

**Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale**

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| <b>Bilagsnr.:</b>               | <b>793</b>                                                                                                     |
| Land:                           | Myanmar                                                                                                        |
| Kilde:                          | OHCHR                                                                                                          |
| Titel:                          | Myanmar – Türk deplores attacks on civilians fleeing Rakhine, fears repeat of 2017 atrocities against Rohingya |
| Udgivet:                        | 22 august 2024                                                                                                 |
| Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet: | 3. september 2024                                                                                              |
|                                 |                                                                                                                |

Document #2114280

# OHCHR – UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (Author)

## Myanmar: Türk deplores attacks on civilians fleeing Rakhine, fears repeat of 2017 atrocities against Rohingya

GENEVA (23 August 2024) – UN Human Rights Chief Volker Türk today expressed grave alarm and raised profound concerns about the sharply deteriorating situation across Myanmar, particularly in Rakhine State where hundreds of civilians have reportedly been killed while trying to flee the fighting.

Over the past four months, tens of thousands of people, many of whom are Rohingya, have fled a major offensive by the Arakan Army to take control of Buthidaung and Maungdaw towns from the military. In one of the deadliest attacks along the Naf River bordering Bangladesh on 5 August, dozens were reportedly killed, including by armed drones. It remains unclear which party to the conflict was responsible.

“Thousands of Rohingya have been forced to flee on foot, with the Arakan Army herding them repeatedly into locations that offer scant safe haven,” Türk said. “As the border crossings to

### ecoi.net description:

Rakhine State: According to reports, hundreds of civilians killed when trying to flee from armed conflict; thousands of civilians, including many ethnic Rohingya, have been displaced by an offensive of the ethnic armed group Arakan Army

**Country:**  
Myanmar

**Source:**

Bangladesh remain closed, members of the Rohingya community are finding themselves trapped between the military and its allies and the Arakan Army, with no path to safety.”

Despite repeated warnings and calls for action, the ongoing violence underscores the prevailing sense of impunity and the persistent challenges in ensuring protection of civilians in accordance with international law, the High Commissioner said.

“This month marks seven years since the military operations which drove 700,000 across the border into Bangladesh. Despite the world saying “never again” we are once more witnessing killings, destruction and displacement in Rakhine. Parties to the armed conflict are issuing statements denying responsibility for attacks against the Rohingya and others, acting as though they are powerless to protect them. This stretches the bounds of credulity,” said Türk.

According to information documented by the UN Human Rights Office, both the military and the Arakan Army, which now controls most of the townships in Rakhine, have committed serious human rights violations and abuses against the Rohingya, including extrajudicial killings, some involving beheadings, abductions, forced recruitment, indiscriminate bombardments of towns and villages using drones and artillery, and arson attacks. Such attacks stand in sharp contrast to obligations of all parties under international humanitarian law and to the provisional measures ordered by the International Court of Justice to protect the Rohingya against risk of further harm.

Credible sources have described increasing numbers of Rohingya, nearly half of whom are children, seeking assistance for conflict-related injuries. There have also been reports of people dying of diarrhoea, due to lack of access to clean water and grossly inadequate living conditions. Food warehouses holding vitally important supplies for civilians have been attacked, ransacked and burnt. Buthidaung and Maungdaw hospitals have been closed due to the violence, further aggravating an already disastrous humanitarian crisis compounded by an extensive telecommunications shutdown.

“Both the military and the Arakan Army bear direct responsibility for the human tragedy that is unfolding in Rakhine,” said Türk. “Both parties must immediately cease attacks against civilians, protect those fleeing the conflict, and ensure their unimpeded access to life-saving humanitarian assistance.”

OHCHR – UN Office of the High  
Commissioner for Human  
Rights (Author)

**Published:**  
23 August 2024

**Original link:**  
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/08/myanmar-turk-deplores-attacks-civilians-fleeing-rakhine-fears-repeat-2017>

**Document type:**  
Appeal or News Release

**Language:**  
English

**Available on ecoi.net since:**  
28 August 2024

**Document ID:**  
2114280

“These atrocities demand an unequivocal response - those responsible must be held accountable, and justice must be pursued relentlessly,” said Türk. “Recurrence of the crimes and horrors of the past must be prevented as a moral duty and a legal necessity. It is the responsibility of the international community, with ASEAN at the forefront, to take all necessary measures to protect the Rohingya and other civilian victims of this cruel conflict.”

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ecoi.net is run by the Austrian Red Cross (department ACCORD) in cooperation with Informationsverbund Asyl & Migration. ecoi.net is funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Austrian Ministry of the Interior and Caritas Austria. ecoi.net is supported by ECRE & UNHCR.

