



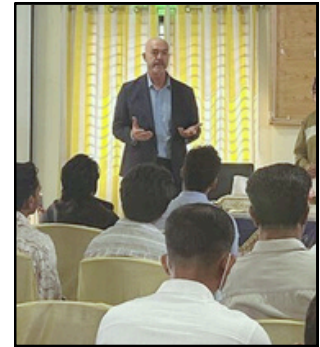
BULLETIN

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MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF THE MECHANISM

In the four years since the Myanmar military overthrew the elected government, crimes against humanity and war crimes have continued unabated and unpunished. Every week we collect new reports of indiscriminate airstrikes; civilian deaths in artillery and drone attacks; the burning or destruction of homes, hospitals, schools and places of worship; and torture and abuse committed against those in detention, including sexual violence.



In January I visited Bangladesh, where I had the opportunity to thank the Government for consistently cooperating with the Mechanism and for facilitating our investigations. In Cox's Bazar, I exchanged views with Rohingya activists. They expressed their deep concern regarding the current situation in Rakhine State following increased fighting between the Myanmar military and the Arakan Army. They told me that life in Rakhine State has become increasingly intolerable for the Rohingya that remain. While internet and phone blackouts and the security situation make it very difficult to obtain a clear picture of recent events, the Mechanism is collecting evidence concerning alleged crimes connected to the recent fighting, including testimonies from those with first-hand knowledge. The Mechanism will fulfill its mandate to collect evidence of such crimes regardless of the ethnicity, religion or political affiliation of the victims or perpetrators.

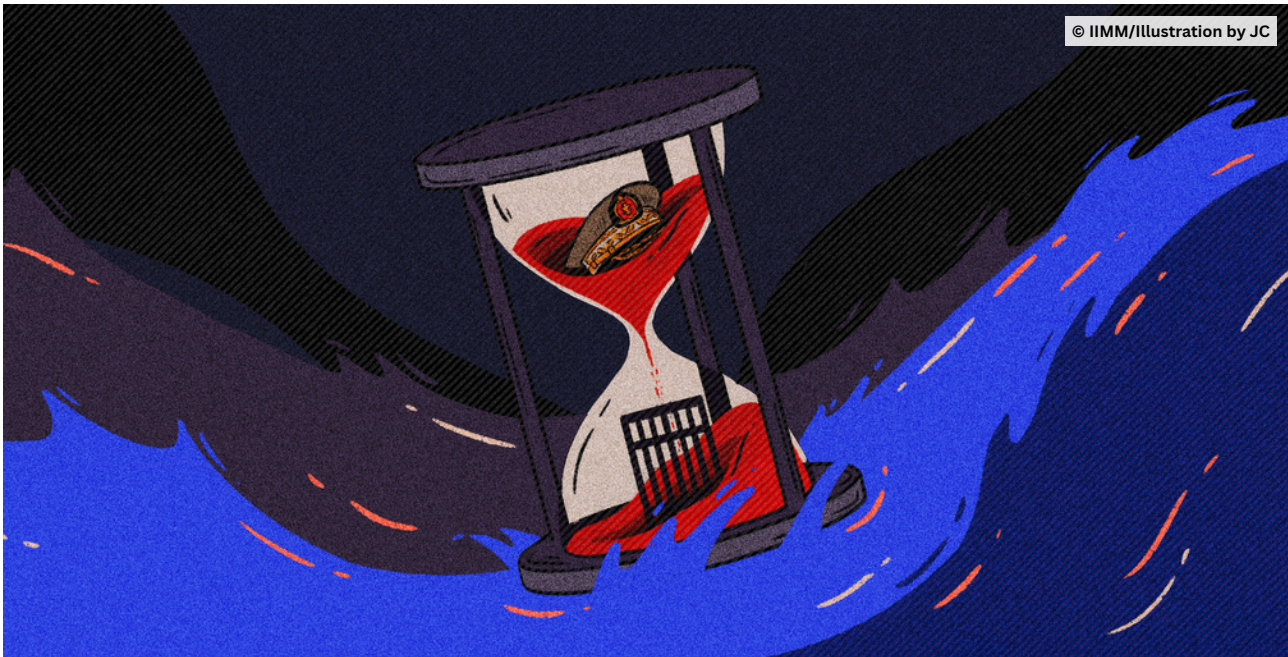
Many of the Rohingya I spoke to in Cox's Bazar expressed feelings of hopelessness. They feel that the international community has forgotten about them and that there will never be justice for the crimes they suffered. But they also expressed gratitude for the work of the Mechanism and were happy to learn that there has been some progress in accountability efforts.

