

**Forum:** General Assembly Third Committee

**Issue:** Addressing the humanitarian crisis of the Rohingya people

**Student Officer:** Paulina Seré

**Position:** Chair

---

## Introduction

The Rohingya people are an ethnic group that has been designated as the "most persecuted minority in the world". They are in majority sunni muslims that live in the southeast asian country of Myanmar (previously Burma), a predominantly Buddhist country.

Myanmar has a population of 50 million people from which 90% are Buddhists. Muslims constitute only 4% of the total population, being around 1.1 million Rohingyas in the country.

Burman is not the same as Burmese; Burman is the biggest ethnicity of Myanmar, constituting 68% of its population while while Burmese is the designation for Myanmar's nationality.

Burmans reside on the central geographic region of Myanmar, while minorities such as Kachin, Chin, and Shan, live in frontier areas. Such is the case of 80% of the Rohingya people who live in the western coast of the country, in the Rakhine State. Inside the Rakhine state, the Rohingya minority mainly resides in two northern townships; Maungdaw and Buthidaung; close to the frontier with Bangladesh.

Myanmar has quite a lot of diversity, with 135 officially recognized minority ethnic groups. There are a few others that find themselves unrecognized by the government; such is the case of the Rohingyas. This ethnic minority finds itself distant from the Burmans in several aspects, for instance, dialect: the Rohingya people speak their own dialect; Rohingya or Ruaingga, which is not spoken by the rest of the country.

Since 1982, the government of Myanmar has denied Burmese citizenships to the ethnic minority, leaving them as stateless individuals (Al Jazeera, 2018, April 18). This lack of recognition has led the Rohingya to face several difficulties in their everyday lives in Myanmar, with poor quality of life and lack of basic resources.

Their residence, the Rakhine state, is considered possibly the poorest of Myanmar's states, characterized by ghetto-like camps and deficiency of basic necessities. Furthermore, Rohingyas are not allowed to leave the Rakhine state without government permission, which little of them actually obtain.

Violence and crackdowns have become more and more recurrent in the Rakhine State, during which Rohingya have continuously reported sexual and physical abuse, arson and murder by Myanmar security forces. This has caused an overall panorama of tension and crisis in the State of Rakhine, affecting the country as a whole, as well as the international community.

The United Nations suspects that human rights abuses, war crimes and allegations are regularly committed by the military in the country, yet the government denies it. Since the 1970s, due to their current condition marked by violence and persecution, the Rohingya people have been enforced to flee their country on excessively crowded boats while being ping-ponged amongst neighbouring nations including Bangladesh, Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia that don't want to grant them entrance.

The international community finds itself worried about the situation of this persecuted ethnicity, and the humanitarian crisis faced by them, and believes it is time for the Rohingya to get the representation and rights they deserve.

## Definition of Key Terms

### Rohingya people

Muslim ethnic minority group that resides in Myanmar, more specifically in the Rakhine state.

### Rakhine state

One of Myanmar's seven states. A mountainous province to the west of the country where Rohingya people are concentrated. It shares a border with Bangladesh actually separated by the Naf River.

### Insurgent group

A group of rebels or revolutionaries going against a government. These take actions by mostly aiming attacks to police officers or the army.

### Genocide

Intentional and methodical killing or actions performed on a mass of individuals belonging to the same ethnicity, nationality, religion or race, with the objective to destroy it in part or as a whole.

### Paris Principles

Set of guidelines proposed by the United Nations on 1993 regarding the protection and preservation of Human Rights globally.

### Crimes Against Humanity

The intended performance of acts such as murder, enslavement, and torture targeted towards any civilian population

### Ethnic cleansing

The violent physical and geographical removal, displacement or murder of an ethnicity by another in a society

## Background Information

### History and Recognition

According to historians, the Arakan Rohingya National Organisation, and Rohingya people themselves, muslims have lived in what is now Myanmar since the 12th century (Al Jazeera, 2018, April 18). Myanmar, former british colony for more than a century (1824-1948), dealt during that period with big amounts of labourer immigrants from what today is India and Bangladesh. As a consequence of how Burma was previously considered a province of India, this migration was said to be internal, according to the Human Rights Watch.

