



OIC/ACM/CG-ROHINGYA/SG -2017

**STATEMENT  
OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL  
HE DR YOUSEF A. AL-OTHAIMEEN  
TO THE  
CONTACT GROUP ON ROHINGYA MUSLIMS OF MYANMAR  
HELD ON THE SIDELINES OF THE  
ANNUAL COORDINATION MEETING  
19 SEPTEMBER 2017  
NEW YORK, USA**

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me at the outset to welcome the esteemed Heads of State and Ministers present at this special meeting of the OIC Contact Group on the Rohingya Muslim Minority of Myanmar. Let me also welcome the distinguished representatives of nations and international organizations that have joined us for this important session. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation has been at the forefront of calling for the rights of the Rohingya Muslim minority to be upheld and for their citizenship to be restored. We are gravely concerned about the situation on the ground which the UN Human Rights Commissioner has called a textbook case of 'ethnic cleansing'.

The government of Myanmar has failed to take responsibility for acts disproportionate acts of violence perpetrated by security forces against the civilian population of Rakhine state. Instead they have claimed that the Rohingya have set fire to their own homes and are responsible for acts of violence. Let me reiterate categorically that the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) does not condone violence against the state or threat to its security and respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Myanmar. At the same time the OIC has expressed to the Myanmar government the need for security forces to apply maximum restraint towards civilian populations and also to prevent the right wing extremist groups from fanning the flames of religious hatred. The denial of the basic rights of the Rohingya only serves to exacerbate the situation in the ground.

With more than 370,000 Rohingya refugees fleeing into Bangladesh in the last few weeks I reiterate the call upon the international community and particularly the UN Security Council to take action to resolve the plight of the Rohingya. I also call upon the Government of Myanmar to implement the recommendations of the Rakhine State Commission, Chaired by Mr Kofi Annan which spells out in clear terms the corrective actions that must urgently be taken. In this regard I urge the Government of Myanmar to cease the campaign of violence and restore basic rights to the Rohingya so they can live peacefully and productively in their country and regain their status and inalienable rights of dignity, religious freedom, full citizenship and equal opportunity.

Excellencies,

I must also express appreciation to those Member States that have provided financial and humanitarian assistance for the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and encourage all Member States to continue to support these crucial humanitarian aid efforts.

I believe that it is imperative that the Member States explore all available means to bring an end to the crises facing the Rohingya. I look forward to our discussions on how we can move forward in our efforts to alleviate the plight of the Rohingya Muslim minority in Myanmar.

Thank you for your attention.