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Your Excellency,

I am writing to express my grave concern about the several hundred Rohingya women, men and children who have been stranded at sea for weeks or possibly months. These people fled their homes in Myanmar's northern Rakhine State after the military unleashed a brutal campaign of violence against them, and governments from across the region have been invoking COVID- 19 pandemic-related restrictions to deny them permission to disembark.

It is alarming to learn that dozens of lives have already been lost at sea, and that there have been reports that those who have been allowed to disembark, are severely malnourished and dehydrated. According to information obtained by Amnesty International, as many as up to 400 refugees are still believed to be at sea.

As you are aware, Ministers involved the Bali Process committed to a comprehensive regional approach to ensure safety and protection for refugees and migrants in March 2016. As the co-chair of the Bali process, the Indonesian Government plays a key role in responding to this crisis and ensuring that no more lives are tragically lost.

I find this situation troubling as it revives distressing memories of the 2015 Andaman Sea crisis, when an untold number of Rohingya people were not rescued and hundreds lost their lives. This failed response to a humanitarian crisis cannot be repeated year on year.

Therefore, I urge your government:

- To Immediately call for an emergency meeting to co-ordinate search and rescue operations to locate and assist boats in distress, in line with regional declarations and international law;
- To work together with governments in the region to refrain from pushing back boats to the sea, and allow all boats carrying refugees and migrants to land safely in the nearest country;
- Along with neighbouring countries (particularly Malaysia and Thailand) to prioritize the immediate humanitarian needs of refugees and migrants including adequate food, water, shelter and health care, according to the Presidential Regulation 125/2016 when the boats enter Indonesian waters

Yours Sincerely,