After getting their independence on January 4th, 1948, Myanmar's government decided that this migration that occurred during the colonial times was illegal, thus denied citizenship to

almost all Rohingya. Myanmar's Union Citizenship Act Law that passed in 1948 stated that ethnicities could get citizenship, yet, the Rohingyas weren't included in this proposal. Since, the majority of Burmans consider Rohingya people bengali, and actually reject the term "Rohingya" sustaining it was created with political intentions (Al Jazeera, 2018, April 18).

During 1947, the Panglong Agreement was signed by Myanmar's government and ethnic minorities including the Shan, Chin and Kachin. This agreement regulated the formation of the Union of Burma and the relations between its people. One of the key points stated that these minorities would have full freedom and autonomy when dealing with the regulations and administrations for Frontier Areas. Moreover, the Burmese constitution from 1947 further emphasized the possibility of minorities acquiring independence; full or at least in certain aspects.

The Panglong Agreement never reached full implementation and soon the government's military forces started handling ethnic areas by force and violence, thus, ethnicities gained a negative opinion towards this government which occupied their territory and didn't provide education, health care or security. The government's behaviour led ethnicities to take on the use of arms by 1958 in order to acquire some voice on the decisions in the autonomy they were promised but never granted.

In 1960, Buddhism was selected as Myanmar's state religion, thus further hatred and rebellions raised in all non-Buddhist individuals. Moreover, even though the Union Citizenship Act of 1948 allowed Rohingya who's families had resided in the country for more than two generations to get identity cards, after the 1962 military coup, also known as Burmese coup d'état, this situation changed significantly.

The totalitarian rule and political power possessed by Myanmar's military required all citizens to get national registration cards, which was stated in the 1974 Emergency Immigration Act. Rohingyas weren't granted this cards, only foreign identity cards which restricted their job and education opportunities.

Throughout 1982 a new law passed and the Rohingya minority was permitted to apply for citizenship only if they could fluently speak a recognized language and owned evidence that

their family had resided in the country before independence. Nonetheless, most people that qualified under this conditions were never granted the paperwork that confirmed their origins to the country, consequently, ending up stateless (Al Jazeera, 2018, April 18).

Not only did this law limit their conditions in education, work, travel and health, but it also removed their rights to vote, forbade their participation on the government and classified their almost impossible to obtain citizenship as “naturalised” instead of “Rohingya”.

Myanmar carried out its first census in over 30 years in 2014. The census did not have the option to be labeled as “Rohingya” thus, the minority was enforced to register as “Bengali”, causing the spread of dislike and further reinforcing the government’s belief of their illegal immigration.

### Persecutions, violence and humanitarian crisis

Since the 1970s Rohingyas have dealt with discrimination and repression, however, its true intensification started after 2011, when the power of Myanmar’s government went back to civilians, rather than the military.

This intensification, mainly characterized by rape, torture, arson and murder, committed by government forces led to the flee of significant amounts of Rohingyas mostly to nearby countries such as Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, or Thailand.

Furthemore, the denial of citizenship for Rohingyas developed into their lack of representation, rights and freedom, resulting in inhumane living conditions that include: living in ghettos and camps, lacking basic human services like education and health, being excluded from government jobs, labour, being banned from marriage by the government, and being limited on their number of children.

Currently the Rakhine State is marked by confrontations between the Rohingyas and other mainly buddhist ethnic minorities or the Rohingyas and the national security forces, as well as by poverty and constant tension amongst groups.

Buddhism is globally considered one of the most peaceful religions, yet, Buddhists, including monks have been accused of being responsible for the dissemination of violent behaviours towards the muslim minority. All of these conducts brought straight up consequences such as the formation of Rohingya militant groups.

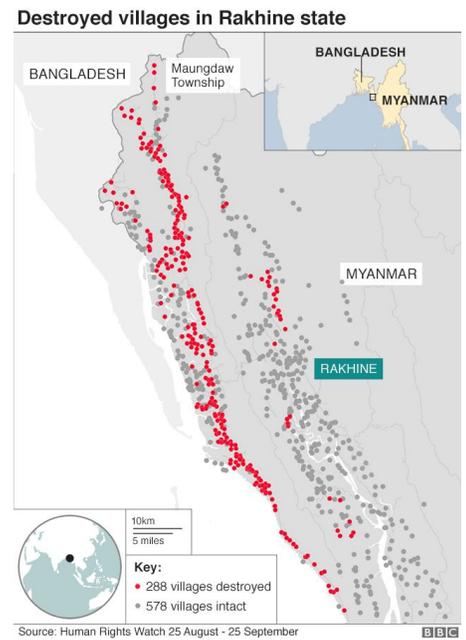
In October 2016, nine burmese police officers were killed in the Rakhine State by what the government said were “insurgent terrorists,” or basically Rohingya militant fighters. This event provoked the arrival of several government troops to the zone, which led to a security crackdown on Rohingya villages.