The Mechanism has shared vast amounts of evidence and analysis with the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the Federal Prosecutor in Argentina. In November 2024, the ICC Prosecutor requested an arrest warrant for Senior General Min Aung Hlaing – the person who holds the highest position in the Myanmar military – for the crimes against humanity of deportation and persecution of Rohingya. This month, the Federal Criminal Court of Argentina ordered the arrest of Min Aung Hlaing and 24 other suspects in order for them to appear in court to answer questions relevant to the investigation. I believe that these recent developments send a strong message to perpetrators that no one stands above the law.

I told the Rohingya I met that the tide could turn when we least expect it, as recent events in Syria demonstrate. The Mechanism is committed to collecting evidence of the most serious international crimes that have been committed in the country, so that this evidence is preserved and available to be used whenever there is a court of law ready and able to prosecute and punish those responsible.

Nicholas Koumjian

INSTITUTIONAL UPDATE



FUNDING

The Mechanism is funded from the United Nations regular budget, approved by the General Assembly on an annual basis, which ensures that the Mechanism has the necessary resources, personnel and expertise to carry out its mandate. This is complemented by voluntary contributions from Member States.

The Mechanism is grateful for the voluntary contributions provided by Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, the European Union, France, Malta, Portugal, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Recent developments have led to increased uncertainty over the future of key donor-funded projects. The Mechanism therefore welcomes additional contributions, which will help strengthen its investigative capacities, protect and support witnesses, and enable greater engagement with civil society organizations.

OUR WORK IN NUMBERS IN 2024

33

Engagements with victims, survivors, information providers and civil society representatives

176

Accounts from victims and witnesses collected

60

Packages of evidence and analysis shared

CRIMES AGAINST AND AFFECTING CHILDREN

According to evidence collected and analyzed by the Mechanism, children from all ethnic groups have been directly targeted by the Myanmar security forces and armed groups for various serious international crimes, including killings, torture and sexual and gender-based violence. Children have also been arbitrarily detained, often as proxies for their parents, and there are reports that those under the age of 15 have been conscripted and used in active hostilities. In addition, the Mechanism has also found that aerial and artillery attacks targeting schools, homes and hospitals are killing children and causing survivors lasting harm.

The Mechanism prioritizes investigating such crimes against and affecting children. Its team of investigators, lawyers, analysts and witness support and protection officers have experience and expertise in investigating these crimes and working sensitively with child victims and witnesses. This includes specialized skills in interviewing children or individuals who were children at the time the crimes were committed. Over the past year, personnel across the Mechanism have also received training to recognize signs that crimes against children have occurred or may occur, and to understand the cultural and gender dynamics that influence how these crimes are committed and their impact on victims and communities.

VISIT TO BANGLADESH

During a **five-day official visit** to Bangladesh in January 2025, Nicholas Koumjian, Head of the Mechanism, met with high-level government officials in Dhaka. They discussed the Mechanism's progress in its investigations of crimes against the Rohingya, the latest developments in accountability processes, and the current situation across the border. They also discussed the importance of addressing accountability and justice at the High-level Conference on the situation of Rohingya Muslims and other minority groups in Myanmar, which was agreed at the 79th session of the UN General Assembly.

