explained: “those on the way, they were stuck. Those in the village were stuck. And those on the riverbank were also stuck. There were 10,000 to 12,000 people on the riverbank at that time. Many died there. From the place where we were hiding, we could see dead bodies everywhere.” One survivor stated that the boat in which they had been travelling towards Bangladesh had come under drone attack. Forty-six civilians, including three children, had been killed. While the Arakan Army blamed

“extremist Muslim armed groups”,<sup>18</sup> multiple interviewees attributed responsibility to the Arakan Army, stating that attacking drones had come from areas under the Arakan Army’s control, where the military was not present. Drone attacks on fleeing civilians continued on 6 August 2024. One interviewee described having been on a boat with 50 people when it was hit, killing 38 people, including 4 children.

44. After months of atrocities and suffering, the conflict dynamics shifted south and east, leading to a comparative decrease in violence affecting the Rohingya. By May 2025, the military’s control had dwindled to Sittwe and Kyaukpyu, while Rohingya remained exposed to myriad abuses and violations. In an incident on 20 December 2024, three boys between the ages of 13 and 16 went missing while returning from fishing in Kya Kaung Taung, Maungdaw Township, an area under the Arakan Army’s control. Their remains, identified by their clothes, were found two months later. Hopes that the situation of the Rohingya would improve under the Arakan Army as the new duty bearer were shattered, as violence and abuses against Rohingya civilians continued routinely, including through widespread arrests under the pretext of searching for alleged members of Rohingya armed groups. While in April and May 2025, sources reported initial returns of the displaced to certain areas of origin, the majority of Rohingya remained displaced, with estimates indicating at least 80,000 in northern Rakhine State. On 26 April 2025, 18 families who had left Bangladesh to return to Maungdaw were arrested upon their arrival in their village by the Arakan Army. As of May 2025, they remained detained in Maungdaw. That and similar accounts have contributed to increased levels of fear among displaced Rohingya and are likely to have deterred other families from returning from Bangladesh.

45. Reports were received implicating all parties active in the Rakhine conflict in the conscription, forced recruitment and use of Rohingya, including children, in combat and supporting roles, such as portering, but there was no comprehensive data to assess its full extent or impact.

46. The military recruited Rohingya as part of their conscription process, despite refusing to recognize their citizenship rights. Some joined voluntarily, following enticements by the military promising to grant recruits citizenship and other benefits. Those promises have remained unfulfilled. By using Rohingya, the military preserved its own troops while hindering Arakan Army advances and ignited interethnic tensions that may have long-term repercussions. As the military retreated to Sittwe, it recruited Rohingya from camps and villages in and around the capital of Rakhine State, with sources reporting that each village had had to provide up to 30 recruits per month. Individuals of conscription age who refused to serve in the military faced beatings, the forced removal from villages and arrest. Reportedly, some Rohingya had been spared conscription by paying large sums. Forced recruitment was also carried out by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army through threats and abductions of young Rohingya people. Interviewees also reported abductions in Bangladesh by the Rohingya Solidarity Organization, including of children, to be deployed alongside the military in Rakhine.

47. Although the Arakan Army unequivocally stated to OHCHR that “the AA has never forcibly recruited anyone in Arakan”, credible reports of forced recruitment were received from camps in Sittwe in December 2024 and from Buthidaung, Maungdaw, Pauktaw, Kyauktaw, Mrauk-U, Minbya and Myebon during the reporting period. Newly arrived Rohingya in Bangladesh cited forced recruitment as a key reason for their decision to flee. Arakan Army fighters reportedly subjected Rohingya villages to recruitment quotas and interviewees expressed fears that non-compliance could lead to punishment, including displacement. Arbitrary deprivation of liberty and the use of torture and ill-treatment in the forced recruitment process, justified by allegations of links with Rohingya armed groups, were repeatedly reported. Survivors described harrowing experiences of torture and ill-treatment in Arakan Army custody, including in Buthidaung prison, ranging from beatings, the burning of body parts and mutilations to forced labour. In several cases, relatives of those deprived of liberty received no information on the fate and whereabouts of detainees.