During this event, several human rights abuses committed by government troops were reported, including sexual, physical and psychological abuses. In 2017 the Office of the High Commissioner interviewed Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh; more than half of women stated they were victims of sexual violence by Myanmar’s military (United Nations Association of Sweden, 2018).

In August of the same year, more than 360 villages in the Rakhine State were demolished by fires initiated by national security forces, and indiscriminate gun firing targeted to Rohingya men, women and children were reported. Furthermore, places of cultural significance for the ethnic minority were destroyed, and educated members of the ethnicity were arbitrarily detained or killed.

According to the Human Rights Watch, the government of Myanmar does not only destroy these villages but further clears the evidence of any potential crimes towards the Rohingya.

Moreover, after their villages were burnt, many Rohingyas were sent to Internally Displaced People’s (IDP) Camps. Known for their inhuman conditions, these camps are a constant concern due to their lack of access to healthcare and education. Each camp holds an approximation of 120.000 individuals which suffer from these conditions on a regular basis.



Even Though an Advisory Commission, established in 2016 on Rakhine State pointed out the need to shut down these camps to the government of Myanmar, in 2017 the process started out really slowly, only shutting down three camps, and making an issue of the whereabouts of the people displaced from these.

In April 2013, Human Rights Watch accused the government of the country of performing an evident case of ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya. In 2016, a UN official reiterated this accusation and was followed by many more. Myanmar's government has simultaneously denied all accusations.

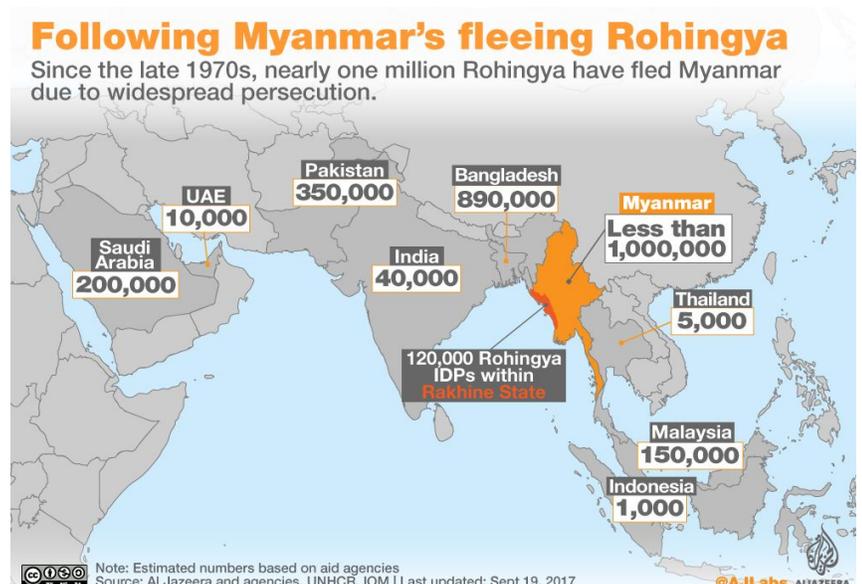
In September 2017, a unilateral ceasefire of duration one month was declared by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) with the purpose of allowing the entrance of aid groups to address the humanitarian crisis in Rakhine. The group strongly encouraged aid groups to join and help victims of the crisis, while calling on the burmese army to contribute with the ceasefire and stop the violence.

## Fleeing Myanmar

As one of the main consequences of these persecutions, nearly one million Rohingya have left the country since the 1970s (Al Jazeera, 2018, April 18). Even before the true intensification of violence in 2017, around 420.000 Rohingya refugees were believed to be in Southeast Asia by the UN.

Since 2017, over 650.000 Rohingyas, have left their country behind and fled to other nearby countries such as Bangladesh, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Their most common destinations include Malaysia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Thailand.

