

January 05, 2018

Chairman Bob Corker  
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations  
425 Dirksen Senate Building  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Benjamin L. Cardin  
Ranking Member, Committee on Foreign  
Relations  
509 Hart Senate Building  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Corker and Ranking Member Cardin:

We, the undersigned Jewish organizations, institutions, and community leaders, strongly urge you to pass the Burma Human Rights and Freedom Act of 2017 (S. 2060), which is currently before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Passing this legislation through your committee and the full Senate would send a powerful message to the Burmese military and the global community that the United States will not be silent or inactive in the face of mass atrocities.

We are horrified by the Burmese military's relentless persecution of the Rohingya, particularly since the recent outbreak of violence began on August 25. In the past four months, the Burmese military has engaged in a scorched earth campaign, razing entire Rohingya villages. Soldiers have indiscriminately massacred Rohingya men, women, and children, and an estimated 600,000 people have fled on foot or by boat—a three-day trek from their burned villages—to refugee camps in Bangladesh.

The Burma Human Rights and Freedom Act would mandate targeted U.S. sanctions to help end the Burmese military's atrocities against the Rohingya people, provide refugee assistance for the Rohingya, and establish a mechanism to address accountability around crimes committed against the Rohingya and other ethnic minorities in Burma.

We urge the Senate to act now. Last month, the House of Representatives sent a resounding message, with its near unanimous vote on a resolution (H. Con. Res. 90) condemning the violence against the Rohingya and calling for an immediate restoration of humanitarian access. It is time for the Senate to build on this momentum by passing the Burma Human Rights and Freedom Act.

We cannot remain silent as Jews, for whom the words "never again" require us to act, nor as global citizens, in the face of senseless acts of brutality. Many of our organizations have called on the United States and the international community to intervene on behalf of the Rohingya people, and to join our efforts to provide desperately needed aid to those who have fled to Bangladesh. We believe that Congress condemning the ethnic cleansing and mandating strong economic sanctions and humanitarian assistance is a crucial first step in stemming the violence.

The United States must act now to ensure the survival, safety and dignity of the Rohingya people. Please join us in condemning the ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya--in saying never again--by passing the Burma Human Rights and Freedom Act of 2017.

Sincerely,

**Ameinu**

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Rachel Roth, Chief Operating Officer

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**Rabbi Howard Stecker**, Temple Israel of Great Neck (Great Neck, NY)

**Mary Ann Stein** (Bethesda, MD)

**Rabbi David Steinberg**, Temple Israel (Duluth, MN)

**Rabbi Naomi Steinberg**, Temple Beth El (Eureka, CA)

**Rabbi Ariel Stone**, Congregation Shir Tikvah (Portland, OR)

**Rabbi Andrew Straus**, Temple Adat Elohim (Thousand Oaks, CA)

**Rabbi Avi Strausberg**, Temple of Aaron (St. Paul, MN)

**Rabbi Gerald Sussman**, Temple Emanu-El (Staten Island, NY)

**Rabbi Robert Tabak** (Melrose Park, PA)

**Rabbi Elliott Tepperman**, Senior Rabbi, Bnai Keshet (Montclair, NJ)

**Rabbi David Teutsch**, Professor, Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (Philadelphia, PA)

**Rabbi Mervin Tomsy**, Burbank Temple Emanu El (Reseda, CA)

**Rabbi Seth Wax**, Jewish Chaplain, Williams College (Williamstown, MA)

**Rabbi Michael Weinberg**, Rabbi, Temple Beth Israel (Skokie, IL)

**Rabbi Arthur Weiner**, Jewish Community Center of Paramus/Congregation Beth Tikvah (Paramus, NJ)

**Rabbi Elie Weinstock**, Congregation  
Kehilath Jeshurun (New York, NY)

**Risa Weinstock**, Reconstructionist  
Synagogue of the North Shore (RSNS)  
(Manhasset, NY)

**Rabbi Samuel Weintraub**, Kane Street  
Synagogue (Brooklyn, NY)

**Rabbi Sarah Weissman**, Associate Rabbi,  
Congregation Beth Am (Los Altos Hills, CA)

**Rabbi Julia Weisz**, Congregation Or Ami  
(Calabasas, CA)

**Rabbi David Weizman**, Congregation Beth  
Shalom (Clearwater, FL)

**Rabbi Lauren Werber**, Temple B'nai  
Abraham (Elyria, OH)

**Rabbi Sara Zacharia**, Senior Jewish  
Educator/Campus Rabbi, Hillel Queens  
College (Flushing, NY)

**Rabbi Michael Zimmerman**, Congregation  
Kehillat Israel (Lansing, MI)

**Rabbi Julie Zupan**, Director, RJ Connect,  
Union for Reform Judaism (Sharon, MA)