

Many constituents have contacted me about the plight of the Rohingya people in Burma.

I passed correspondence about this to the Prime Minister in May but have only just received a response; it was passed from Downing Street to the Foreign & Commonwealth Office. The response is below.

The Minister outlines what he has done, I welcome the action he has taken during his visits including raising this with the Burmese Government. The UK should be doing all that it can on this, upholding human rights and ensuring persecuted communities are protected; issues I care strongly about and have campaigned on.

I will continue to hold the Government to account, ensuring they do all they can and use their role in the world to protect the Rohingya and other persecuted communities.

Yours ever,



Fiona Mactaggart MP

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16<sup>th</sup> September 2015

Our reference: MIN/86923/2015

The Rt Hon Fiona Mactaggart MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

King Charles Street  
London SW1A 2AH

Minister of State

RECEIVED  
22 SEP 2015

Dear Fiona,

Thank you for the email [REDACTED] of 29 May to the Prime Minister on behalf of your constituent, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] on the situation of the Rohingya community in Burma's Rakhine State. I am also deeply concerned about the situation in Rakhine, which is why I was determined to travel to Rakhine for a second time, when I visited Burma last month.

Your constituent's letter asks about an international investigation into the events in Rakhine since 2012. We are aware of the reports referred to from Human Rights Watch and United to End Genocide. It is clear that there are appalling human rights violations taking place against the Rohingya in Rakhine State that amount to persecution. During my visit to Rakhine State last month, I was able to see for myself the result of some of this persecution in the numbers who are enduring awful conditions in camps for the internally displaced.

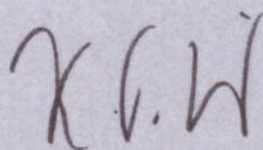
The UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Burma, Yanghee Lee, has issued two lengthy reports detailing human rights abuses and violations against the Rohingya in Rakhine State. We believe the immediate focus should be to adopt the recommendations made in her reports. We have also made clear to the government of Burma that allegations of human rights abuses must be dealt with through a clear, independent and transparent investigative and prosecutorial process that meets international standards.

Our priority in Rakhine remains to address the immediate humanitarian situation and human rights violations and abuses that are occurring. At the same time we continue to press the Burmese authorities to take responsibility for addressing the underlying challenges across the State, not least tackling impunity for violations, and ensuring the protection of all inhabitants. During my visit, I made these points to the Burmese government at senior level both in Sittwe and in Naypyitaw.

Your constituent's letter also mentions action by the UN to address this issue. We have welcomed the UN's involvement and leadership on Rakhine, for example where the UN Secretary General's efforts helped secure the equitable distribution of aid following Cyclone Nargis. The Secretary General took a firm personal stand

during his visit to Burma for the ASEAN Summit November 2014, as well as during the recent migration crisis when he called President Thein Sein on 20 May. High-level discussions on humanitarian access featured during my own visit to Burma last month and the United Kingdom is one of the largest humanitarian donors in Rakhine State. As well as that funding, we play a leading role in coordinating the aid response alongside the UN, other donors and non-governmental organisations.

As I hope my visit to Rakhine will have demonstrated, the situation of the Rohingya will continue to be at the heart of the United Kingdom's policy in Burma. We will remain a vocal advocate for change and continue to press for action to resolve issues of concern.

Handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Swire'.

P.P. THE RT HON HUGO SWIRE MP  
Minister of State