

# STATUS OF HUMAN RIGHTS & SANCTIONS IN MYANMAR

## AUGUST 2019 REPORT

**Summary.** This report reviews the August 2019 developments relating to human rights in Myanmar. Relatedly, it addresses the interchange between Myanmar’s reform efforts and the responses of the international community.

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## **I. Political Developments**

### **A. Rohingya Refugee Crisis**

On August 15, the Myanmar and Bangladesh governments announced repatriation plans, consisting of an agreed list of 3,450 Rohingya refugees to be returned to Rakhine State.<sup>1</sup> This second attempt to begin repatriation of the thousands of Rohingya refugees that have fled from Myanmar to Bangladesh over the past two years failed, primarily due to the Myanmar authorities' failure to convince the refugees that it would be safe to return.<sup>2</sup> Similar to the first repatriation attempt in November of last year, no refugees agreed to voluntarily board the buses to Myanmar.<sup>3</sup> A Bangladeshi government official confirmed that four families from Cox's Bazar had initially expressed interest in going back, but that they were dissuaded from boarding a vehicle to cross the border by fellow refugees who told them that they would not be able to return to their original villages or have a pathway to citizenship.<sup>4</sup>

Although the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights ("UNHCR") has confirmed with the two governments that any repatriation of refugees will be voluntary, safe and dignified, none of the refugees interviewed by UNHCR have indicated that they are willing to repatriate at this time.<sup>5</sup> Bangladesh's refugee relief and repatriation commissioner, Mohammad Abul Kalam, stated that UNHCR had only interviewed a third of the 3,450 refugees as part of its intention surveys.<sup>6</sup> Of the refugees who had been interviewed, most Rohingya clearly stated that they were very fearful of their physical safety in Rakhine State, and that this was the primary reason that they did not want to return to Myanmar.<sup>7</sup>

The failed repatriation attempt came as a United Nations fact-finding mission issued a report that revealed the extent to which the Tatmadaw systematically used sexual violence, including the gang rape of men and women, as part of its strategy to intimidate the Rohingya during 2016 and 2017 during the crackdowns that precipitated the fleeing of Rohingya from Myanmar to Bangladesh.<sup>8</sup>

### **B. Corruption**

Following a complaint to the President's Office, former Union Industry Minister Khin Maung Cho was allowed to step down under suspicion of corruption.<sup>9</sup> Khin Maung Cho is suspected to have arranged for the purchase of raw materials worth more than one billion kyat from state-owned Burma Pharmaceutical Industry without conducting a tender process.<sup>10</sup>

The Union Parliament approved a proposal for Myanmar to join the International Anti-Corruption Academy.<sup>11</sup> Myanmar will join 74 other countries and four non-state entities, and lawmakers have expressed hope that joining the academy will help to improve the operations of the Anti-Corruption Commission ("ACC").<sup>12</sup>

A Ministry of Electricity and Energy official under investigation by the ACC has returned to work, although the investigation remains ongoing.<sup>13</sup>

A deputy director general of the Naypyitaw market department was released from custody by the Mandalay Region Supreme Court following a finding of fabricated evidence.<sup>14</sup>

The deputy director general, Min Lwin Soe, had been arrested and sued in November 2017 for allegedly accepting a bribe of 5 million kyat.<sup>15</sup> Evidence presented by Min Lwin Soe showed that the videos showing him accepting the bribe had been edited to exclude Min Lwin Soe's refusal of the bribe.<sup>16</sup>

### **C. International Community / Sanctions**

A report from a UN fact-finding mission has revealed that nearly 60 foreign firms operating in Myanmar have business ties to the Tatmadaw.<sup>17</sup> It also listed 45 local businesses that donated over US\$10 million (15.1 billion kyats) to the military during the first few weeks of its 2017 clearance operations against the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army in Rakhine State—operations widely condemned since as ethnic cleansing. The report calls on members of the international business community to sever their ties to the Tatmadaw or risk contributing to the several human rights violations the international community accuses the military of perpetrating. The report accuses the firms of at the very least contributing to the military's financial capacity to carry out human rights violations, particularly in ethnic areas like Kachin, Shan and Rakhine States.<sup>18</sup> The report named two companies in particular—KBZ Group and Max Myanmar Group—that helped finance the construction of a barrier fence along the Myanmar-Bangladesh border “knowing that it would contribute to the suffering and anguish associated with preventing the displaced Rohingya population from returning to their homes and land,” the report said. Max Myanmar Group said that it “categorically denies” the report's description of its donation.

