



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE  
UNITED NATIONS | GENEVA

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

24 October 2019

Ms Leigh Toomey  
Vice-Chair of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention

Mr Bernard Duhaime  
Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary  
Disappearances

Ms Agnes Callamard  
Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions

Mr Felipe González Morales  
Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants

Mr Fernand de Varennes  
Special Rapporteur on minority issues

Ms Fionnuala Ní Aoláin  
Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and  
fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism

Mr Nils Melzer  
Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or  
punishment

Dear Ms Toomey, Mr Duhaime, Ms Callamard, Mr González Morales, Mr de  
Varennes, Ms Ní Aoláin and Mr Melzer,

I refer to the letter dated 10 October 2019 [Ref: UA SGP 4/2019]  
concerning the Government of Singapore's deportation in July 2019 of a group  
of Myanmar nationals who were residing in Singapore.

The background to the events you referred to in your letter has been comprehensively explained in the Singapore Ministry of Home Affairs Statement of 10 July 2019 on “Security Action Taken Against Myanmar Nationals Working in Singapore, for Organising Support for Armed Violence” (enclosed at Annex).

Investigations by Singapore security agencies revealed that a group of Myanmar nationals in Singapore had organised and mobilised some members of the local Myanmar community to support the Arakan Army (AA) and its political wing, the United League of Arakan (ULA). The AA is an armed group that has conducted violent attacks in Myanmar.

The Singapore Government takes a very serious view of persons who support, promote, undertake or make preparations to undertake armed violence, regardless of how they rationalise such violence, or where the violence takes place. Foreigners visiting, working or residing in Singapore have to abide by Singapore’s laws. They should not import domestic political issues from their countries into Singapore. Any person, local or foreign, who engages in such activity, which is inimical to Singapore’s national security, will be dealt with firmly.

The Singapore authorities informed the Myanmar nationals that they were not allowed to remain in Singapore because they had used Singapore as a platform to organise and garner support for armed violence. After their work passes were cancelled by their employers, they had no legal basis to remain in Singapore. The Myanmar nationals were thus told to leave Singapore and were free to decide on their destination country upon leaving Singapore. They chose to return to Myanmar, and took the flights to Yangon on their own, unescorted. As such, the issue of non-refoulement did not arise.

The Singapore Government’s actions were not taken upon the request of any other party, but were the decision of the Singapore Government after the completion of investigations.

All foreign nationals with a valid visa/work pass are allowed to reside/work in Singapore so long as they abide with our domestic legislation. Any extradition requests received by the Singapore Government will be processed according to our domestic laws and international legal obligations.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Umej Bhatia', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**UMEJ BHATIA**

Ambassador and Permanent Representative