Their flee from the country often involves life-risking situations such as travelling by boat across the Andaman



Sea and the Bay of Bengal in order to get to their destinations. This risky voyage was performed by an estimate of 110.000 people between 2012 and 2015. During this unsafe trip, it is common for the army of Myanmar to shoot Rohingyas in boats, as well as for them to become easy targets for pirates for human trafficking or slave labour.

Moreover, when refugees reach their destinations, with little to no belongings, they still face several difficulties regarding their survival due to the lack of campings, shelter, aid, food, water and healthcare in the receiving countries.

Currently, it has further become a challenge for the Rohingya to leave the horrific conditions of their country due to how Myanmar's government has forbidden the Rohingya to leave Rakhine State without authorization from the government, thus, eliminating their already slight possibilities of escaping persecution. This has left hundreds of thousands of Rohingya isolated in Rakhine, without any access to health or food.

Additionally, it has been reported by Amnesty International that the burmese army had placed landmines all along Rakhine's coast as to prevent refugees from re-entering the country. Paradoxically, these landmines have further wounded individuals fleeing the country, not returning (Omlo, 2017). Tough 1997's Ottawa Treaty established international consequences for the use of landmines, it is important to say that Myanmar never actually signed this treaty.

As a fact, the flee of Rohingya has also become a trouble for neighbouring countries, reflected upon the increasing denial of entrance of refugees to receiving countries by security forces at fronteers. This has been visible a lot, for instance in Bangladesh, who has slowly decreased the numbers of refugees permitted to enter. Nevertheless, this process is occurring little by little in all neighbouring countries.

Luckily, according to a 2018 study done by the Inter Sector Coordination Group, thanks to worldwide collaborations, outside Rakhine State, around 70% of the one million refugees have been slowly granted food and health aid. Also 100.000 individuals have been treated with malnutrition, vaccination programs against diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough have been given to 315,000 children, and 47,639 emergency latrines have been placed in Bangladesh as means of aid.

Moreover, in November 2017, Bangladesh and Myanmar engaged in dialogue respecting the refugee crisis and signed a deal regarding the return of over half a million refugees from Bangladesh to Myanmar.

### Myanmar's Government

In November 2015 the first open national elections happened in Myanmar in over 25 years due to the recent change in the country's power from the military, back to civilians. As a result, in March 2016, Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi assumed power. She is an absolute hero for the country and the portrayal of a free civilian ruled government, and yet, has been dealing with extensive worldwide critics on her behavior towards the Rohingya people.

Not only has Aung San Suu Kyi and her government refused on many occasions to discuss the situation of the Rohingya, but they have also, as previously mentioned, denied recognition to the ethnic group, blamed violence in the State of Rakhine on them, and exposed them as "terrorists" amongst Myanmar and the international community.

In addition, the government is now known for repeatedly turning down accusations posed on the country. In February 2017, a report was published by the UN stating the performance of crimes against humanity by the government's troops. To this, the government of Aung San Suu Kyi responded by evading the accusations and further saying that Myanmar had the rights to defend itself against terrorist activist, while only including domestic investigations as enough means to deal with the situation (Al Jazeera, 2018, April 18).

In November 2017, Pope Francis visited Myanmar. The country's army chief talked with the Pope and stated that there was "no discrimination" in Myanmar while recognizing the military's success in maintaining "peace and stability" amongst the country.

Aung San Suu Kyi has been seen condemning human rights violations in Rakhine in television, never mentioning the Rohingya specifically, and yet, journalists and aid workers have been denied access to the Rakhine State in several occasions, justifying their actions by claiming that aid groups are helping people they consider terrorists.

Moreover, rapporteurs have been granted only to talk to Rohingyas who have been pre-approved by the military, and several UN individuals looking to investigate the violence in the zone have been denied visas to enter the country.

### The international community

The situation of the Rohingya people violates several of the international laws including, for instance, the Human Right to a nationality from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and The Convention on the Rights of the Child, the failure to investigate human rights violations and provide justice to citizens from The Updated Set of Principles for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights Through Action to Combat Impunity, and the return of refugees to their country while still being in danger from the UN Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees.

The treatment of Rohingya by Myanmar and neighbouring countries has been already condemned by the United Nations, Amnesty International, many rights groups and Human Rights Watch.