The Myanmar government said that it “categorically rejects” the UN report, saying it is “an action intended to harm the interests of Myanmar and its people.”<sup>19</sup> The Foreign Ministry reiterated its view that the UN Human Rights Council exceeded its mandate and contravened the terms and practices of international law by setting up the fact finding mission.<sup>20</sup> Myanmar has opposed the investigatory body since it was formed in 2017, saying its creation was based on unfounded allegations. The government said that it is addressing the issue of accountability in Rakhine through the Independent Commission of Enquiry. The military has also established its own Commission of Enquiry to address the allegation of human rights violations in northern Rakhine. The Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development in Rakhine (“UEHRD”), an umbrella program for infrastructure projects in northern Rakhine and one of the programs named in the report, said the UN report “paints a distorted picture of the UEHRD, which was established to address the complex issues of Rakhine.”<sup>21</sup>

Following the release of the report, Belgian company Newtec decided to stop doing business with Myanmar military-backed Mytel.<sup>22</sup> Newtec was among the many firms mentioned in the report. Newtec said it would “follow the recommendations by the UN and stop commercial ties with Mytel linked to the MEC [Myanmar Economic Corporation] through its corporate structure.” According to Communication & Commerce (Com & Com), a technology and equipment supplier to Mytel, Newtec's decision will not seriously impact the company's more than 15 million SIM-card holders across the country.

The UK-based rights group, Burma Campaign UK, added nearly 40 international firms, including U.S. tech giants Google and Apple, as well as Britain's Peel Group, China's Huawei and Japanese financial services company JCB to its “Dirty List” for having ties to Myanmar military-owned businesses or projects linked to gross human rights violations and environmental

destruction in the country.<sup>23</sup> Whereas the UN's recent report focused on foreign firms that indirectly earn income for the military, Burma Campaign UK's latest report includes a wide range of companies with various types of links to military-backed businesses such as telecom operator Mytel.

Kyauktada Township deputy administrator Myo Myint filed a complaint against Hla Swe, a former lieutenant-colonel with the Tatmadaw, with the township court for allegedly condemning state leaders while speaking at a rally against the imposition of U.S. sanctions on Myanmar military leaders in front of Yangon City Hall on August 3.<sup>24</sup> "Sanctions were imposed against Tatmadaw [leaders]. Doesn't the country have a president? Doesn't the country have someone who is higher than the president?" Hla Swe said at the rally, apparently calling out President Win Myint and State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi for not taking actions against the U.S. sanctions. He also accused them of providing inside information to the U.S. that contributed to the imposition of the sanctions. An arrest warrant was issued for sedition under Article 124(a) of the Penal Code.

## **II. Civil and Political Rights**

### **A. Freedom of Speech, Assembly and Association**

A court in Kamayut Township rejected a lawsuit filed against the U.S. ambassador and two others by nationalist monk, Parmaukha, for allegedly defaming Buddhism.<sup>25</sup> Parmaukha filed the lawsuit against U.S. Ambassador Scott Marciel, the artist who painted the picture and the person who posted the picture on the official Facebook page of the U.S. Embassy in Yangon. The image was of a painting done for an environmentally themed art exhibit the embassy hosted in July. The image depicts a silhouette of Buddha wearing a gas mask in the foreground while factories belching smoke are seen in the background. The post received hundreds of critical comments, saying the embassy defamed Buddha and Buddhism, and failed to respect the host country's religion. The U.S. Embassy removed the post the next day. Parmaukha's lawsuit was rejected by the court as being unfit for a lawsuit.

