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To the UN General Assembly Third Committee under agenda item 69 (c)
“Promotion and protection of human rights: Human rights situations and reports of
special rapporteurs and representatives”

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Mr. Chair,

Thank you for allowing us to take the floor on this very important issue. As you
may know, the OIC, and in particular, the OIC Group in New York has taken a very
keen interest in the ongoing situation in Myanmar and is fully committed to finding
a durable, peaceful solution to the ongoing inter-communal and inter-ethnic
violence.

Firstly, it is important to welcome the progress made by Myanmar during their
transition and ongoing reform process that has been taking place steadily since
2011. The OIC extends its support to Myanmar and is pleased that H.E. the OIC
Secretary General Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu and a group of seven ministers will be
visiting Myanmar in mid-November. The OIC looks forward to a positive
engagement with the Myanmar authorities on how the OIC can be of assistance to
Myanmar. The OIC is also appreciative to H.E. the UN Secretary General and his
Special Adviser, Mr. Vijay Nambari and his good offices for their tireless effort to
bring about a lasting and durable peace to Myanmar.

Our brief comments will be focused on four areas from the Special Advisor’s report,
including national reconciliation efforts, humanitarian challenges, communal
challenges and the situation of internally displaced persons in Rakhine State.

National reconciliation efforts:

With regards to the Special Adviser’s report on the current national reconciliation
efforts, the OIC is pleased that Myanmar has opened a Myanmar Peace Centre this
past year and that the government has continued to streamline various efforts to negotiate with ethnic groups and address the concerns of resettlement and rehabilitation. However, the OIC believes that there is still room for improving reconciliation efforts by carrying them out in an open and all-inclusive manner with all ethnic groups in Myanmar. Similarly, the OIC believes that there should be the inclusion of an interfaith component to ensure that all groups in Myanmar are represented in the national reconciliation process. The OIC will continue to support the efforts of the Special Adviser in this regard.

**Humanitarian Challenges:**

The OIC continues to be concerned with the ongoing grave humanitarian situation in Myanmar and joins the Special Adviser in his call for the government to provide unhindered access to areas that are in need of urgent humanitarian aid in all sectors. The OIC stands ready to assist the Myanmar authorities in this regard to provide humanitarian coordination assistance, work with United Nations agencies on the ground and to mobilize both OIC-affiliated NGOs and local NGOs to provide support in the water and sanitation, food, shelter and medical arenas.

**Communal Tensions:**

The ongoing communal tensions in some states in Myanmar continue to be an area of serious concern for the OIC. As mentioned in the Special Adviser's report, the clashes between Buddhists and Muslims in Mekhtila last March left a number of people dead and injured and over 2,000 homes were destroyed. This unfortunate incident was only one of many, causing over 12,000 people to be displaced and about 7,000 refugees over this past year. Similarly and much more recently, during the end of September through the beginning of October, the violence that took place in Thandwe left several homes burned and several injured.

While the OIC is appreciative of the Myanmar Government efforts to apprehend those who started and carried out the violent acts, the OIC calls upon the government of Myanmar to continue to hold all those accountable who carry out such acts.

The OIC also calls upon the Government of Myanmar to create and encourage interfaith and inter-communal dialogue efforts across States where there is this tension and create positive opportunities for engagement. The OIC is ready to provide assistance in this regard.

The OIC will continue to engage all interested parties on the issue of inter-communal violence in Myanmar in an effort to find suitable means of cooperation.
Situation of internally displaced persons in Rakhine State:

The ongoing situation of those internally displaced in Rakhine State is of the utmost importance to the OIC. Due to the complications of humanitarian assistance delivery, lack of travel authorizations and other impediments, there is a lack of assistance reaching many who are in need. There continues to be inter-communal tension, lack of access to health and education services in the camps and a perceived bias towards the Rohingya in the distribution of aid. The OIC is committed to finding an appropriate avenue through the Government of Myanmar for the delivery of aid to those who need it without any ethnic or religious bias.

In the view of the forthcoming visit of the OIC Secretary General and group of Ministers to Myanmar, the OIC Group in New York would like to register the OIC’s readiness in the spirit of cooperation and solidarity with the Government of Myanmar to help alleviate the humanitarian situation as well as efforts aiming at inter-communal reconciliation.

Thank you Mr. Chair.