

For immediate release

Statement by Ms. Alice Wairimu Nderitu, Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, on her official visit to Bangladesh from 11-14 April 2022

(14 April 2022) The Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Alice Wairimu Nderitu, undertook her first official visit to Bangladesh from 11-14 April 2022. The primary objective of her visit was to meet with the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar. She also met with government officials, civil society representatives and religious leaders. The Special Adviser thanks the government of Bangladesh for facilitating her visit.

Special Adviser Wairimu Nderitu expressed her dismay that, almost five years since the 2017 violence against the Rohingya in Rakhine State in Myanmar, which resulted in over 700,000 fleeing to neighbouring Bangladesh, the risk of atrocity crimes, in particular genocide, facing this population in their home country remains unchanged. The Rohingya continues to be one of the most vulnerable communities in the world. They have suffered decades of discrimination, dehumanization, deprivation of their identity and basic rights, including to citizenship. The extreme violence witnessed in 2017 against the Rohingya, in which they were killed, tortured, raped, burnt alive and humiliated, on no other basis than their identity, should never be forgotten. The need for justice and our collective action remains as urgent as ever before.

In light of this challenge, the Special Adviser welcomed the enduring commitment by the government of Bangladesh to host and protect the Rohingya refugees until they can return to their home country. She stressed that all the Rohingya refugees she engaged with during her visit expressed their wish to return home to Myanmar, but only when they can do so in a safe and dignified manner, with access to equal rights, including to citizenship. The Special Adviser emphasized that for such voluntary and sustainable return to happen, accountability for the crimes committed remains crucial. The Special Adviser stated that the victims of the vicious violence inflicted against them have no reason to believe that such violence cannot happen again. Justice is not only essential for addressing the crimes of the past, but also to prevent

