

OIC to discuss efforts to help Rohingya refugees
The Malaysian Insider
May 26, 2015

The Organisation Of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is mobilising efforts to address political and humanitarian aspects of the Rohingya refugees, as part of its long-standing campaign to support the persecuted Muslim minority in Myanmar.

In line with this, OIC Secretary-General Iyad Ameen Madani has instructed its offices in Geneva and New York to actively coordinate with relevant international agencies and organisations to contribute to humanitarian efforts.

The issue would also be top of the agenda during the Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in Kuwait tomorrow, where a joint plan of action would be discussed for adoption, the Jeddah-based organisation said in its website yesterday.

OIC Special Envoy for Myanmar, Tan Sri Syed Hamid Albar has been fully active on the ground, as well as working with local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and contacting officials for the OIC campaign to help the Rohingya – described by the United Nations as one of the most persecuted minorities in the world.

OIC has also communicated with its humanitarian NGOs' network to create an action plan to tackle the issue, as well as preparing to launch media awareness and fund raising campaign throughout its 57-member states.

It said that the main cause for the current crisis was due to the dire situation faced by the Rohingya, which led some 100,000 of them fleeing Myanmar's Rakhine state on boats due to oppression, fear, abuse and killings since 2012.

The organisation stressed that the international community must press the Myanmar government to stop violating the basic human rights of the Rohingya and recognise them as full-fledged citizens.

OIC said it had actively supported the Rohingya to regain citizenship revoked in 1982, and had assisted in the founding of the Arakan Rohingya Union, an entity representing Rohingya worldwide, to seek the international community's support as well as raise awareness on their plight.

It has also adopted an action plan to persuade the Myanmar government "to take steps" against people promoting hate speech and instigating violence against Rohingya, as well as held inter-community and interfaith dialogue.

The bloc has dispatched fact-finding missions to Myanmar and proposed to the government to open an OIC humanitarian office but it was rejected by the Myanmar authorities.

Malaysia and Indonesia have agreed to provide temporary shelter for the 7,000 Rohingya and Bangladeshi refugees and migrants adrift at sea for one year. –

Bernama, May 26, 2015.

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