The denial of visas to UN members took Human Rights Watch to warn Myanmar about its risk of becoming a “pariah state” such as DPRK or Syria if it did not permit the UN to investigate the zone. Due to the recent intensification of violence, Aung San Suu Kyi and her military was called upon by the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and warned about the her potential performance of ethnic cleansing.

Moreover, the United Nations Security Council has called on Myanmar to detain the abuses on the ethnic minority, and still no sanctions have been imposed to the burmese country.

Pope Francis himself, after visiting the country, stated that inclusion, tolerance, and acceptance with all ethnicities is needed in Myanmar, and many of the Muslim-majority countries such as Turkey have presented heavy allegations against the discrimination of the Rohingya.

The re-installation of Rohingya rights to vote, and the end of their oppression has been requested by several international groups, international media and Western governments and

yet, have not developed in any results. The international community is now, more than ever, aware of the situation in Myanmar, and it has shown that it won't tolerate any sort of ethnic discrimination toward the Rohingya minority.

## Major Countries and Organizations Involved

### Myanmar

Formerly known as Burma, the Southeast Asian country has recently been dealing with strong violent encounters between its military and the Rohingya people, which has caused the death of many as well as the performance by the country's military of the destruction of over 55 villages

The country has been persecuting the Rohingya minority for more than twenty years, and yet, acts that could be labelled as ethnic cleansing have been occurring more and more on the last couple of years, causing mass of the minority group to flee to neighbouring countries such as Bangladesh.

Myanmar has showed cooperation by signing a deal with Bangladesh in order to arrange the return of hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugees to the nation.

### Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA)

The Rohingya insurgent group, previously known as the al-Yaqeen Faith Movement is currently active in northern Rakhine State. In 2017, the group presented a statement where it expressed its need to "defend, salvage and protect [the] Rohingya community".

The government of Myanmar considers the group as "terrorists", however in March 2017 the group further publicly stated that they do not work or relate with any terrorist association and do not perform any sort of terrorist behaviour against any individual regardless of their ethnicity or religion (Al Jazeera, 2018, April 18).

The group has been accused by the government of Myanmar of killing civilians and preventing the flee of Rohingya, documented Fortify Rights, rights group. In 2017, ARSA

declared a unilateral ceasefire in order to allow the entrance of aid to the conflict zone and help those ill.

### Neighbouring countries (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand)

These four countries have been deeply affected by the Rohingya conflict. They all have, willingly or unwillingly, received some number of Rohingya refugees. After hesitating, some have opened their doors to the minority group, others have only discouraged them from entering the country, while others simply closed their borders to their entrance.

In these last couple of years it has become more and more easy to find cases where Rohingyas end up stranded in the middle of the sea due to how neither of these countries want to take them in, thus they end up being ping-ponged around the four nations.

Indonesia specifically prohibited its fisherman from rescuing any refugees at sea (Dewan, 2017, September 13). Nevertheless, the country, being the world's biggest Muslim-majority nation, has still expressed its support for the Rohingya by performing regular protests on their behalf.

Malaysia has been able to provide a way better care for refugees than the rest of nations due to the much smaller amount of individuals it has received. The country really looks forward to the solving of the issue by international cooperation, something that for instance, Bangladesh is not so keen about.

Thailand has slowly acquired a more important role in this conflict. Being, a key landmark for human trafficking and abuses, the Rohingya refugees have suffered the consequences of these, by becoming subjects and easy targets for such abuses and trafficking.

Thankfully, as a result of the rise in the migrant crisis since 2015, the international community has began to pressure these neighbouring countries into welcoming the Rohingya refugees with open arms. Indonesia and Malaysia responded fruitfully and started providing shelter to migrants. More and more now we see Malaysia rescuing Rohingya stranded boats, and Thailand agreed to detain sending migrant boats back into international waters.

## Bangladesh

Bangladesh does not believe the Rohingya people are Bangladeshi.

Over half a million unregistered Rohingya are currently living in camps in Bangladesh, making the country, by far, the most Rohingya refugee receiving of them all. The country started up welcoming the newcomers, yet little by little it has become less keen about their entrance and has now even denied access to the country to some. Even though Bangladesh opened some of its borders to the Rohingya, the country has often send refugees back to Myanmar. Those refugees that luckily do enter the country, end up working as illegal immigrants, in poverty, without either education nor health.