<sup>18</sup> See United League of Arakan, statement No. 16/2024, 7 August 2024, available at <https://www.arakanarmy.net/post/statement-10>.

Following their release, individuals recalled horrific detention conditions, with overcrowding and the presence of minors among the detained adult population as further key concerns.

48. On 8 December 2024 in Ka Nyin Tan village, after the last battle before taking Maungdaw, the Arakan Army captured several soldiers and Rohingya recruits and reportedly burned them alive. Satellite images corroborated the presence of fire at the location as described.<sup>19</sup> According to the interviewee, over 50 Rohingya hors de combat were subsequently moved to a nearby school, where they were reportedly beaten severely before being executed. Bodies were allegedly piled up and abandoned in a roadside drain nearby. No information is available about the fate of the soldiers.

49. Heightened protection concerns and soaring humanitarian needs were exacerbated by repeated instances of displacement and critically contributed to the deterioration of the human rights situation. Due to military-imposed restrictions aimed at preventing deliveries of food and other items to Rakhine State, Rohingya were also affected by food insecurity and hunger, and forced to survive in the absence of any support other than within the Rohingya community. Reports were received of deaths resulting from a lack of food, medicine and drinking water. While warnings on possible risks of famine have not been realized,<sup>20</sup> many Rohingya in camps and in northern Rakhine State continued to face emergency levels of food insecurity requiring immediate attention and assistance. Inadequate living conditions and a lack of access to healthcare resulted in the spread of skin infections and transferable diseases, including scabies, diarrhoea, hepatitis and malaria. In camps in Sittwe, the situation worsened due to acute shortages of food and medicine, high inflation, a lack of livelihood opportunities and insufficient humanitarian assistance compared to the actual needs. Accounts were also received of attempted suicides alongside reports of other harmful coping strategies, such as limiting daily food intake and accepting poor working conditions, reflecting the profound desperation of Rohingya civilians.

50. Although the Arakan Army stated to OHCHR that it “treats all communities equally under the same policy”, restrictions on the rights and freedoms of Rohingya imposed by previous Governments remained in place. Like the military, the Arakan Army persisted in denying the Rohingya identity by referring to them as “Bengalis” or “muslims”. OHCHR has documented continued restrictions on movements, including the imposition of night curfews, with a negative effect on religious practices, livelihood opportunities, such as limiting fishing licences and imposing exorbitant fees for letters of permission from administrators to leave villages, and communication, including through surveillance and the seizures of phones. Interviewees in northern Rakhine State said that Rohingya were only permitted to use vendor-owned phones to make calls, with the vendors required to provide recordings of calls to the Arakan Army.

51. Those desperate conditions and the persistent state of fear and insecurity continued to compel Rohingya to attempt to flee abroad, often with tragic results. Hundreds of Rohingya, if not thousands, left Pauktaw and Kyauktaw in 2025, quite possibly trying to reach Malaysia or Thailand. On 12 February 2025, in Ye Township, Mon State, the military opened fire on a boat carrying Rohingya, killing six people. Their bodies were found ashore the following morning. Rohingya travelling on foot to Bangladesh are at risk of becoming victims of shootings, drone attacks, landmines, unexploded ordnance and trafficking in persons. Rohingya in Bangladesh reported having had to pay fees of up to 2.5 million kyats (approximately \$1,200) to Arakan Army personnel and to smugglers associated with them to flee. While United Nations figures estimate that 118,000 Rohingya have fled to Bangladesh since November 2023,<sup>21</sup> local sources indicated that the numbers may be twice as high.

52. Departures at sea, including from Bangladesh, continued to result in tragic Rohingya deaths. United Nations figures indicate that at least 9,000 individuals attempted to flee Myanmar by boat in 2024, more than doubling the 2023 figure, and that 650 were reported dead or missing,<sup>22</sup> evoking the 2015 Andaman crisis.<sup>23</sup> Between 3 and 5 January, some 460

<sup>19</sup> See <https://firms.modaps.eosdis.nasa.gov/map/#d:2024-12-08;@92.37,20.82,14.00z>.

<sup>20</sup> See <https://www.undp.org/asia-pacific/publications/rakhine-a-famine-in-the-making>.

