13 November 2017

Dear Ambassador:

The NGO Committee on Migration is a member of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (CoNGO) in consultative relationship with the United Nations Economic and Social Council. The mission of our Committee is to encourage the protection and promotion of migrants’ human rights, especially those of women and children, in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

As such, we are highly concerned about the ongoing plight of the Rohingya, nearly 600,000 of whom have now fled the extreme and systematic violence being enacted upon them in the Rakhine State of Myanmar. 60% of those in flight are children, a group that is guaranteed special protection under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and whose well-being has been prioritized in our Committee’s advocacy agenda since our founding. As you know, the violence has grown particularly severe since late August, and the Rohingya, both inside and outside Myanmar, are living in increasingly dire circumstances. The camps and settlements in which they reside are in squalid condition, lacking basic amenities and serving as a likely breeding ground for the outbreak of further violence. As stateless persons on the receiving end of atrocities the UN High Commissioner of Human Rights has described as a “textbook example of ethnic cleansing,” Rohingyans are facing tremendous obstacles to virtually every human right guaranteed them by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, especially the right to freedom from discrimination (Article 2); the right to life, liberty, and personal security (Article 3); the right to a nationality and the freedom to change it (Article 15); the freedom of belief and religion (Article 18); the right to an adequate standard of living (Article 25); and the freedom from State or personal interference in their enjoyment of all the above (Article 30).

As a Member State of the UN General Assembly, your government has been entrusted with the power and responsibility to “initiate studies and make recommendations for the purpose of promoting international cooperation in the economic, social, cultural, educational, and health fields, and assisting in the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion” (Charter of the United Nations, Article 13.1.b). **We therefore urge you to support the proposed General Assembly Third Committee Resolution on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, which, most importantly, condemns the mass atrocities being committed against Rohingyans in Myanmar, calls for an opening of the Burmese State to UN fact-finding missions and humanitarian relief; urges the international community to support neighboring nations in their efforts to provide dignified reception of refugees; and prescribes actions for the eventual, safe, voluntary return of Rohingya to Myanmar. We hope such actions would make possible a fruitful dialogue between Myanmar and its neighbors in the region such that the fundamental human rights of the Rohingya may be restored without further delay.**

Sincerely yours,

Maria Pia Belloni-Mignatti
Chair, NGO Committee on Migration
on behalf of the member organizations of the NGO Committee on Migration listed on the following page
This letter has been endorsed by the following member organizations of the NGO Committee on Migration:

Casa Generalizia della Societa del Sacro Cuore
International Council of Psychologists
International Presentation Association
Poverty Elimination and Community Education (PEACE) Foundation
RADOL
Sheba USA
UNANIMA International
VIVAT International
WARBE
World Christian Life Community
World Organization for Early Childhood Education (OMEP)