Mr. Koumjian also met with over 100 Rohingya activists and community representatives from the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, where he answered their questions about the Mechanism's work and progress. He emphasized that pursuing justice for the crimes committed against them is critical for their eventual safe return to their homes in Rakhine State, and for future peace.

While in the country, Mr. Koumjian also gave a lecture on the Mechanism's challenges and way forward at the Centre for Peace and Justice, BRAC University, attended by academics, lawyers, NGOs, journalists and students.



Photos by IIMM, the Government of Bangladesh and BRAC University

UPDATES ON INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL CASES

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT (ICC)

In November 2024, the Prosecutor's Office announced that it had filed a request for an arrest warrant for Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Commander-in-Chief of the Myanmar Defence Services, for the crimes against humanity of deportation and persecution of Rohingya. This follows a five-year investigation into the violence in 2016 and 2017 that forced hundreds of thousands of Rohingya to flee Rakhine State into Bangladesh. A panel of judges from the ICC's Pre-Trial Chamber will review the Prosecutor's request and the evidence and decide whether to issue the arrest warrant. The Prosecutor's Office also noted that it intends to file requests for additional arrest warrants.

The Mechanism closely cooperates with the ICC and has shared a large volume of evidence and analysis with them. The Mechanism and the ICC have also jointly interviewed several victims of sexual violence and crimes against children.

INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE (ICJ)

Several countries have added their names to the growing list of Member States intervening in the ongoing case brought by The Gambia at the ICJ, alleging that Myanmar failed to prevent and punish acts of genocide committed against the Rohingya as required under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide. In July 2024, the ICJ accepted the declarations of interventions filed by Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, the Maldives, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. In late 2024, Belgium, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ireland and Slovenia also filed declarations of intervention. Oral hearings are expected to begin this year.

The Mechanism has shared evidence and analysis with both parties, with the consent of individuals and entities that provided the information.

FEDERAL CRIMINAL COURT OF ARGENTINA

In February 2025, the Federal Criminal Court of Argentina ordered the arrest of 25 suspects from the Myanmar military, security forces and civilian government as part of its investigation into serious international crimes committed against the Rohingya, including genocide and crimes against humanity. The arrests are intended to bring the suspects before the court for a preliminary hearing, which is part of the investigative stage. The court may then rule on whether to refer any suspects to trial on specific charges.

The Mechanism is supporting this proceeding through the sharing of evidence and analysis with the Federal Prosecutor of Argentina.

OTHER UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION PROCESSES

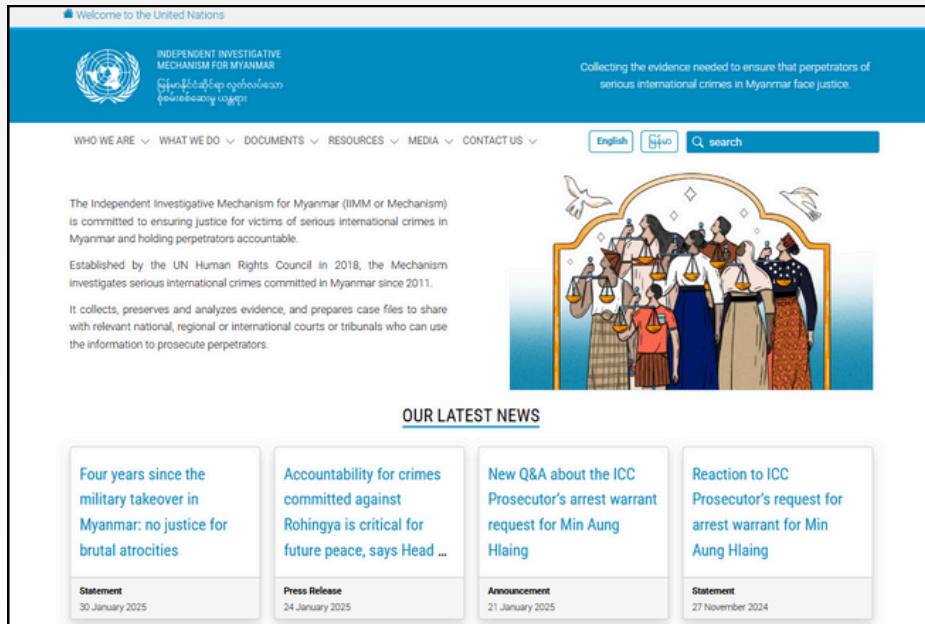
In the United Kingdom, the Counter Terrorism Command of the Metropolitan Police has opened structural investigations into situations under investigation by the ICC, which includes Bangladesh/Myanmar. This involves identifying potential witnesses and examining the alleged crimes. Significantly, they may also investigate crimes committed since the military takeover in Myanmar.

