

**Crimes Against Humanity Committed Against Rohingyas in Western Burma,  
Concludes Report from Irish Centre for Human Rights,  
NUI Galway**

**Thursday, 16 June, 2010:** The Rohingya minority group in Western Burma has been victim of human rights violations amounting to crimes against humanity, according to a report released today by the Irish Centre for Human Rights, NUI Galway. The report, entitled *Crimes against Humanity in Western Burma: The Situation of the Rohingyas*, was officially launched by Micheál Martin, the Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs, at Iveagh House, Dublin.

“For decades now, the Rohingya minority group has endured grave human rights violations in North Arakan State. Every day, more Rohingya men, women and children are leaving Burma, fleeing the human rights abuses in the hope of finding peace and security elsewhere,” said Professor William Schabas, director of the Irish Centre for Human Rights, NUI Galway.

The Report is based on extensive open-source research and on a fact-finding mission to Burma, Thailand and Bangladesh conducted by experts in international criminal investigation. As well as interviewing organisations working in the region, investigators met with Rohingya victims in and around refugee camps in Bangladesh. The Rohingyas’ plight has been overlooked for years and the root causes of their situation still remain under-examined. The Irish Centre for Human Rights’ Report identifies and discusses some of these causes.

The Report examines whether the apparent cases of enslavement, rape and sexual violence, deportation or forcible transfer of population, and persecution against the Rohingyas may constitute crimes against humanity. “Describing the violations as crimes against humanity raises the possibility that cases against those Burmese officials who are responsible could be referred to the International Criminal Court”, Professor Schabas explained.

The Report affirms that people committing, allowing, aiding and abetting these crimes must be held accountable. The international community has a responsibility to protect the Rohingyas, to respond to the allegations of crimes against humanity and ensure that violations and impunity do not persist for another generation, concludes the report

Speaking at the launch of the Report, Minister Martin commended the work of the NUI Galway research team, stating that they have presented “compelling evidence suggesting that crimes against humanity have indeed been committed by the Burmese authorities against the Rohingya minority group”. Noting the recommendation in the Report that the Security Council establish a Commission of Inquiry to determine whether there is a prima facie case that crimes against humanity have been committed, as well as similar recent comments by UN Special Rapporteur on Burma, Tomás Ojea Quintana, Minister Martin said that he fully supported these calls for all such alleged crimes to be formally investigated.

The Irish Centre for Human Rights, NUI Galway, is one of the world’s leading university-based human rights research centres. The Centre, which marks its tenth anniversary this year, is dedicated to teaching, research and advocacy in the field of human rights.

Report available at: [http://www.nuigalway.ie/human\\_rights/projects/burma.html](http://www.nuigalway.ie/human_rights/projects/burma.html)

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