In January 2017, the country proposed the idea to send tens of thousands of Rohingya to a remote flood prone, undeveloped coastal island. Human rights groups classified this island as “uninhabitable” and discredited the proposal.

Furthemore, Bangladesh’s authorities have shown a lot of support towards the minority group. The country’s foreign minister has stated that the treatment received by Rohingya in Myanmar is "a genocide". Also, Bangladesh’s National Commission for Human Rights declared that it considered pressing charges against Myanmar at the international tribunal due to genocide.

Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh’s Prime Minister, visited Rohingya camps back in 2017 and further called on the international community, right groups, and the UN, to pressure Myanmar in order for it to allow the return of fleeing Rohingya to the country. She also stated that Bangladesh would provide temporary aid and shelter to the muslim group, and yet called on Myanmar to start the process of talking its population back. Despite Sheikh Hasina’s statement, Bangladesh has been quite irregular at the moment of providing aid to refugees from Myanmar. In some occasions, the country’s government has even banned NGOs and rights groups from giving help to the Rohingya, mainly due to the desire to stop the Rohingya immigration influx to the country.

Bangladesh has not signed the UN Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, thus the concept of “non-refoulement,” of refugees does not apply to the country, and it further believes it

is not part of its duties to take care of Rohingya refugees while having the right to return them to their country.

### China

China is an ally of Myanmar. The country has, on several occasions, vetoed UN resolutions against Myanmar due to the tight economic relationships between the two of them. Not only is China Myanmar's greatest arms supplier, but it is also a big developer of the country; seen for instance, in the investments for the development of a deep-water port in Rakhine State (United Nations Association of Sweden, 2018).

The Chinese government has stated that there is no simple way to solve the violence in Rakhine, and that results shouldn't be expected soon, while it has also called upon the international community to support Myanmar on its effort towards keeping peace and stability in its country. Moreover, the country has aided the overall dialogue between Myanmar and Bangladesh, with the purpose of improving the refugee conflict.

### France

The Security Council has witnessed France's declaration of this conflict as "ethnic cleansing", and the country's president, Emmanuel Macron, declaring it as "genocide".

France has demanded for Myanmar to restore peace and security in the Rakhine State, as well as providing humanitarian access to population.

The country has further called upon Bangladesh to continue accepting refugees until the situation is better for the Rohingya, while guaranteeing to Bangladesh the return of the Muslim ethnic minority back to their country.

### Human Rights Watch

Human Rights Watch designated Myanmar's security force's behaviour as an "ethnic cleansing campaign". Moreover, it appealed to the United Nations and Myanmar's supporters to pressure the country in order to end the violence.

### Japan

Japan is strongly against the abuses performed by the military of Myanmar. The country expects Myanmar to restore peace on its country and believes the solution to this conflict will be achieved through diplomacy. Japan has provided a lot of financial aid to the refugees living in Bangladesh and believes that Rohingya refugees should return, when conditions permit so, to Myanmar.

### Kazakhstan

The muslim-majority country has strong bonds with Russia, Myanmar's ally. The country has stated its desire to send a UN investigation to Rakhine in order to look into the actual situation of the zone.

Kazakhstan believes that any abuse towards the muslim minority, as well as any military action should be stopped immediately, and further wants humanitarian access to be granted to the Rohingya, for the refugees to come back to Myanmar, and for Myanmar to grant them citizenships.

### Russia

Russia comes second after China in the list of Myanmar's allies. The Russian government believes that international participation will only worsen the conflict, and it also supports Myanmar in all its action to bring peace back to Rakhine.

The country has further accused ARSA of attacking members of the hindu community of Myanmar, and it has expressed its disapproval towards those who label the conflict as "genocide" or "ethnic cleansing".

Russia wants the situation of refugees to be solved and for the international community to support Myanmar on its efforts towards ending violence between ethnicities.

### Sweden

Sweden believes Myanmar's actions to be crimes against humanity and demands the cease of any military action or violence. It further calls upon Myanmar to permit the entrance of refugees back into its land as well as the access to humanitarian aid and UN officials to

Rakhine. Sweden considers that perpetrators from Myanmar's army should be held accountable for their actions and be sentenced by international court.

