



Date: 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020

### **Joint Statement on the reckless remarks of the Indonesian Ambassador to Myanmar**

The Indonesian Ambassador to Myanmar H.E. Iza Fadri, made statements on 6 July 2020 in RMOLACEH<sup>1</sup> online news site about the recent arrivals of Rohingya people to Aceh.

In his statement the Ambassador failed to mention the root causes of the Rohingya people's flights to countries in the region, including Indonesia. The Ambassador perpetuated the fairy tale espoused by the genocidal junta in Myanmar. Specifically, the Ambassador mentioned that the Rohingya did not come from Arakan/Rakhine State (Myanmar) but from Bangladesh refugee camps, and that they are British time settlers as most of them could not speak Myanmar language.

The Ambassador, given his high-level duties, is no doubt aware by now that Myanmar state officials have no political will to create suitable conditions for the voluntary, safe, and dignified return of the Rohingya from Bangladesh to their homeland. As such, it is now unsafe for them to return home where bloodshed and violence await them, and genocide is ongoing. As the Rohingya see no end to their plight – persecuted in Burma and impoverished in refugee camps in Bangladesh – they have become more desperate to risk death or injury by making perilous journeys at sea in overcrowded and unsafe boats.

The Ambassador should understand that the Rohingya are indigenous people to the Arakan. Their language and culture are true reflection of this geographic reality. Sadly, Rohingya people have been victims of structural violence in Myanmar which has deprived them of economic, cultural, and social rights as outlined in international treaties. The Ambassador's remark that they all are recent immigrants or British time settlers simply on the reason that they could not speak Myanmar language highlights the perverse narrative that has been deployed throughout the region by the Myanmar government. Sadly, his reckless statement has hurt the feelings of several Rohingya genocide survivors around the world.

We emphasize that despite these statements made by the Ambassador that they do not in any way reflect the official position of the Indonesian government nor that of the friendly people of Indonesia who have been generously helping the Rohingya in distress at sea.

We ask the Ambassador to withdraw for his short-sighted and factually wrong remarks.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://bit.ly/32n61YX>