<sup>21</sup> See <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/116480> (accessed on 19 May 2025).

<sup>22</sup> See <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/114965>.

<sup>23</sup> See <https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/05/26/10-years-rohingya-refugees-stranded-sea>.

Rohingya were tracked arriving in Malaysia and Indonesia.<sup>24</sup> In the largest maritime tragedy of 2025, on 9 May, two boats carrying 514 people capsized and at least 427 Rohingya perished.<sup>25</sup> Confirming the rising trend of departures, by the end of May, the number of Rohingya who had attempted perilous sea trips in 2025 had already surpassed 3,000. In May 2025, credible reports indicated that an Indian naval vessel had transported approximately 40 Rohingya to a point off the southern coast of Myanmar in the Andaman Sea and forced the passengers to disembark and swim ashore.<sup>26</sup> The refouled Rohingya were then stranded in Tanintharyi, where they were taken into the custody of an armed group operating there.

53. Some developments on accountability at the international level occurred during the reporting period. In November 2024, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court applied for an arrest warrant against Min Aung Hlaing, the military's Commander-in-Chief, indicating that more applications would follow. The application remained pending before the Pre-Trial Chamber.<sup>27</sup> At the International Court of Justice, primary written proceedings between the parties in the case between the Gambia and Myanmar concluded. The Court declared admissible in the proceedings the interventions of 11 further States, in respect of the most recent 4, of which submissions were fixed for September 2025.<sup>28</sup> On 13 February 2025, a court in Argentina issued arrest warrants under principles of universal jurisdiction recognized in Argentine law.<sup>29</sup> While those were welcome steps, civil society members and interviewees continued to call for broader and more decisive efforts, including the referral of the entire situation in Myanmar to the International Criminal Court.

## V. Conclusions and recommendations

54. As documented in previous reports, the human rights crisis in Myanmar has steadily worsened, even while attention to the crisis in the media and in political spheres has waned. The liquidity crisis affecting the United Nations and reduced donor support have greatly limited the capacity of the Office in compiling the present and other recent reports and have restricted its ability to follow up reports with tangible actions in support of protection, good governance, accountability and civic space. Without improved funding of the Office's work on Myanmar, such reports may not be possible, as the verification of information requires resources and time to ensure accuracy and impartiality.

55. The devastating toll on the civilian population continued, with widespread and systematic patterns of indiscriminate attacks by the military on civilians and protected objects, forced displacements, forced recruitment, disappearances, arbitrary arrests, arson and property destruction, the denial of humanitarian assistance and repeated atrocities aimed at terrorizing the people of Myanmar. Military forces further escalated their reliance on air strikes, including by using drones and paramotors, and on heavy weaponry in civilian-inhabited areas, often targeting schools, markets, religious sites and camps for displaced persons. Disregard for the protection of civilians by the military became even more starkly evident after the earthquake that struck Myanmar on 28 March 2025. Despite declaring a unilateral ceasefire, the military persisted in bombing and attacking civilians in earthquake-affected areas and across the country. As in the aftermath of previous natural disasters, the military also acted to deny humanitarian access, particularly in areas outside of their control, heightening

<sup>24</sup> See [https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/myanmar?\\_kx=pySQ9eMlle8Wwy80YnHU3cXJTM8dzbzZxiIW30UT6NU.WPtBYy](https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/myanmar?_kx=pySQ9eMlle8Wwy80YnHU3cXJTM8dzbzZxiIW30UT6NU.WPtBYy).

<sup>25</sup> See <https://www.unhcr.org/news/press-releases/unhcr-fears-extreme-desperation-led-deaths-427-rohingya-sea>.

<sup>26</sup> See OHCHR, "Alarmed by reports of Rohingya cast into the sea from Indian navy vessels, UN expert launches inquiry of 'unconscionable, unacceptable acts'", 15 May 2025.

<sup>27</sup> See <https://www.icc-cpi.int/bangladesh-myanmar>.

<sup>28</sup> See <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/178>.

<sup>29</sup> See <https://brouk.org.uk/argentina-court-issues-international-arrest-warrant-for-min-aung-hlaing-a-historic-step-towards-justice-for-rohingya-genocide-2>.

protection concerns and humanitarian needs, with women and children disproportionately affected.

