

Bangladesh urged to support ICC to make Myanmar accountable

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Dhaka University's Centre for Genocide Studies, BRAC University and ActionAid jointly organise an international seminar on 'accountability: ICC and the Rohingya crisis' at the Senate Building of Dhaka University on Monday. — New Age photo

The Bangladesh government should extend support to the International Criminal Court without any delay in making Myanmar authorities accountable for crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing against the Rohingyas, foreign and local experts said in Dhaka on Monday.

The UN Security Council should send peacekeeping forces to ensure security to the Rohingyas on their return to Rakhine State of Myanmar, they said at an international seminar on ensuring accountability of the Myanmar authorities at International Criminal Court.

Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed of the High Court said that the ICC had jurisdiction over offences originated in one country but completed in another and in the case of the Rohingya crisis, cross border crime of 'deportation' was committed against the Rohingyas who were intentionally and forcibly sent to Bangladesh territory.

Bangladesh, as a state party to the ICC, might request the ICC prosecutor to carry out an investigation into such crimes, he said, adding that in the cases of Uganda, Congo and the Central African Republic, investigations were commenced and warrants were duly issued for the arrest of the alleged perpetrators.

Former Australian attorney general and human rights envoy Philip Ruddock stressed the need for comprehensive and unwavering measures for getting evidence and testimony for supporting the ICC process as well as sending international peacekeeping forces to Rakhine State.

Former ICC prosecutor Kate Vigneswaran stressed the need for maintaining international standard in collecting and recording evidence of crimes against humanity committed against Rohingyas specifying the individuals involved in the crimes in Rakhine State.

Former Bangladesh attorney general AF Hassan Ariff urged the government not to miss the deadline for sending input to the ICC for making decisions in the case involving the Rohingya persecution.

Any Rohingya victim may also seek remedy at the ICC, he said.

The UN Security Council might consider deploying peacekeeping force in Rakhine State for several years to install confidence among Rohingyas on return, he said, adding that steps could be considered for starting the process of demilitarisation in Myanmar.

Centre for Genocide of the Dhaka University, Centre for Peace and Justice of Brac University and ActionAid Bangladesh jointly organised the seminar on the Dhaka University campus.

Dhaka University professor Imtiaz Ahmed said that China and India could play role by supporting Bangladesh in resolving the Rohingya crisis with Myanmar.

Centre for Peace and Justice of Brac University executive director Manzoor Hasan said that the government had to be far-sighted with extending support for presenting the case at the ICC for ensuring accountability on ethnic cleansing of Rohingyas by Myanmar authorities.

ActionAid Bangladesh country director Farah Kabir alleged that the international community had provided impunity to the Myanmar authorities over the years.

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