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UNHCR – UN High Commissioner for Refugees (Author)

UNHCR statement on Bangladesh, Myanmar bilateral pilot project on Rohingya returns

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is aware of the visit of a Myanmar delegation to Bangladesh to meet with a group of refugees on a bilateral pilot project between the two countries on possible returns. UNHCR is not involved in these discussions.

UNHCR's position on returns of Rohingya refugees to Myanmar remains unchanged. In UNHCR's assessment, conditions in Myanmar's Rakhine State are currently not conducive to the sustainable return of Rohingya refugees. At the same time, we reiterate that every refugee has a right to return to their home country based on an informed choice, but that no refugee should be forced to do so. Bangladesh has consistently reaffirmed its commitment to voluntary and sustainable repatriation since the onset of the current crisis.

In support of efforts to preserve the right to return, UNHCR considers consultation of and dialogue with Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh by all parties in relation to the conditions in Myanmar's Rakhine State as important to enable refugees to make an informed choice about return and build confidence amongst the community. This is particularly important as many refugees have reiterated that they do hope to go home to Myanmar as soon as conditions allow.

Following the events of August 2017, UNHCR has also consistently encouraged Myanmar to expeditiously verify the previous residence in Myanmar of refugees in Bangladesh, as part of efforts to lift any administrative obstacles to return when the refugees decide to do so.

UNHCR therefore supports efforts that could lead to the verification of all refugees and pave the way for eventual return. This most recently included providing logistical support to members of the Myanmar delegation to cross into Bangladesh for the technical verification process.

UNHCR will continue to work with Bangladesh and Myanmar to ensure that Rohingya refugees maintain the right to return when they choose to do so, based on a fully informed and voluntary decision. UNHCR will also support efforts to create conditions that would be conducive to the sustainable return of Rohingya refugees in Myanmar's Rakhine State.

In Bangladesh, UNHCR will continue to support building the skills and capacities of refugees to facilitate their eventual return and sustainable reintegration in Myanmar. The 2023 Joint Response Plan for the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis in Bangladesh was recently launched and UNHCR calls upon the international community's continued robust support for this appeal which is currently 10 per cent funded.

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UNHCR statement on the security situation in Rakhine state, Myanmar, and the return of Rohingya from Bangladesh to Myanmar

Country:

Myanmar

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