56. Escalations of hostilities in Rakhine State resulted in numerous civilian deaths and hundreds of thousands displaced, with a large portion suffering from repeated instances of displacement. Videos and photos from the first part of the reporting period showed death, destruction and desperation, similar to images from 2017. During that period, members of the Rohingya community were caught between the military and the Arakan Army and systematically abused by both parties. As the Arakan Army took control of northern Rakhine, it became the main perpetrator of human rights abuses against the Rohingya. Killings, forced recruitment, displacement, disappearances, arrests, burnings, extortion, looting and the occupation of properties occurred regularly across northern Rakhine, causing hundreds of deaths and immense suffering. Due to military blockades, humanitarian access remained severely restricted and basic needs, such as food, medicine and shelter, largely unmet. That aggravated the situation of all communities and that of the Rohingya in particular, who struggled to survive while facing emergency levels of food insecurity.

57. While different in scale and intensity, civilians in Myanmar faced violations and abuses by anti-military armed groups, including extrajudicial killings of individuals perceived to be affiliated with the military, indiscriminate attacks, including through the use of landmines, resulting in civilian deaths and damage to or the destruction of protected objects, and forced recruitment.

58. All parties acted with near complete impunity, enabling the recurrence of violations in an endless cycle of suffering for the civilian population. In the light of the above findings, the High Commissioner reiterates his previous calls for a full referral of the situation in Myanmar to the International Criminal Court by the Security Council and calls upon the Myanmar military:

(a) To cease immediately all violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, including attacks directed against civilians and civilian objects such as schools, hospitals, religious sites and camps for displaced persons, in compliance with Security Council resolution 2669 (2022);

(b) To allow and facilitate the rapid and unimpeded passage to civilians in need of humanitarian relief that is impartial in character and conducted without any adverse distinction, and to lift restrictions on the delivery of food, medicine, essential supplies and telecommunications;

(c) To end all forms of conscription, including of Rohingya, that are incompatible with international human rights law;

(d) To release all political prisoners without further delay and to ensure effective remedies for others arbitrarily deprived of liberty, including for evading or refusing conscription.

59. The High Commissioner recommends that the National Unity Government, ethnic armed organizations and anti-military armed groups:

(a) Cease all violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of international human rights law;

(b) Take specific steps to respect and guarantee the protection of civilians, including by refraining from extrajudicial killings and ensuring that violations and abuses are transparently addressed in a timely manner through fair and credible accountability mechanisms and that victims can obtain remedy and reparations;

(c) Cease all practices of forced recruitment, particularly with regard to children, whose release they should immediately effectuate.

60. The High Commissioner recommends that the Arakan Army:

(a) Cease immediately all forms of forced recruitment of Rohingya and ensure the highest possible level of protection of civilians, including the Rohingya population;

(b) Allow, in conformity with international humanitarian law, all displaced Rohingya to return to their places of origin and assist them financially to rebuild homes destroyed during military operations;

(c) Immediately lift all undue restrictions on movement and access to services for members of the Rohingya community;

(d) Allow unimpeded access to independent human rights investigators to areas under its control in Rakhine State and allow and facilitate humanitarian relief for civilians in need.

61. Furthermore, the High Commissioner recommends that States Members of the United Nations:

(a) Maintain specific political focus and attention on the human rights crisis in Myanmar, with particular emphasis on the situation of the Rohingya and other minorities, reflecting their voices and experiences in international policy responses;

(b) Refrain from the transfer or authorization of the transfer of arms, jet fuel, surveillance equipment or technologies and dual-use items that risk contributing to violations of international humanitarian law or violations and abuses of international human rights law;

(c) Support efforts to protect refugees and displaced persons, including by implementing safe and dignified pathways for asylum and resettlement and avoid returning anyone to Myanmar in contravention of the principle of non-refoulement;

(d) Increase humanitarian funding and support for emergency food, shelter and medical assistance, prioritizing the most vulnerable populations, including the Rohingya and other minorities in both Myanmar and the camps in Bangladesh.