20 June 2011

Press Release

STATEMENT ON THE WORLD REFUGEE DAY 2011:
QUALID CONDITION OF THE ROHINGYA BURMESE REFUGEES IN THE WORLD

We, National Democratic Party for Human Rights (NDPHR) (exile)-Headquarters based in the United States of America and the South East Asia Regional Office in Malaysia, would like to express our concern over Burma’s regime’s installation of the worst proportion of inhuman pogrom against ethnic minorities in Burma. Particularly of the Rohingyas in western border of Burma through out the forced labour, force eviction, forced extortion, forced extermination, forced relocation, torture, extra judicial killings, rape, model village settlement, restriction on their movement and freedom of worship, education, social and business development Rohingya refugees which make continuous flow of refugees. Hence the Rohingya Burmese refugees are languishing under the traumatic mistreatments around the world specifically in Bangladesh, Thailand, Malaysia and Suadi Arabia.

As Rohingya refugees are Burma’s first refugees and defined as the world most oppressed group, the plights received international attention and UNHCR’s supports thereupon global leaders have yet to pave solution for the plights.

In Bangladesh, the situation is cramp and the government restricts aid of Rohingya. About 28,000 Rohingya Burmese refugees are in squalid at the UNHCR runs camps of Kutupalong and Nayapara in southern district of Cox’s Bazar, have been there for three decades, and about 30,000 Rohingyas in unregistered camp are for years. While no one know how the rest about 250,000 Rohingyas in outside refugee camps are surviving. The UNHCR has resettled less than thousand Rohingyas from the registered camps since the year 2006. The enormous problems in Bangladesh are direct impacts on vulnerable Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. Despite having well knowledge of the world on repatriated refugees, UNHCR and Bangladeshi government have still uphold to establish agreement with Burma for involuntary repatriation of Rohingya refugees. We would like to call upon Bangladesh itself depends on funds, should not ban international aid of the other and to respect non-refoulement and customary laws.

The expression of majority willing to repatriate by UNHCR in Aug 1994 was flawed after MSF survey in March 1995 revealed that 63% did not want to repatriate. Therefore we deeply concern for processing of repatriation of Rohingya refugees which advantages on their malnutrition or starvation, stuck, with other stimulation by offers.

In Thailand, recent repeated mistreatments towards Rohingya boat people show Thai-authorities barbarous commitment of genocide crimes against humanity and defiance against international communities and international laws. Thai army and Internal Security Operation Command-ISOC are responsible for misconception of the Rohingya as threat to Thai national security.

That lead in March 2008, Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej attempted to explore a deserted island to place Rohingya refugees living in Thailand, Bankok Post Paper on 28 March 2008.

Again in Dec 2008, total about 1116 Rohingyas and some Bangladeshi boat people were towed into international waters and more than half were feared dead including firing, some were shot dead on boat and some were thrown over boat to drown.

Current PM Abhisit Vejjajiva had promise to hold all those involved to account. Instead of investigation to bring into account or compensation for those lost of lives, Thai PM is still upheld its authorities to treat rank-less behaviour towards vulnerable boat people.
Again in Jan 2011, three boats of Rohingya refugees landed over the weekend of January in Southern Thai-waters, were similarly pushed back into international waters. A group 91 persons rescued near India-Andaman Island and another group 129 persons rescued near Indo-Acheh.

We therefore would like to urge international community to take action on Thai-authority and PM for pursuing similar crimes.

**In Saudi Arabia**, Rohingyas been there for five decades and still facing arrests, detentions and forceful deportations, and exempt from basic rights. They are living mostly in Makkah, Jeddah and Madina in poor conditions. Even though Former King Abdullah had showed a little favour towards their plights, detention of Rohingyas is slightly increased from 5,000 persons estimated in 2008 Oct who were nab from Mecca and Jeddah. Those detainees were forced to accept to say Bangladeshi and several hundreds were deported to Bangladesh in this manner. They are kept without adequate foods and equipments in dilapidated buildings by guarding due to overcrowding in prisons and failure of deportation. Most of them are in inhuman situation and suffering from types of diseases, shortage of food and in non hygienic and squallid environment. Half of those detained in dilapidated building had been escaped. This kind of treatments are totally unexpected in Muslim kingdom of Saudi Arabia therefore we would like to call Saudi Arabia to show humanity towards its Muslim brothers and at least they must be protected under Islamic universal Laws.

