

PRESS STATEMENT**For Immediate Distribution****MERCY MALAYSIA CONTINUAL RESPONSE TO THE ROHINGYA REFUGEE CRISIS IN COX'S BAZAR
BANGLADESH AND CURRENT UPDATES OF MERCY MALAYSIA'S OPERATION IN MYANMAR**

Kuala Lumpur, 26th September 2017 – In early September, Myanmar authorities had instructed all foreign and international aid groups operating in Rakhine to go on a temporary lockdown due to the violence that had erupted on August 25 when militants attacked police posts and an army base, provoking a major counter-attack that reportedly killed around 400 people, mostly Rohingyas. In consequence of this crisis, more than half of the estimated 412,000 Rohingyas are women and children whom have seek refuge in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, bordering Myanmar without proper shelter, clean drinking water and sanitation. MERCY Malaysia in response has been on the ground in order to assess the needs and prepare for further intervention according to our mandate in view of the latest escalation.

Amid a dramatic increase in the number of refugees fleeing violence in Myanmar's Northern Rakhine state, MERCY Malaysia continues to express its deep concern over the refugee crisis in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh and continues to call for urgent action to provide relief on the ground. "There is a sense of urgency to cater to the needs of the refugee communities affected in Cox's Bazar and the needs of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) affected in Myanmar. With the increasing number of displaced people and lack of space in safe locations, ensuring access to food, Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), healthcare and hygiene kits, as well as non-food items such as blankets and so forth are much needed. Our team has been on site since 9th September 2017.", said Dato' Dr Ahmad Faizal Perdaus, President of MERCY Malaysia.

Aligned with our mission in providing health-related humanitarian aid for vulnerable communities regardless of race, religion, culture, political affiliation, or geographic boundaries, in crisis situation, MERCY Malaysia in our continuous response has deployed our second mission consisting of the Emergency Response (ER) team to the crisis in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh on 12 September 2017 in order to strengthen our response and prepare further intervention according to our capacities and mandate in view of the escalation with the help of our partner Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust (COAST).

MERCY Malaysia has identified the needs on the grounds and will be distributing 60,000 hot meals consisting of cooked rice with eggs and lentils of one meal a day to refugees nearby Kutupalong and Thankkali camps. Additionally, 150,000 litres of clean water will be provided to 1000 families in the targeted areas. Other than distribution of hot meals and provision of clean water, MERCY Malaysia will be installing 1000 sanitary and water-sealed latrines in the camps to be made available to less than 3000 families*. Furthermore, in light to conduct two (2) mobile clinics on official settlements with high concentration of refugees, we will be deploying more of our volunteering doctors from Malaysia based on the needs on the ground. In addition to that, medicines will be distributed from the mobile clinic projected to cover more than 180,000** refugees. Moreover, MERCY Malaysia will cater to non-food item needs of refugees such as blankets, pail, and jerry cans. These activities will be conducted within three (3) months of duration commencing from September with possible extension to up to six months.

Apart from our concern and continual response over the refugee crisis in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, MERCY Malaysia is equally concern over the situation of Internally Displaced People consisting of Rohingyas and local ethnic groups in Northern Rakhine, Myanmar.

MERCY Malaysia has identified the needs on the grounds and will be providing 4000 tarpaulin as urgent shelter for 4000 families in Taung Pyo where 200,000 Rohingya Internally Displaced People (IDPs) got displaced. Additionally, 2000 dry food will be provided to 2000 families (14,000 beneficiaries). Apart from providing tarpaulins and dry food, MERCY Malaysia will be providing 1000 dignity kits for 1000 women.

In terms of health support, MERCY Malaysia is supporting the health department with medical supplies as well as transportation for the medical team. We are also providing our medical team to carry out mobile clinic in Northern Rakhine particularly Maungdaw in the next few days as per request from the State Health Department.

In Sittwe, we are the only and first international NGO to have restarted our operation of medical programmes in Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps after the initial lockdown on 5 September 2017, and we are carrying out three (3) mobile clinics for the newly displaced local Rakhines. In addition to that, we are continuing to conduct our operation to provide Primary Health Care through three (3) mobile clinics in Sittwe villages as well as operating Thet Kel Pyin Sub-Rural Health Centre, the only centre providing health services to Rohingyas inside the camps.

MERCY Malaysia is continuously calling for the public to support its humanitarian efforts both in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh that has become increasingly urgent due to the current situation requiring a total of MYR3 million for immediate relief on the ground, as well as the current situation of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in Northern Rakhine. Donations to the Rohingya refugee cause in Cox's Bazar can be made to MERCY Malaysia's Rohingya Relief Fund and donations to the Internally Displaced People cause in Myanmar can be made to MERCY Malaysia's Myanmar Relief Fund, both by logging on to www.mercy.org.my.

** Depending on the dynamic of the situation.*

*** Numbers of beneficiaries may alter due to the needs on the grounds.*

Ends.

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About MERCY Malaysia

MERCY Malaysia is a non for profit organisation focusing on providing medical relief, sustainable health related development and risk reduction activities for vulnerable communities in both crisis and non-crisis situations, both locally and internationally. MERCY Malaysia recognises the value of working with partners and volunteers as well as providing opportunities for individuals to serve with professionalism. We uphold the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief and hold ourselves accountable to our donors and beneficiaries. For more information, please proceed to www.mercy.org.my

How is MERCY Malaysia funded?

To ensure independence and impartiality, MERCY Malaysia relies on donations from the general public for financial support. A portion of our income is obtained from institutional donors, individual government grants and other international organizations, which are given on project basis. MERCY Malaysia spends 80% of its income in carrying out its relief operations and support.

Important Note to Media: Usage of Wordmark MERCY Malaysia

In order to avoid confusion with other organisation(s) that uses “Mercy” as the organisation’s name or part of the organisation’s name, please take note that in addressing the name of our organisation, the wordmark for MERCY Malaysia is with capitalised “MERCY”, followed by the word “Malaysia”. When describing the organisation, the term “MERCY Malaysia” must always be used in full, and should not be partially referred to as “MERCY”, or “Mercy”. Thank you for your cooperation.