



Rohingya-Camp in Kutupalong. Foto: © Yvonne Koch

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SOUTHEAST ASIAN GOVERNMENTS MUST PROVIDE CARE, REFUGE FOR ROHINGYA STRANDED AT SEA

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Responding to reports of at least one boat carrying Rohingya refugees stranded at sea, Amnesty International's Southeast Asia Researcher Rachel Chhoa-Howard said:

“Seven years after the Andaman Sea crisis, which saw an extensive loss of lives, Rohingya people continue to risk everything in dangerous journeys to escape persecution at home in military-run Myanmar, and the abysmal conditions in Bangladeshi refugee camps.

“International humanitarian law requires the rescue of people at sea when they are in distress, and their delivery to a place of safety. Swift action is needed to protect lives. Further delays to alleviate this suffering or any attempts to send Rohingya back to Myanmar where they face persecution are unconscionable. Regional governments must urgently coordinate and cooperate on search and rescue operations. They must attempt to locate any boats in distress and ensure the people on board are allowed to disembark safely and receive proper medical support, food and water.”

Background

UNHCR has reported a six-fold increase of mostly Rohingya people making risky journeys by sea from Myanmar and Bangladesh in 2022, with 119 people reported dead or missing. Regional authorities have made extensive commitments to improve their coordination of search and rescue operations of boats in distress, after the loss of lives due to delayed response.

In August 2017, more than 740,000 Rohingya women, men and children fled northern Rakhine State to neighboring Bangladesh after Myanmar security forces launched a widespread and systematic assault on Rohingya villages, including extrajudicial killings, destruction of property and sexual assault.

More than 130,000 Rohingya people remain in squalid internment camps in Myanmar's Rakhine State. Rohingya in Myanmar continue to face severe restrictions on freedom of movement, access to education and health services in a system that Amnesty International [has called apartheid](#).

Myanmar military authorities routinely and arbitrarily detain Rohingyas for travelling outside of Rakhine state. Those detained are sent to prisons without the right to defend themselves or access to legal counsel. Conditions in Myanmar prisons are inhumane and do not meet international human rights standards.

Link: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/12/rohingya-refugees-stranded-sea/>