Dear Excellency Chairman U Hla Thein,

We, the undersigned Rohingya-led organizations in Cox’s Bazar District, Bangladesh, urge the Union Election Commission to uphold the right of Rohingya refugees to vote and participate in the 2020 general election in Myanmar.

In recent weeks, the Union Election Commission rejected several Rohingya candidates for office in Myanmar. We call upon the Election Commission to reverse these decisions and uphold the right of Rohingya to participate in the elections.

As citizens of Myanmar, we hold the right to vote. We had the right to vote until 2015 when we were blocked. The Myanmar government has stripped us of our citizenship and ability to participate in political life.

In July, the Union Election Commission announced that Myanmar nationals living abroad could cast votes, continuing the trend of overseas voting from the 2010 and 2015 elections. The Commission should ensure that all Myanmar nationals, including Rohingya refugees, are able to cast votes.

We, the undersigned Rohingya-led organizations, believe that the Embassy of Myanmar in Bangladesh should work with the international community and Bangladesh authorities to facilitate our participation in the general election. The Union Election Commission should publicly declare that it will work to register voters in the refugee camps before the elections. We can assist by disseminating information in the camps.

We are Myanmar nationals. Before the elections, the Myanmar government should restore our citizenship rights and uphold our rights to vote and participate in the general election.

Signed:
Rohingya Peace Innovation Unity
Rohingya Peace Initiative
Rohingya Women Empowerment and Advocacy Network
Rohingya Women for Justice and Peace
Rohingya Youth for Legal Action
Rohingya Student Union
Rohingya Student Network
Arakan Rohingya National Union
Rohingya Youth Association
Arakan Rohingya Society for Peace and Human Rights
Voice of Rohingya
Rohingya Women Education Initiative
Rohingya Children Education Center
Rohingya Youth Federation

CC:
Office of the President, Nay Pyi Taw, Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Honorable Judges, International Court of Justice, The Hague, Netherlands
Mr. Thomas H. Andrews, UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar

U Hla Thein
Chairman of the Union Election Commission
Nay Pyi Taw, Republic of the Union of Myanmar

The Union Election Commission should recognize the voting rights of Rohingya refugees in the November 8 general election in Myanmar
The Union Election Commission should recognize the voting rights of Rohingya refugees in the November 8 general election in Myanmar

Rohingya Youth Association
Rohingya Children Education Center
Rohingya Women for Justice and Peace