



## *Check Against Delivery*

Organization: Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada and International Bar Association  
Item: Item 4: Interactive dialogue with the Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar  
(oral update)  
Date: 19 September 2017  
Speaker: Catherine Morris

## **Oral Statement to the 36th Session of the UN Human Rights Council from Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada (LRWC) and the International Bar Association, NGOs in special consultative status**

Mr. President,

Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada and the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute thank the Fact-Finding Mission for its oral update. The Mission offers an opportunity to determine the facts of continuing atrocities particularly against the Rohingya people in Rakhine state as well as peoples in Shan and Kachin states, and to ensure full accountability for perpetrators and justice for victims. It further provides an opportunity to identify root causes of violations and develop practicable recommendations to prevent and remedy violations and end the longstanding impunity enjoyed by Myanmar's military.

When this Council created the Mission in March, the Government of Myanmar responded first by denying access to the Mission and then with increasingly brutal military action against the Rohingya.

On 13 September, the UN Secretary General described the military action against the Rohingya as "ethnic cleansing," and the UN Security Council called for "immediate steps to end the violence in Rakhine, de-escalate the situation, re-establish law and order, ensure the protection of civilians ... and resolve the refugee problem."

Denial of access to the Mission is part of a pattern of refusal to allow human rights defenders including journalists to freely conduct independent monitoring of human rights violations. Systematic judicial harassment of defenders is compounded by corruption within Myanmar's justice system.

We ask Council to call upon all States to use their full diplomatic capabilities to urge the government of Myanmar to immediately stop the violence, allow access for all necessary humanitarian aid, and to cooperate fully with the Mission, including by allowing its members full and unimpeded access to the entire country. We call on the Fact-Finding Mission to complete its work and to identify those responsible so that appropriate proceedings can be taken against them.

Thank you, Mr. President.