Muslim spiritual leader San Aung said that he is in the process of filing a lawsuit against Hla Swe, an ex-military officer who represented the Union Solidarity and Development Party ("USDP") in the country's Upper House under the Thein Sein administration, accusing him of hate speech against Islam.<sup>26</sup> During a speech on August 3, Hla Swe, who retired from the military as a lieutenant colonel to join the military's proxy USDP before the 2010 general elections, said, "They [the U.S.] can insult three out of four religions. But do they dare touch Muhammad? I doubt the U.S. is that brave. If they do, Muhammad will bomb them with an airplane. They are afraid of that." The lawsuit is filed under Article 295(a) of the Penal Code, which criminalizes deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage the feelings of any group by insulting its religion or religious beliefs.<sup>27</sup>

The Loikaw Township Court officially charged six Karenni activists with slander under Article 8(d) of the Law Protecting the Privacy and Security of Citizens for calling the Kayah State chief minister a traitor over his support of a statue of Myanmar independence hero General Aung San.<sup>28</sup> In February, the Kayah State government erected the statue in a park in the state's capital, Loikaw, amid protest from Karenni locals. The state government used the police force to

crack down on protesters that had gathered at the park and later outside of the local National League for Democracy headquarters. Karenni activists said at the time that they have their own history involving their own ethnic leaders, and that the statue of Gen. Aung San is a symbol of the dominant role the interests and identity of the Myanmar majority plays in the country, to the disadvantage of ethnic minorities. If convicted the activists face six months to three years in prison.

Some 30 students protested in Sagaing Region to call on the government to release the eight students who were arrested for holding a march on July 7 in Yangon to commemorate the demolition of the Rangoon University Students' Union building by troops in 1962.<sup>29</sup> The eight students who led the march in July were charged with protesting without permission.

Lieutenant-Colonel Than Htike from the Tatmadaw's Northern Command filed a lawsuit against an ethnic Kachin religious leader, Rev. Dr. Hkalam Samson, for discussing "the promotion of democracy and federalism in Myanmar" with U.S. President Trump at the White House in July.<sup>30</sup> Dr. Hkalam Samson and another Kachin pastor, Langjaw Gam Seng, attended a meeting of victims of religious persecution from around the world organized in Washington by the U.S. State Department. During the meeting, Dr. Hkalam Samson told Trump there was no religious freedom in Myanmar and that oppression and torture were still common in the country, where fighting between ethnic armed organizations and the Myanmar military continues despite a return to civilian rule. He also requested Trump support Myanmar's transition to "genuine" democracy and federalism. Dr. Hkalam Samson also thanked the U.S. for imposing sanctions against Myanmar military commander-in-chief Senior-General Min Aung Hlaing and other leaders over extrajudicial killings of Rohingya Muslims. The sanctions bar the officers from entry to the U.S.

Insein Township Court in Yangon Region sentenced a prominent filmmaker and human rights activist to one year in prison for defaming the military in posts on Facebook.<sup>31</sup> Min Htin Ko Ko Gyi, who also founded the Human Rights, Human Dignity International Film Festival, was the subject of a defamation lawsuit filed in March by Lieutenant-Colonel Lin Htun of the Myanmar military's Yangon Region Command under Article 505(a) of the Penal Code.<sup>32</sup> "Min Htin Ko Ko Gyi is so sick that he only has a slim chance of surviving. The sentence is unfair and inhumane; it's an inappropriate sentence for an ailing person. We will submit an appeal to a higher court very soon," said the filmmaker's lawyer, Robert San Aung. Min Htin Ko Ko Gyi suffers from liver cancer. Just three months before he was detained in April, he underwent surgery to remove half of his liver. Prior to the sentencing, Amnesty International had called for all charges against the filmmaker to be dropped immediately and unconditionally.<sup>33</sup>

## **B. Freedom of the Press and Censorship**

At a meeting organized by the Myanmar Press Council, the chief minister of Mandalay Region said that he only knew of three pillars of democracy—the legislature, the administrative branch and the judiciary—prompting criticism from the country's media organizations.<sup>34</sup> "I want the media to be the fourth pillar. But I have to question if the media in Myanmar now are worthy of being the fourth pillar? In the Constitution, there are only three pillars—legislative, administrative and judicial," Zaw Myint Maung said. He said the concept of the fourth pillar of democracy is derived from the international community, and insisted there was no such fourth

pillar in Myanmar. The Upper Myanmar Journalists Organization said it was saddened by the chief minister's comments, and voiced concerns that they would increase restrictions on freedom of press.

