

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM6.1	ACTION			Ward: All
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International Accountability for Crimes of Genocide Against the Rohingya and Other Minorities - by Councillor Shelley Carroll, seconded by Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Shelley Carroll, seconded by Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, recommends that:

1. City Council urge the Government of Canada without further delay to invoke the Genocide Convention and specifically engage like-minded States to pursue the matter before the International Court of Justice in order to hold Myanmar to its obligations and to seek provisional measures and ultimately reparations for the Rohingya people.
2. City Council urge the Government of Canada to exert pressure on Myanmar to release the jailed Reuters journalists, and to allow for unobstructed access to Rakhine State by independent monitors in order to investigate the international crimes committed and to afford protections to remaining Rohingya.
3. City Council urge the Government of Canada to continue to assist the Government of Bangladesh through multilateral aid in addressing the humanitarian needs of the Rohingya refugees, with particular focus on the needs of women and children, including education.
4. City Council direct the City Clerk to provide a copy of this Motion to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Justice of the Government of Canada.

Summary

On September 20, 2018, the Parliament of Canada unanimously adopted a motion recognizing that the crimes committed by the Government of Myanmar against the Rohingya people constitute genocide. This "cleansing operation" by Myanmar's military has caused an exodus of over 725,000 people to flee to Bangladesh, creating the world's largest refugee camp and one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

Today, Myanmar continues its persecution of the remaining Rohingya in Rakhine State and is defiant in its blatant disregard of international norms and standards with activities including:

the imprisonment of journalists; the denial of access to the United Nations Special Rapporteur; and the burning of villages of other ethnic groups such as the Kachin, Karen, Shan, and Chin minorities.

Following the end of World War II and the Holocaust, both Canada and Myanmar signed and ratified the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (the 'Genocide Convention'). Recently, Canadian human rights think tanks such as the Montreal Institute of Genocide Studies at Concordia University, the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights, and the Human Rights Research and Education Centre at the University of Ottawa have called for Canada to invoke the Genocide Convention.

We are submitting this Motion in conjunction with a similar Motion to be considered by Montreal City Council in April 2019.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM6.1