

## 2-day int'l conference on Rohingya crisis begins at DU

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Int'l conference on Rohingya crisis begins at DU. Photo: Zabed Hasnain Chowdhury, UNB

Dhaka, Apr 2 (UNB) - A two-day international conference on 'Rohingya Refugee Crisis: Towards Sustainable Solutions' began at Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban of Dhaka University on Monday.

The conference began around 10am with the welcome address delivered by Manzoor Alam, Executive Director of the Centre for Peace and Justice at BRAC University, Chair of ActionAid Bangladesh and Co-convener of the conference.

Later, a message from Robert Keith Rae, special envoy of Canada for Myanmar, was read out at the inaugural session.

Prof Imtiaz Ahmed of DU Department of International Relations is scheduled to present the keynote paper titled 'The Unfolding of the Crisis: Five Challenges' at the session. Centre for Genocide studies of Dhaka University, Brac University and ActionAid jointly organised the conference with an aim to prevent further violence against Rohingyas and promote sustainable peace and reconciliation for those affected.

It also covers humanitarian, social, political, legal and economic issues, gender dimensions, protection and rights as well as security considerations through technical sessions.

Concrete steps will be discussed at the programme to address the issues of ethnic cleansing in Myanmar, crimes against humanity and to leverage international legal instruments to ensure justice for the victims.

Some recent international recommendations and guidelines such as the final report of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State (August 2017), Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's five-point proposal at the United Nations General Assembly (October 2017), China's proposed three-step solution (October 2017), Permanent People's Tribunal's findings and recommendations in Malaysia (September 2017) will also be taken into account through discussions.

The conference is envisaged to bring together diverse and important voices to deepen the discussion on protection and rights for Rohingyas and raise greater awareness both nationally and internationally with specific recommended measures.

The event will end on Tuesday with the Dhaka Declaration, an outline measures for finding sustainable solutions, co-signed by the participants, which will be later sent to the UN and the governments of Bangladesh and Myanmar to address the issues.

Government representatives from Bangladesh and other countries, national and international organisations, including NGOs, CSOs and CBOs, activists and community leaders, national and international academics and experts are taking part in the two-day event.