The Mandalay District Court agreed to hear an appeal against a lower court's decision to drop a lawsuit against Myanmar Now editor Ko Swe Win, who was accused of defaming a prominent nationalist monk.<sup>35</sup> Nationalist Kyaw Myo Shwe sued Myanmar Now editor Ko Swe Win on July 30, 2017 under Article 66(d) of the Telecommunications Act for posting comments on Facebook that allegedly defamed ultra-nationalist Buddhist monk Wirathu.

Reporters Without Borders ("RSF") has asked the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention to look into the case of Aung Kyi Myint, a video-reporter who will begin his fourth month in detention on what, in a statement, it called "trumped-up charges" in Myanmar's central Mandalay region.<sup>36</sup> Arrested on May 15 while providing live coverage of a demonstration on social networks, Nanda is accused of violence against police and soldiers, supposedly with the help of a stick, although, RSF says, there is no evidence to support this claim. He was held for a month before being formally charged and he is facing a possible combined sentence of 17 years in prison.

### **III. Economic Development**

#### **A. Economic Development—Legal Framework, Foreign Investment**

According to a statement of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration ("DICA"), 224 foreign enterprises were permitted by the Myanmar Investment Commission ("MIC") to invest more than \$ 3.5 billion in the country in the first 10 months of the fiscal year 2018 – 2019. From October 2018 to July 31, 2019, the transport and communication sector attracted the most foreign direct investment, followed by the manufacturing sector. Foreign investment also flowed into the country's agriculture, livestock and fisheries, power, oil and gas, hotel and tourism, real estate, industrial estate and other services sectors.<sup>37</sup>

After a meeting with the Myanmar State Counselor, the president of South Korea pledged to accelerate Korea's economic presence in Myanmar and to cooperate on development in the country. The trip is a part of the Korean president's "New Southern Policy" to deepen relations with Southeast Asian nations. Five memoranda of understanding and one framework agreement, focused mostly on investment between the two countries, were signed during the trip.<sup>38</sup>

According to the embassies of Japan and the U.S. in Myanmar, the countries stand with Myanmar to promote responsible, quality and ethical investment "for the benefit of the people of Myanmar" and "for the country's economic development." The announcement was made in a joint statement issued by the embassies following the opening ceremony of the Myanmar-Japan-U.S. Forum on Fostering Responsible Investment in Yangon. As of June 2019, the U.S. was the 13th-largest source of foreign direct investment in Myanmar.<sup>39</sup>

Hilton, one of the fastest-growing hospitality companies in the Asia Pacific, remains upbeat about Myanmar as a growth market within its South East Asia operations on the back of the country's positive tourism outlook. The global company has expressed confidence in both

leisure and business travel segments in Myanmar, as the Tourism Ministry reported close to 2.5 million foreign visitor arrivals into the country in the first half of this year, which is a 26% year-on-year increase from 2018. Recent developments, such as the easing of visa policies for travelers, the country's new tourism campaign and the naming of the ancient city of Bagan as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, are expected to contribute to increasing Myanmar's appeal as a travel destination.<sup>40</sup>

Myanmar's securities regulator and the Yangon Stock Exchange are planning to establish an alternative market on which investors can trade shares of unlisted companies. Dubbed the Myanmar Public Companies Board, the new market will be a steppingstone for companies to list on the Yangon Stock Exchange. The stock exchange opened in 2016 but still lists only five companies. On July 12, the commission announced that it would allow foreign investors to trade on the Yangon Stock Exchange by the end of the year. Companies which have previously conducted public offerings or those with more than 100 shareholders will be encouraged to register for the new market. About 60 such companies exist in Myanmar.<sup>41</sup>

