

## **Statement following government-organized visit to northern Rakhine**

2 October 2017

The UN appreciates the Government of Myanmar's invitation to participate in the visit to northern Rakhine organized by national authorities for diplomatic community and the UN.

This was a positive step and such visits, under appropriate conditions, could help in our efforts to explore potential areas where the UN could cooperate with the Myanmar authorities in alleviating the dire situation in northern Rakhine.

Three UN representatives participated in the field visit -- the UN Resident Coordinator Ms. Renata Lok-Dessallien; the WFP representative and Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr. Domenico Scalpelli, and senior UNHCR official Ms. Cécile Fradot.

The scale of human suffering is unimaginable and the UN extends its deepest condolences to all those affected.

The UN advocates for the end to the cycle of violence and for establishing law and order and the rule of law; to allow unfettered access for humanitarian support; and to ensure the safe, voluntary, dignified and sustainable return of the refugees to their areas of origin.

The UN used the field visit also to send a signal of hope to the people in the affected areas, as well as to connect with its staff in northern Rakhine.

The UN delegation reiterated the need for a greater access for humanitarian and human rights actors to conduct comprehensive assessments of the situation on the ground in order to address the concerns and needs of all communities in affected areas. The UN called also for access for the media.

Building on this visit, the UN looks forward to strengthening trust and cooperation with all communities and the Myanmar Government. This will be critical in addressing the root causes and setting a sustainable path towards peace and prosperity of all people in Rakhine State, irrespective of ethnicity, religion or citizenship status.

The UN stands ready to provide its full support to the authorities in responding to the humanitarian and human rights crisis in northern Rakhine, as well as the implementation of the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State.