Aside from the structural investigation in the United Kingdom, there are currently no judicial processes for serious international crimes committed since the military takeover four years ago. The Mechanism remains ready to support any authorities who comply with international human rights laws and standards and are willing and able to investigate and prosecute these cases.

OUTREACH

WEBSITE

The Mechanism's [website](#) has been revamped! It features a fresh design, clearer language and a more user-friendly layout, making it easier to navigate and find important information in English and Burmese.



MULTILINGUAL OUTREACH MATERIALS

Can the ICC investigate and prosecute crimes committed in Myanmar? What is the Mechanism's reaction to the ICC Prosecutor's arrest warrant request? And what was the Head of the Mechanism's message to the Rohingya during his recent visit to Bangladesh? Watch Rohingya-language videos addressing these timely questions, published on the Mechanism's [website](#) and [Facebook Page](#).

What is the Mechanism and what does it do? How can I share information with the Mechanism? Find the answers in the Mechanism's Fact Sheet, now available in multiple Myanmar languages – including Burmese, Jinghpaw, Rakhine, Falam Chin, Hakha Chin and Mizo – with more to come!



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT DOES THE ICC PROSECUTOR'S REQUEST FOR AN ARREST WARRANT FOR MIN AUNG HLAING MEAN?

The request indicates that in the view of the Prosecutor, there is sufficient evidence that Min Aung Hlaing bears criminal responsibility for crimes against humanity to bring him to trial. ICC judges will now review the evidence and decide whether there are “reasonable grounds to believe” that Min Aung Hlaing has committed a crime within the jurisdiction of the ICC and if an arrest warrant is necessary to ensure his appearance before the court.

All of the 125 states that are members of the ICC are obligated to carry out the orders of the judges, including a warrant of arrest. However, states that are not members are not obligated under international law to make an arrest. If an arrest warrant is issued, Min Aung Hlaing could face trial at the ICC if he is arrested and handed over to the ICC. However, since Myanmar is not a member of the ICC, it is not obligated to arrest suspects under an ICC arrest warrant.

The Prosecutor also noted that he expects to file requests for arrest warrants against additional individuals in the coming months. To support the Prosecutor's five-year investigation, the Mechanism has shared with his office a large volume of evidence and analysis. A key part of this evidence are statements from many Rohingya survivors and other witnesses that met with the Mechanism's investigation teams and consented to share their information with the ICC. The Mechanism is very grateful to all of these witnesses for making the effort to recount these painful events and allow it to preserve and share their testimonies.

WHAT CRIMES ARE INCLUDED IN THE ICC PROSECUTOR'S REQUEST?

The request alleges Min Aung Hlaing's responsibility for the crimes against humanity of deportation and persecution of Rohingya between 25 August and 31 December 2017. It does not cover more recent crimes committed against the Rohingya in Rakhine State.

The Prosecutor's jurisdiction and current investigation is limited to crimes that were committed, at least in part, on the territory of Bangladesh, as Bangladesh is a member of the ICC. This limits the range of crimes that could be included in arrest warrant requests.

DO YOU HAVE MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ICC PROSECUTOR'S REQUEST FOR AN ARREST WARRANT AND WHAT COMES NEXT?

Download the Mechanism's [Q&A](#) available in English, Burmese and Rohingya.