## **B. Economic Development—Infrastructure, Major Projects**

On August 1, Chinese representatives and officials from Myanmar's Industry Ministry held the first meeting of the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor ("CMEC") Industry and Investment Cooperation Group, which aims to promote production-based investment and to implement industrial zones along the CMEC.<sup>42</sup>

On August 8, Myanmar's Urban and Housing Development Department ("UHDD") signed a joint venture agreement with Korea Land and Housing Corporation to establish a joint industrial complex in Hlegu, north of the commercial capital Yangon. The Korea Myanmar Industrial Complex will comprise both industrial and commercial areas as well as a research and development facility and a training school on 558 acres in Nyaung Hna Pin village. The project is estimated to create 50,000 to 100,000 jobs. Around 200 Korean companies are expected to invest in the production facilities, which will generate a projected \$10 million in taxes annually. The two parties signed a memorandum of agreement for the project in 2017, which was approved by the Myanmar Investment Commission in February 2019. The project is expected to be completed by 2023.<sup>43</sup>

The two-year USAID-funded capacity development project in partnership with the Pacific Disaster Center and the ASEAN Centre for Humanitarian Assistance, AHA Centre, which aims to build disaster monitoring and early warning capacity for extreme cyclones, earthquakes, floods, landslides and wildfires within Myanmar, entered its final phase in August, as local disaster management experts continue the advances made in the past 27 months. Under this project, Myanmar officials received training on the use of the Disaster Monitoring and Response System platform ("DMRS") beginning in 2017, with a total of 11 sessions reaching nearly 200 members of Myanmar's disaster management community. One final, advanced training was conducted with senior government staff who will take responsibility for incorporating Myanmar-specific Hazards into the DMRS.<sup>44</sup>

The main developer of the New Yangon City project, the New Yangon Development Company ("NYDC"), announced on August 20 that it selected Thailand's PTT Group for power

supply and distribution and India's Indraprastha Gas Limited and Gail Consortium (IGL Consortium) for natural gas supply and distribution for the controversial project. The New Yangon City project was launched last year by the Yangon government to develop 20,000 acres of farmland across the Yangon River from downtown Yangon. The project is still awaiting Union government approval. According to the announcement, the companies were selected from among 77 submissions from 45 companies and consortia. Next steps include carrying out preliminary work and feasibility studies to prepare pre-project documents—a set of submissions including technical specifications, a financial proposal and a business model—to be used as the basis for conducting the NYDC Challenge, an adaptation of the Swiss Challenge, a global model for fair competition and transparency. The NYDC Challenge allows parties to challenge the original bids with lower bids, which would then cause the originally chosen companies to match the offer or forgo the contract.<sup>45</sup>

On August 15, the Myanmar government announced that it was ready to sign a framework agreement with China on the establishment of cross-border economic cooperation zones, paving the way for the implementation of Beijing's grand infrastructure plans in the country as part of its Belt and Road Initiative. According to the Assistant Permanent Secretary and spokesperson for the Ministry of Commerce, Khin Maung Lwin, the framework will cover a number of major agreements, particularly on the formation of a bilateral joint committee for the implementation of the cross-border economic cooperation zones, the assignment of management roles for the zones and types of incentives for investors.<sup>46</sup>

However, despite China and Myanmar's enthusiasm, there are concerns over the feasibility of Beijing's push to implement the framework. In a three-day period in August, the Northern Alliance, a collection of armed groups in northern Shan State, blew up four major bridges along the main route to the two most important trade hubs on the Myanmar-China border. As a result of the damage, two major border gates in Shan State—in Muse (across the border from Ruili, in China's Yunnan Province) and Chinshwehaw in Laukkai Township (part of the Kokang Self-Administered Zone)—have been shut down.<sup>47</sup>

Conflict between Myanmar and the ethnic armed groups also appeared in Pyin Oo Lwin, where joint forces belonging to the Arakan Army, Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army set off explosives at the Goktwin Bridge on August 15. The bridge, which is part of the Mandalay-Muse highway that facilitates trade between Myanmar and China, was one of five targets, which also included tollgates and the Defense Services Technological Academy in Pyin Oo Lwin.<sup>48</sup>

