

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

9 August 2012

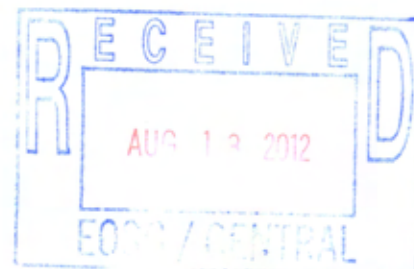
Excellency,

I would like to thank you for your letter dated 3 August 2012 and for the fact that you are taking this initiative in reaching out to me and to the United Nations in order to provide a detailed account of the current situation in Rakhine State and the measures your Government has taken, or proposes to take, in order to meet the challenges arising from the recent spate of violence in that State.

First of all, let me express my profound condolences to you and to the people of Myanmar on the loss of innocent lives in Rakhine State since the outbreak of sectarian violence on 28 May 2012. I have noted the early steps your Government took, including your public statement calling for magnanimity and promising the application of the rule of law. I share your concern that the situation could negatively impact the reform process launched under your leadership, a process that has been welcomed by the international community.

Your decision to invite members of the diplomatic community and international organizations based in Yangon, as well as the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Tomas Ojea Quintana, to visit Rakhine State exemplifies your intention to constructively engage with the international community on this issue. I also note that you intend to invite the Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey to visit Myanmar first-hand to acquaint themselves of the situation there. This is an encouraging demonstration of your Government's seriousness to address the widespread concerns and misgivings of members of the international community about the situation in Rakhine State. I welcome this gesture and propose to brief the President of the General Assembly as well as Member States appropriately in this regard.

His Excellency  
Mr. Thein Sein  
President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
Nay Pyi Taw



POL / 04 / 001 (12 - 07438)

In this connection, however, I cannot fail to draw your attention to the arrest and continued detention of United Nations personnel by the authorities, an issue that was raised by Mr. Quintana, and to stress the need to address this issue most urgently and correctly.

More broadly, since the violence broke out in the Rakhine State, my Special Adviser has kept me abreast of the latest developments. In his numerous engagements on the issue, he has been mindful of the complexity of the situation, whose genesis is rooted in the reality of the ethnic and religious fabric of Myanmar. I support your Government's resolve to bring out the facts and to take legal actions against the perpetrators of this violence. However, it is important that any inquiry that is conducted is done in a full, impartial and credible manner that ensures justice to the aggrieved families and contributes to the rebuilding of trust and longer-term harmony and goodwill between the communities. Only such action will provide the necessary healing both in terms of physical relief and psychological security.

Addressing deficiencies in terms of legal status and equal justice, a proper lessons-learned from Rakhine events can offer a first step towards meaningful community-based dialogue and trust-building. It is clear that the present crisis offers an opportunity for the central and local authorities to step up initiatives for such confidence-building between the communities in Rakhine State.

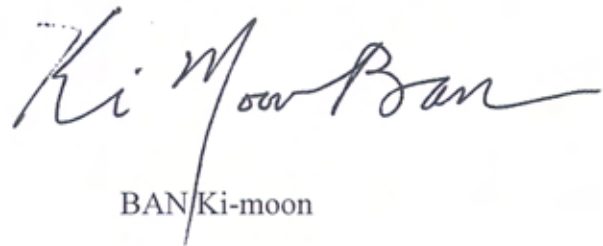
From a long-term perspective, the Government should remain cognizant that it is not possible to relegate the situation of the Rohingyas in Rakhine State as an historical question alone. While recognizing your commitment to the rule of law and to pursuing this matter within the context of the prevailing citizenship laws, I would like to underline the need to see the issue also as a human rights concern and one of political management within the democratic transition. If Myanmar is to be able to move forward in peace, stability and harmony, the Government will need to provide the courage and wisdom to deal with the problem of all communities living in Rakhine State within a broader national reconciliation framework.

There is no doubt that the greatness of a nation like Myanmar springs from the fact that generations of different ethnicities and faiths have traditionally coexisted and thrived together, culturally and economically. At the same time, overcoming decades of mistrust and discrimination remains one of your most pressing nation-building challenges, particularly in the present context.

You have kindly mentioned my having worked closely in support of the democratization process in Myanmar. I remain committed to continuing to do so. My Special Adviser will also remain available to you in this regard. Such support will extend to the determined efforts you are making in all fields including that of national reconciliation.

You may rest assured that the United Nations will continue to help Myanmar and all its communities as you rise to meet the challenges you face in Rakhine State, in particular the need for urgent humanitarian assistance.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ki Moon Ban". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ki" and last name "Ban" being more prominent than the middle name "Moon".

BAN/Ki-moon

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL  
CABINET DU SECRETAIRE GENERAL

REFERENCE:

9 August 2012

Excellency,

The Secretary-General would be grateful if you could kindly forward the enclosed letter to His Excellency Mr. Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

A copy of the letter is attached for your information.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Susana Malcorra  
Chef de Cabinet

His Excellency  
Mr. Thant Kyaw  
Permanent Representative of the Republic  
of the Union of Myanmar to the United Nations  
New York



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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

CABINET DU SECRETAIRE GENERAL

To: Chef de Cabinet (through DSG),

Please find attached for your approval and SG's signature, a reply letter addressed to the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, H.E. Mr. Thein Sein.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'A. R.' or similar.

Political Unit  
9 August 2012

Cc: DSG

12-07438



**Fw: SG's reply to President U Thein Sein**  
Silva Armani to: Jill Annitto

09/08/2012 11:02 AM

----- Forwarded by Silva Armani/NY/UNO on 09/08/2012 11:02 AM -----

From: Ivan Lupis/NY/UNO  
To: "Silva Armani" <armani@un.org>  
Date: 09/08/2012 10:01 AM  
Subject: Fw: SG's reply to President U Thein Sein

Vijay Nambiar

**ACTION** *LAG*  
**COPY** *DSK*

----- Original Message -----

From: Vijay Nambiar  
Sent: 08/08/2012 11:37 AM EDT  
To: Andrew Gilmour  
Cc: Ivan Lupis  
Subject: SG's reply to President U Thein Sein

Dear Andrew:



Further to my conversation with you, perhaps we could think of inserting after the fourth and before the fifth as a separate paragraph, a sentence on the following lines:

In this connection, however, I cannot fail to draw your attention to the arrest and continued detention of UN personnel by the authorities, an issue that was raised by Mr. Quintana, and to stress the need to address this issue most urgently and correctly.

The revised draft is attached.

Regards

Vijay



Myanmar\_TheinSeinletter\_draftSGreply\_6aug12.doc

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*PO4/01/001*