



Emmaus Asia condemns the human rights violation & genocide in Palestine & Myanmar

From Emmaus Asia region, all members vehemently condemn in the strongest terms the genocide and human rights violation perpetrated by Israel in Gaza-Palestine and against Rohingyas in Myanmar. We stand firm in our commitment to oppose the anguish, indiscriminate violence and forcible displacement inflicted upon the innocent civilians. Such disregard for human life and dignity is a disgrace to the principle of humanity and must be stopped without delay.

Myanmar and the occupied Palestinian territory, which Gaza is part of, stand close to each other at the top of the lists of crises in 2024. Myanmar's conflict have been among the most violent countries for some time, but often fall out of the international media's radar. With genocide intent, both Israel and Myanmar - charged with persecuting, killing and destroying minority communities that are/were inside the borders of these nation-states, namely Palestinians in Gaza and the Rohingya in Myanmar. These two peoples' struggles have been around for decades. Most of the Rohingya are stateless, which sets them aside from other refugees. Likewise there is a State of Palestine that is a "non-member observer state" of the United Nations, but one whose its territories are listed as occupied by Israel.

In Myanmar, a military pushback has killed thousands of civilians, and forced hundreds of thousands move from their homes. The government calls it self-defence – a fight against terrorism. Rohingya have existed in Myanmar for centuries, but they were not considered to be one of the country's 135 official ethnic groups. The military violently expelled more than 700,000 Rohingya, and today over 1 million of them live in the world's largest refugee camp in Bangladesh. They have lost everything and are living in very inhuman difficult conditions as refugees in the eastern border of Bangladesh. What Myanmar's military claimed was necessary, the UN described it as ethnic cleansing, genocide and crime against humanity.

Since October 2023, the death toll in Gaza currently well over 32,000, the bombing of densely populated areas, and the restrictions on aid supplies continues. International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued its ruling warning of a plausible risk of genocide. However the situation in Gaza has grown exponentially worse, with thousands more Palestinians killed, and Israel continuing to refuse to comply with the ICJ ruling to ensure provision of sufficient humanitarian aid to Palestinians, as human-made famine edges closer each day and more people starve to death. People in Gaza are no longer just dying from bombs or lack of medical care, but they're dying of hunger. And not because of a natural disaster, but because of the will of Israel, which has been programming famine in Gaza for six months.

The parallels between Myanmar and what is now happening in Gaza are striking, but the divergent international response has been baffling. No state stood "shoulder to shoulder" in both these situation, when military committed mass atrocities. The bombardment of Gaza looks set to intensify, and the coup crisis continues to escalate in Myanmar. Fed by unchecked rights abuses, the decades-long humanitarian crises in Palestine and Myanmar have outlasted governments, peace accords, geopolitical strategies, and year-to-year aid appeals.

These heinous actions have resulted in the loss of countless innocent lives, the displacement of millions, and the infliction of unbearable suffering upon communities already facing immense challenges. International condemnation is widespread, and there were calls not just for an immediate end to the violence, but for justice and rights. The international humanitarian system is at a crossroads – and in the many crises where humanitarian needs are intertwined with human rights abuses. People are being silenced simply for opposing the widespread killing and displacement of civilians.

Freedom of movement is a fundamental right championed by the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (articles 13 & 14). The forced denial of fundamental rights and human dignity is the crime to humanity, unacceptable to all of us. The legitimacy of the humanitarian system is ultimately at stake. Gaza is as much an open-air prison as the barricaded refugee camps in Myanmar. Being part of Emmaus movement, we strongly believe in human dignity, and the right of all people to live in peace, harmony and democracy, free from repression and dictatorship. With pain, we witness the sheer violation of the fundamental human values, 'Freedom of Movement' by both oppressive governments. It has brought immense and unimaginable suffering to the poor minority population.

Emmaus Asia strongly denounces the brutal act of ethnic cleansing and the killing of innocent civilians, by the Israeli regime in Gaza and the systematic persecution of Rohingyas in Myanmar. We consistently oppose the misery, death, displacement and disruption that affect any country affected by war. We reject any form of discrimination and violence that seek to deny individual rights. Being a member of Emmaus movement, it is must that we all condemn, and take action to support the refugees and the population in the occupied territories, by all possible means.

Emmaus Asia extends its solidarity and unwavering support to all those affected by the atrocities committed by both these ruthless regimes, offering heartfelt condolences to those who have lost their loved ones, sustained injuries and endured material loss. We recognize the deep trauma inflicted upon individuals and communities, and pledge to stand by them in their pursuit of justice and healing.

We affirm that the planet Earth is a shared home for all humanity and every individual is entitled to enjoy fundamental rights of freedom, dignity and security. In recognizing the inter-connectedness of all people, regardless of nationality, ethnicity or creed, Emmaus Asia advocates for a world where every individual can live in peace with dignity, and is free from violence and injustice.

Let it be known that we will continue to raise our voice and take action to ensure that the rights and dignity of all individuals are upheld and protected within our own communities and across the globe.

In Solidarity,
Regional Board
Emmaus Asia
