



জাতিসংঘ আবাসিক সমন্বয়কারীর কার্যালয় - বাংলাদেশ  
OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS RESIDENT COORDINATOR IN BANGLADESH

## PRESS STATEMENT

### **International Community in Bangladesh Visit Cox's Bazar, Reiterate Support for Bangladesh and Commitment to Rohingya Response.**

Representatives of the international community in Bangladesh – including Ambassadors of the United States and the European Union, the British High Commissioner, the Head of Humanitarian Aid of the Canadian High Commission, the Country Director of the World Bank, and the United Nations Resident Coordinator – today concluded a two-day visit to Cox's Bazar and the Rohingya refugee camps.

"After months of necessary COVID-19 restrictions, we are here with our partners to reaffirm our solidarity with Bangladesh and support for the Rohingya refugees and the communities generously hosting them. We have seen how the decisive action taken by the authorities has slowed the spread of COVID-19, and with the support of the international community, an effective and life-saving response continues," said Mia Seppo, United Nations Resident Coordinator.

The U.S Ambassador, Earl Miller, added "The Rohingya crisis remains an important priority for the United States just as it is for Bangladesh and our other international partners, and even more so in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since 2017, the United States has contributed nearly \$800 million to support the humanitarian efforts including specific funding to support Bangladesh host communities in Cox's Bazar District. Some two thirds of the total global funding to the Rohingya response has been provided by the donor countries on this visit. At the same time, we continue working toward solutions and the safe, voluntary, and dignified repatriation of refugees to Myanmar."

During discussions with the delegation, refugees shared how the COVID-19 situation is impacting their daily lives and how they see the future. "Refugees have continued to play a critical role in helping their own communities protect themselves against COVID-19. They are the backbone of the response and their contributions should be fully recognised," highlighted Canada's Head of Humanitarian Aid, Phedra Moon Morris.

In the course of their field visits, the delegation visited Severe Acute Respiratory Isolation and Treatment Centres – of which there are now 14 with nearly 1,000 treatment beds –set up to treat COVID-19 patients, both Bangladeshis and Rohingya, as well as COVID-19 testing centres.

The delegation also visited temporary learning centres, which have been temporarily closed due to COVID-19, leading to a reported increase in hopelessness among refugees, violence against children, and increased rates of child marriage and labour. The delegation discussed with the authorities the importance of the safe reopening of these and other facilities in a phased manner.

The delegation also discussed and observed efforts to keep the camps and surrounding areas safe and secure in Cox's Bazar. "The authorities continue to play an absolutely critical role in ensuring the safety and security of the Rohingya settlements and the host communities. With any additional and necessary measures, we encourage full humanitarian access be maintained to the camps and that consultations with affected communities continue to take place," said British High Commissioner, Robert Chatterton Dickson.

The delegation also spoke with Government officials about the Bhasan Char project. "While the first recent "go and see" visit was a welcome step, it would also be important that the proposed UN technical and protection assessments are also able to proceed, as well as the separate humanitarian and protection visits to assess the situation for the 306 refugees already relocated there," said E.U. Ambassador, Rensje Teerink.

In all their discussions, the members of the delegation assured the authorities of their unwavering commitment to support the Rohingya refugee response and affected Bangladeshis communities. "We have been with Bangladesh since the early days of this crisis and will continue to scale up development



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assistance to Cox's Bazar, having already provided more than half a billion dollars in grants. This crisis cannot and will not be forgotten," said World Bank Country Director, Mercy Tembon.

In closing, the delegation commended Bangladesh's generosity in hosting the Rohingya population and agreed that returns must be voluntary, safe and dignified. The delegation reiterated that the solution to this crisis lay in Myanmar and that required for the root causes of the crisis to be addressed. Holding perpetrators of the atrocities committed against the Rohingya people in Rakhine state to account would contribute to giving the refugees the confidence to return home, they highlighted.

24 September 2020  
Cox's Bazar

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