



Appeal - Solidarity with the Afflicted Rohingya people

WORLD STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION (WSCF)-15 SEPTEMBER 2017

Joint Appeal from the SCM Bangladesh and WSCF AP to be in solidarity with the afflicted Rohingya People and the affected community in the Rakhine region of Myanmar

According to global mainstream media and the United Nations reports since the 25th August 2017 nearly 400,000 Rohingya Muslim including Hindus have fled Myanmar and have entered to Bangladesh while others have fled to different regions in Myanmar to escape violence and have become internally displaced in the country. The gory violence erupted in the western region of Rakhine state of Myanmar after suspected Rohingya insurgent attacked 30 police posts and an army base killing 12 security personnel. As a result, a military retaliation was launched against the Rohingya people.

The world is witnessing one of the largest mass exoduses of people in recent history in South Asia and probably Asia's biggest refugee crisis! The arson, killings, and reported rapes have forced them to flee through whatever means is available either through seas or by road to save their lives. Streams of terrified people including pregnant women, children, new-borns, elderly are seen in various media walking through fields, jungles, crossing through submerged fields and rivers in horrible conditions.

The recent influx has added to the existing 400,000 Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and the number has increased to nearly 800,000 - a worrisome number of refugees for an economically poor country like Bangladesh. The Bangladesh government was not prepared for the overwhelming number of refugees in just three weeks of time. Therefore, the situation of the new arrival refugees in Bangladesh is catastrophic. Not enough aid even to provide basic need of food, water, shelter for the overwhelming refugees.

The World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) joins the Student Christian Movement of Bangladesh (SCMB) to condemn the on-going violence against the Rohingya people by the Myanmar Army in the strongest terms. While we are aware that a faction of Rohingya community took up arms and indulged in violence and do condemn their act. However, this is purely human rights violation as more than a million Rohingya people have been persecuted through decades. We show our support and solidarity to the civilians who are violated and killed by an unjust political system and military aggression victimising a particular religious community.

We as faith community seek your support and solidarity and call the SCMs, (Student Christian Movements), Churches and Ecumenical organizations to respond to this major humanitarian disaster unfolding. The new arrival refugees are in desperate need of food, drinking water, tents, clothes, and medicines. The SCM Bangladesh together with the faith communities in the country is initiating assistance to the desperate community together with other aid agencies.

We seek your support, solidarity, prayers and action to respond to the humanitarian disaster. You can do the following to express your solidarity with the suffering and affected people by:

- Taking immediate measures beyond of the verbal condemnation
- Writing to the Myanmar Consulate/ Embassy in your countries urging them to immediately stop the ongoing violence in the Rakhine state
- By facilitating response by the humanitarian aid agencies to assist in food, drinking water, shelter and medical help to the affected community including the internally displaced people and to protect the vulnerable children, women, men from traffickers
- Writing to the Consulate/ Embassy of India in your countries not to deport the undocumented Rohingya refugees (*Indian government is planning to deport all the undocumented Rohingya people*) but allow them to live in the country on humanitarian ground and based on the principle of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to protect the right to life
- Creating awareness of the Recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State 2017 and bring pressure to the government of Myanmar and Bangladesh to start implementing the Recommendations
- Increasing international pressure on UN and international communities to find a lasting solution to the conflict in the region.
- Providing financial support to meet the basic need of the refugees in Bangladesh

(Click the link below to send your financial support)

<http://www.wscfap.org/whoweare/contact/support-wscfap.html>

Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.(Proverbs 31:8-9)

In Solidarity,

Edward Tarun Roy, Chairperson SCM Bangladesh

Kingston Selvaraj, WSCF Asia Pacific Human Rights Justice and Peace Committee

Sunita Suna, WSCF Asia Pacific Executive Staff

Photo credit: NDTV