### **C. Land Seizure**

In Mandalay, there is growing concern about fake land deeds being used to sell land.<sup>49</sup> Officials have indicated that they believe that “more reliable” procedures for taking ownership of land need to be put in place, including a new property brokerage law.<sup>50</sup> There is also concern in Mandalay about rental houses built for individuals who were previously squatters being sold or rented illegally.<sup>51</sup> These apartments were built in an effort to remove illegal houses. The Mandalay City Development Committee reports that over 3,300 illegal houses and structures have been cleared in the last three years.<sup>52</sup> Some of the cleared structures include shops that had



previously been encroaching on public roads. Mandalay has indicated that they “continue tackling this problem.”<sup>53</sup>

The government has continued its work to expedite compensation for people who have lost land due to urban development.<sup>54</sup> The total amount of land eligible for compensation pursuant to this program stands at 397 hectares and the financial compensation totals K200 billion.<sup>55</sup> An estimated K77 billion will be distributed in 2019, and another K33 billion is expected to be handed out in 2020.<sup>56</sup> Additional funding for compensation will be raised by selling land in new townships.<sup>57</sup>

#### **IV. Peace Talks and Ethnic Violence**

##### **A. Ethnic Violence**

According to a Myanmar army spokesperson, ethnic armed fighters have killed at least 15 members of the Myanmar security forces in attacks on an elite military college and other government targets in the northern Shan State.<sup>58</sup> The Northern Alliance, a collection of armed groups in the region, claimed responsibility for the attacks.<sup>59</sup> The rebels also burned down bridges in the region.<sup>60</sup> Photos published by local media showed damaged buildings and burned cars riddled with bullet holes.<sup>61</sup>

Also in Shan State, a volunteer ambulance worker has been killed and several others injured during fighting between separatist rebels and government forces.<sup>62</sup>

Fighting in Shan State escalated after attacks by the Northern Alliance.<sup>63</sup> Dozens of NGO workers were evacuated days after the ambulance driver was killed.<sup>64</sup> Over 3,400 people from Lashio, Theinni and Kutkai townships in northern Shan State have been displaced by recent conflicts between ethnic armed organizations and the Myanmar military, according to local volunteer groups.<sup>65</sup> The numbers do not include those staying with friends and relatives.<sup>66</sup> All schools in the region outside of large city centers have closed out of security concerns.<sup>67</sup>

A woman and a girl sustained injuries after stepping on a landmine in the forest in Mong Peng Township, eastern Shan State, while gathering food.<sup>68</sup> There was no evidence as to which armed group planted the landmine, according to an officer at the Restoration Council of Shan State (“RCSS”).<sup>69</sup>

##### **B. Peace Talks**

The United Nationalities Federal Council (“UNFC”), a coalition of ethnic armed groups, announced it is suspending participation in the peace process after an emergency meeting in Chaing Mai, Thailand, on August 1 and 2.<sup>70</sup> The UNFC has been involved in Myanmar’s peace process since 2011, serving as the main contact between the government and the ethnic armed groups.

The government and the Peace Process Steering Team (“PPST”), composed of ethnic armed organizations that are signatories to the nationwide ceasefire agreement (“NCA”), met in Chiang Mai, Thailand in mid-August to discuss current political and military affairs as well as

peace conditions to find ways of moving the stalled peace process forward.<sup>71</sup> Leaders also urged the union government, the Myanmar military and three non-signatory ethnic armed organizations currently fighting in northern Shan State to end the conflict and seek political solutions. Following the meeting, the PPST announced that peace discussions will continue with the government.

According to the TNLA, no significant progress was made at a meeting between the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre (“NRPC”) and the Northern Alliance, although the Tatmadaw’s unilateral ceasefire is scheduled to end on August 31.<sup>72</sup> The alliance of four ethnic armed groups and the government are still negotiating over a venue for talks on signing a bilateral ceasefire agreement. The NRPC wants to hold the talks in the country, but the alliance wants to hold them in China or in Panghsang in the Wa Special Administrative Region.

