

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 25, 2018

The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary of State
Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary,

We thank you for the publication this week of the State Department's report "Documentation of Atrocities in Northern Rakhine State."

We commend the Department for its work to document the situation in Burma and Bangladesh in light of the atrocities committed by the Burmese military in Rakhine State. We know that completing a report like this requires extraordinary dedication and work that is often undertaken under arduous and dangerous circumstances.

As the report notes, "recent violence in northern Rakhine State was extreme, large-scale, widespread, and seemingly geared toward both terrorizing the population and driving out the Rohingya residents. The scope and scale of the military's operations indicate they were well-planned and coordinated. In some areas, perpetrators used tactics that resulted in mass casualties, for example, locking people in houses to burn them, fencing off entire villages before shooting into the crowd, or sinking boats full of hundreds of fleeing Rohingya."

The report expertly documents these atrocities, but did not specifically define these atrocities as genocide or crimes against humanity. Therefore, we would like to know if the report, and associated documents, have been referred to the Office of the Legal Advisor for a formal legal determination. We ask that you provide a formal legal determination regarding the actions of the Burmese military to Congress without delay.

Today at the United Nations, President Trump stated that "The United States of America has been among the greatest forces for good in the history of the world..." We strongly concur. For the United States to continue be that force for good – and if the words "Never Again" are to have meaning in practice – we must not hesitate to call atrocities like those committed by the Burmese military by name, identify the perpetrators, and take the necessary steps to hold them accountable.

We look forward to continuing our work together to ensure the United States plays a leading role in providing assistance to afflicted populations, documenting crimes against humanity, and bringing to perpetrators to justice.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Todd Young
United States Senator