

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**DJIBOUTI**

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*Statement by*

*His Excellency*

*Mr. Mahamoud Ali Youssouf*

*Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation*

*Head of the Djibouti Delegation*

*During the meeting*

*Of the OIC Contact Group on Rohingya Muslim Minority*

*Tuesday September 19, 2017*

*Check against delivery*

Once again, we are here today as members of the OIC Contact Group on Rohingya Minority to compare notes on a tragic situation with which this group has been seized with – we dispatched various high level Missions in attempts to foster dialogue with the Government. I was part of the OIC Mission to the country in 2012. We were able to collect first-hand information on a very dire situation. To no avail. The situation has even deteriorated. The Government has continued its aggressive stance against Rohingyas and has systematically dismissed our calls “as calculated attempts to misrepresent the situation”.

The latest outrageous and brutal military campaign against the Rohingyas resembles to borrow the High Commissioner’s words” Mr. Houssein “a cynical ploy to forcibly transfer large number of people without possibility of return” –. Of particular concern to Djibouti are the consistent accounts of widespread extrajudicial killings, rape and other atrocities”

This OIC Group must act and do so with greater resolve.

Djibouti is of the view that the OIC is best positioned to promote and protect the rights of the Rohingya community. If we act in unison, we will have the leverage to lead international action to protect the Rohingya. We have a moral and political obligation to put an end to “this long-standing pattern of violation and aggression, systematic and systemic discrimination and policies of exclusion and marginalization.

Failure to do so will leave the largest stateless group in the world at the mercy of a government that has defiantly framed its actions a necessary counter-insurgency operation – such a cynical attitude and is unacceptable – we have to all act now!

Thank you Mr. President