

Coalition of Myanmar Muslim Civil Society Groups

Yangon, Myanmar

An Open Letter to the Malaysia's Ruling Party UMNO with regards to the Rally Organized on 4 December 2016 on Myanmar

Date: 5 December 2016

We, Myanmar Muslim community, express our disapproval of the rally, organized by ruling party United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) on 4 December 2016, on the internal affairs of Myanmar. We find the rally, led by Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Sri Haji Mohammad Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, was nothing but aiming at the political interest of the Malaysia's ruling party. We affirm that the unfortunate situation facing Myanmar needs not, and should not, be exploited for self-interest and political purposes.

We also disapproved Mr. Najib relating the situation with the religious cause. We hereby reassert that the Muslim community in Myanmar do not take it as a religious persecution, but a controversial ethnic issue.

It is a delicate and sensitive situation that needs international coordination and multi-faceted approaches to finding a lasting peaceful solution. To this end, the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has been making several efforts, including the establishment of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State charged by the former United Nations Secretary General Kofi Anan.

Given the complexity of the situation, the level of political willingness and the resources available, the progress on resolving the issue may not have been made to the extent that can be satisfactory to all the parties concerned.

In such a time, we are dismayed by poorly informed initiatives like the rally in Malaysia which could further worsen the already difficult situation and be considered as a threat to the unity and stability of the ASEAN community.

We, however, would like to reiterate that we will never tolerate any discrimination based on race or ethnicity or religion.

We, therefore, would welcome any support that would yield positive results and respect national sovereignty.

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