**In Malaysia** Rohingya is the first among Burmese refugee groups. Rohingya refugees in Malaysia have been languishing more than two decades in limbo with lack of basic needs. Malaysia is not a signatory country therefore Rohingya refugees are still subject to arrest, detention and other abuses. Current UNHCR representative has yet to explore assistance of widow, over aged and sick Rohingyas, Rohingya families whose husband are kept in Australian detentions, registration of unregistered Rohingyas whose data were collected since the mid-2009, fair and equal opportunity in resettlement quota. Because there are less than 250 Rohingyas found in UNHCR resettlement, about 43,000 refugees from Malaysia in the past decade. Compare to the past years UNHCR has able to get release of refugee detainees from some detentions. But it does not mean they are protected. There are still swapped in raids and hundreds of unreported numbers are still languished and detained in dehumanized conditions where UNHCR service not explore or access. The Malaysian government is also still silent on Home Minister said in Feb 2010 that the refugees to be allowed to work was being considered while waiting to be resettled in third countries. We would like to call Malaysian government to corporate to find permanent solution for the plights of Rohingyas refugees in Malaysia and to upgrade its detention system.

Repressions of oppressed Rohingya refugees in host countries became one of the issues why Rohingya refugees in neighboring countries are busy to find a safe place through risky journey. We see secondary movements of Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh to Malaysia and Rohingya refugees in Malaysia departing for Australia because they expect to find more secure and safe place. From the year 2006, we escalated that total Rohingyaans landed to Australia from Malaysia are; 8 Rohingyans by a boat in Aug 2006, 42 Rohingyans by four different boats in between September to Dec 2009, 98 Rohingyans and 8 different ethnic Burmeses by six different boats in between March to October 2010 and recently 18 Rohingyans landed near Ashmore Reef by a boat on 12 May 2011. This last group was told that they would be transferred to where they came from and they are kept separately for final decision near North West Point Immigration Detention Centre of Christmas Island. One of the key reasons of their arrival was after the talk of swap deal. We urge Malaysian government not to accept this 18 Rohingya men as Malaysia is not in position to fulfill their basic needs and Malaysia has yet to settle existing Rohingya cases.

108 Rohingyans landed by a boat in Pulau Kendi, off Penang on 4 March 2007, were detained in Juru detention camps and half of them were deported to Burma border through voluntary corporation with Thai. The rest were languished for fear of repatriation so that they were finally handed over to human traffickers in Malaya-Thai border.

A few of trafficked in fishing boat were landed in Terengganu beach in Oct 2007 after broke down the engine. They were detained in Ajil detention camp and some accessed UNHCR's intervention.
93 Rohingyans landed by a boat in Kedah in March 2010 after received aid from Thai. They were detained prolong then finally some got UNHCR's intervention.

Some of those Thai pushed back Rohingya boat people in Indonesia captured in Malaya-waters in March 2010, were detained prolong and a few were met UNHCR assessment.

We also found that Rohingya boat people asylum-seekers in Australian detentions are being the longest group and treated unequally in visa processing and then detained inappropriately by advantageing on security checks despite Australia has well understanding about Rohingya position and Australia itself is one of the country which advocate for their plights and contributed for the welfare of Rohingyas both in home and exile. Such prolong detention contracts psychological torture and affects mental and then that bruise their families left behind. On the consequences of pressure so far 32 of 42 Rohingya refugees arrival in 2009 were released after averagely detained 13 months, the rest six persons in Northern Immigration Detention Centre (NIDC), 3 persons in Villawood and one person in Maribyrnong detentions are still languishing in limbo. Including two of them; Mr Habiburahman is head and Mr Sayad Kasim is Joint Secretary of NDPHR (exile) South East Asia Regional Office based in KL, Malaysia, have been detaining now in 18 months in NIDC. Their lives in Malaysia were risked and they both had been personally experienced with arrests, detentions and deportation to human traffickers in Malay-Thai border.

We acknowledged their detention is worst than mandatory detention as mandatory detention has a mandate with key values which ensure fair and humane treatment. The period of their detention excessive length of proper process while thousands of clients who arrived lately and faking Rohingya cases were already released. Unfortunately, such indefinite detention doesn't import the way to have good conduct and good order in Australian society. They proved their identities received UNHCR-Malaysia but their cases are still hanging for puppet security checks regardless of government notice released on 17 March 2011. There is no Rohingya threat to Burmese society or other country. Rohingya community in Burma have been terrorized at least five decades by terror military government. Moreover, they are bounded in the cycle of arrests, detentions, deportations and other brutal abuses in neighbouring countries. Therefore, their detention is nothing more than arbitrary detention of innocent refugees.

We concerns seriously for prolong detention of the world most oppressed Rohingya refugee asylum-seekers detained in Australia and Australia as a leader in humanitarian fields and that uplift international laws, should not detained inappropriately, nor materialize the swap deal to send back Rohingya refugee boat people asylum-seekers to the country where is not safe for refugees and asylum-seekers even for legal migrants. Despite boat people issue in Australia brought to a hot debate by politicians, their rights in Australian territory should not be deprived for political interaction. This is nothing more than degrading of Australia's human rights record and letting to mess-up the situation.

In summary we also would like to call international communities to encourage UNSC to take action unexceptionally on military regime. Burma's neighbouring countries or its associations does not import security and safety of the Burmese people therefore there is nothing to rely on them.

Thank you,

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