

Press Statement

Yangon, Myanmar, 20 Dec 2016 – On behalf of the UN system in Myanmar, the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Ms. Renata Dessallien welcomes the convening by the Government of Myanmar of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat on 19 December in Yangon and its outcome.

The UN system has repeatedly condemned the attacks that began in Maungdaw and Rathedaung in Rakhine State on 9 October, expressed condolences for the loss of life and urged restraint, full humanitarian access and independent and a credible investigation into allegations of serious human rights violations.

Appreciating the Government's own humanitarian assistance of rice, cash and non-food items delivered on a number of occasions to the affected communities, the UN welcomes the significant opening of humanitarian space by the Government on 18 December. It is hoped that such an opening would swiftly lead to the delivery of urgent humanitarian assistance to the entire beneficiary population in the whole of the northern part of Rakhine.

We also note the commencement of the Commission of Inquiry, and urge it to conduct a thorough, prompt, and impartial investigation to ensure accountability for any violations committed and provide adequate redress for victims.

Responding to humanitarian needs is an immediate imperative, but not the solution to underlying challenges, which have once again extended beyond the borders of Rakhine State, causing serious concerns. The UN urges the Government of Myanmar to accelerate implementation of a comprehensive strategy to address the suffering and grievances of all communities, as well as the root causes, and to raise the hopes of peoples for a better and dignified life. The UN has been providing extensive assistance to all communities in Rakhine State, and reiterates its offer to redouble its efforts to support the Government and the people toward this end.