The government and the Northern Alliance will meet for peace talks in Keng Tung, eastern Shan State on August 31, the last day of the Tatmadaw’s unilateral ceasefire in the region.<sup>73</sup> Observers are hoping negotiations can resume and lead to an easing of the conflicts in western and northeastern Myanmar, where three members of the Northern Alliance—the TNLA, AA and MNDAA—are engaged in heavy fighting with the Myanmar military.

The Tatmadaw plans to hold peace talks with ethnic armed organizations in Shan State’s Kengtung.<sup>74</sup> The military spokesperson declined to say which armed groups were invited. However, the Irrawaddy reports that it is speculated that the talks will include the TNLA, AA and Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army.

- <sup>1</sup> Amnesty, August 21, 2019: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/08/myanmar-two-years-since-rohingya-crisis/>
- <sup>2</sup> The Guardian, August 22, 2019: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/22/rohingya-refugees-turn-down-second-myanmar-repatriation-effort>
- <sup>3</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>4</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>5</sup> UNHCR, August 22, 2019: <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/press/2019/8/5d5e720a4/unhcr-statement-voluntary-repatriation-myanmar.html>
- <sup>6</sup> The Guardian, August 22, 2019: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/22/rohingya-refugees-turn-down-second-myanmar-repatriation-effort>
- <sup>7</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>8</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>9</sup> The Irrawaddy, Aug. 5, 2019, <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/ex-industry-minister-violated-office-procedures-govt-spokesman.html>.
- <sup>10</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>11</sup> The Irrawaddy, Aug. 5, 2019, <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-join-international-anti-corruption-academy.html>.
- <sup>12</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>13</sup> Frontier Myanmar, Aug. 16, 2019, <https://frontiermyanmar.net/en/energy-minister-returns-to-work-amid-corruption-probe-confusion>.
- <sup>14</sup> The Irrawaddy, Aug. 28, 2019, <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/municipal-official-myanmar-capital-cleared-bribery-charges.html>.
- <sup>15</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>16</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>17</sup> The Irrawaddy, August 5, 2019: <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/nearly-60-foreign-firms-tied-military-businesses-un-report.html>.
- <sup>18</sup> Myanmar Times, August 5, 2019: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/un-fact-finding-mission-urges-sanctions-against-military-owned-businesses.html>.
- <sup>19</sup> The Irrawaddy, August 6, 2019: <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/govt-rejects-un-report-calling-boycott-military-tied-companies.html>; Mizzima, August 7, 2019: <http://www.mizzima.com/article/myanmar-categorically-rejects-un-report-army-business-empire>.
- <sup>20</sup> Myanmar Times, August 7, 2019: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/govt-slams-un-call-ban-businesses.html>.
- <sup>21</sup> The Irrawaddy, August 8, 2019: <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/suu-kyi-led-rakhine-development-agency-says-un-report-intended-harm-myanmar.html>.
- <sup>22</sup> The Irrawaddy, August 13, 2019: <https://www.irrawaddy.com/business/belgian-firms-withdrawal-mytel-operator-sees-minimal-impact.html>.
- <sup>23</sup> The Irrawaddy, August 20, 2019: <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/uk-rights-group-expands-dirty-list-companies-ties-myanmar-army.html>.
- <sup>24</sup> The Irrawaddy, August 8, 2019: <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/arrest-warrant-issued-former-myanmar-military-officer.html>.
- <sup>25</sup> The Irrawaddy, August 1, 2019: <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/court-rejects-monks-lawsuit-us-embassy-buddha-image.html>.
- <sup>26</sup> The Irrawaddy, August 6, 2019: <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/muslim-leader-files-suit-ex-officer-hate-speech-islam.html>; Mizzima, August 8, 2019: <http://www.mizzima.com/article/court-accepts-complaint-against-bullet-hla-swe-insult-religion>.
- <sup>27</sup> Myanmar Times, August 13, 2019: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/court-issues-warrant-arrest-former-usdp-lawmaker.html>.
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