### United Kingdom

The United Kingdom has classified the situation as "ethnic cleansing". The country believes Myanmar's military has the responsibility to find a solution to the crisis. Protection must be granted to everyone and violence needs to be detained; the UN, and humanitarian access should be allowed to enter Rakhine, and Myanmar should implement all of the Annan Commission's recommendations while, at the same time, arranging with Bangladesh the return of the refugees back to Myanmar.

The United Kingdom believes sanctions must be imposed to Myanmar by the Security Council if the country does not comply with all requirements.

### United States of America

Back in 2012, former US President Barack Obama visited Myanmar and called on the country's government to reform its Human Rights policies and conditions. Myanmar showed some short term cooperation but soon the promises were left unattended.

The United States are concerned that an excess of pressure on Myanmar will backfire and affect the country's delicate democratization process.

The United States has labelled the situation as "ethnic cleansing", condemned Myanmar's military action, and suspended all military relationships with the country. Furthermore, it has called upon the international community to suspend arms trade with Myanmar, and believes refugees must return to Myanmar and that humanitarian aid must be granted access to Rakhine.

### United Nations

Antonio Guterres, United Nations Secretary General called on Aung San Suu Kyi's government to end the abuses, and warned them of the possibility of ethnic cleansing.

Moreover, there are several official UN camps in Rakhine which have helped over 25,000 Rohingya. Nevertheless, the big majority is still found in unofficial, less safe, resources lacking camps or ghettos.

For the last couple of years, the UN's refugee agency has called upon Myanmar's nearby countries to open its borders to Rohingya refugees, pressuring them to rescue and provide aid to the coming individuals who risk their lives at sea.

## Timeline of Events

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description of event</b>
1885	End of monarchy in Myanmar. As a British colony, Burma becomes part of India
1937	Burma is separated from India, and is turned into a new colony
1942-1945	During WWII, Burma is occupied by Japan and liberated by the United Kingdom
1948	Independence of Burma; beginning of civilian government
1961	Burma names Buddhism as state religion
1962	Military gains power in Burma's government implementing socialist policies
1982	Citizenship Law forbidding Rohingya to acquire citizenship in Burma
1988	People's Revolution - protests and riots against Burma's government. Many protesters are killed by the military
1989	Military party implements martial law to stop riots, and renames country "Myanmar"
1990	Opposition party wins elections by a lot. Myanmar's military ignores results
2007	"Saffron Revolution"
2008	Cyclone Nargis hits Myanmar and leaves over 130,000 victims
2010	Military party wins elections, and the opposition complains about fraud
2011	Economic and democratic reforms start in Myanmar by President Thein Sein

2012	Opposition wins majority of seats in parliamentary
June 10, 2012	Start of State of Emergency over Rakhine State
2012-2014	Riots and violence between ethnicities in the Rakhine State
2014	Rohingyas are excluded from Myanmar's first census in over three decades
2015	Myanmar's government and 15 rebel groups sign a draft ceasefire.
November 2015	First democratic elections in Myanmar since military rule. Rohingyas are excluded from candidates and voters. Suu Kyi wins elections.
March 29, 2016	End of State of Emergency over Rakhine State
April 6, 2016	Aung San Suu Kyi becomes the leader of Myanmar's civilian government
August 23, 2016	Advisory Commission on Rakhine State is established
October 9, 2016	ARSA claims responsibility over the death of nine police officers of Myanmar
March 24, 2017	United Nations Human Rights Council sends an investigation regarding human rights abuses by the army to Myanmar
August 25, 2017	Rohingya militants kill 30 of Myanmar's police officers. Myanmar's military responds with "clearance operations," destroying villages and killing Rohingyas
August 17-31, 2017	Around 300.000 Rohingyas flee to Bangladesh
September 19, 2017	Suu Kyi publicly condemns human rights abuses and denies any sort of discrimination, persecution, and violence against the Rohingya minority.
November 2017	Pope Francis visits Myanmar
August 2018	UN report accuses the country's military of performing genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity and calls for several generals for trial at the ICC. Myanmar denies all findings

## Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- The Paris Principles: National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, 20 December 1993 (**A/RES/48/134**)
- Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, 5 August 2011 (**A/66/267**)
- Situation of human rights of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar - Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 29 June 2016 (**A/HRC/32/18**)
- Aung San Suu Kyi asked former UN chief Kofi Annan for help in the solution of the ethnic division in Myanmar. The Advisory Commission on Rakhine State was established, September 2016
- UN official accused Myanmar's government of performing an act of "ethnic cleansing" against the Rohingya minority, November 2016

## Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

The Security Council embarked on a serious approach towards this issue during the second half of 2017 and beginning of 2018. Meetings regarding the situation of Myanmar started occurring more often, and members such as Secretary General António Guterres constantly updated the Council on the condition of the country. This increase of attention devoted to the issue led the Security Council to condemn the violence in Rakhine and forbid the further excessive use of military forces in the area, on November 2017. This overall reaction to the issue made Member States fully aware of the situation in Myanmar and overall encouraged a stronger participation and cooperation from the global community in the solution of this crisis.

The Advisory Commission on Rakhine State released a report in August 2017 where it mentioned key paths to follow in order to reach the stabilization of Rakhine. Such paths include, shutting down IDP camps, providing humanitarian access to the zone, and equality against the law. These were proposed more than a year ago, yet no big result has been seen and many of these suggestions still haven't been implemented by Myanmar.

Rohingya Insurgents have had several ceasefires with the Myanmar Army along the years. Many of these lasted a couple of months, while others were successful at providing more peace and stability to the nation. On 9 September 2017, Rohingya Insurgents offered a

prolonged ceasefire to Myanmar's Army, however this was denied by the military, sustaining a position of no negotiation with terrorists.

Finally, the country of Myanmar itself has, in November 2017, presented its Union Enterprise Mechanism for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement, and Development in Rakhine to the Security Council. This body, devoted to the development of Rakhine with goals such as providing humanitarian aid, resettling and rehabilitating, and developing the zone, has stated its ideas of repatriation of refugees in Bangladesh as well as the improvement of quality of life of citizens. Some noticeable results have been visible mainly in aspects regarding agriculture and health, and for sure this is a step in the right direction towards peace.

## Possible Solutions

One of the strongest ways to solve the issue is by imposing arms embargoes and economic sanctions to Myanmar. This will prevent the further easy access to arms and weapons, thus, aiding the overall detain of violence in the zone. This actions could always backfire and be overcome by military forces and Rohingya insurgent groups through black markets, or other methods of violence. Moreover, this method will most likely generate resentment from the country towards the international community and possibly slow down collaboration and cooperation from Myanmar.

Another method that could be implemented is humanitarian assistance and human rights monitoring. The entrance of these should first be granted by Myanmar but the international community, the UN, and NGOs should be available to aid the country in the protection, rehabilitation and reintegration of Rohingya refugees. Furthermore, follow ups of UN controls and reports should become recurrent in order to keep an eye on the situation of the country.

In addition, the Security Council could use its authority to invoke the International Criminal Court (ICC) for a criminal investigation. This methodology is also quite strong, and can take place regardless if Myanmar is party to the ICC's Statue. As mentioned previously, such strong methods might generate resentment from the country, bringing future negative consequences.

Moreover, sexual and gender-based abuses could be decreased by pressuring Myanmar into not tolerating any sort of sexual or gender-based violence at Rakhine, and rather, penalizing such acts. Individuals that carry action such as these sexual and gender-based abuses as well as any sort of type of practice that could be associated as genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes could be prosecuted by the ICC. For this to occur collaboration from All Member States, including Myanmar, should be sustained.

Furthermore, if the country of Myanmar started showing cooperation in subjects related to prosecuting criminals, responsible for said crimes, the country could be encouraged to create specific national courts dedicated to cases on human rights violations with the purpose of providing further methods to eradicate this sort of violence in the zone, while, at the same time granting autonomy and authority to Myanmar in the solution of its own conflict.

Besides these methods, Myanmar could also be pressured and encouraged to accept and rule by the Paris Principles with the purpose of giving the overall country a much better civilian security status while providing Rohingya people with better conditions and positions in the country. Myanmar's 1982 Citizenship law should also be subject to amendments and modification through international pressure due to their lack of compliance with the international law.

Finally, with the purpose of helping the situation of refugees in Bengali camps, Bangladesh could be talked into and pressured to allow the entrance of humanitarian aid NGOs back into the country as to access Rohingya refugees. Dialogue between Bengali authorities and NGOs is key in order for this proposal to work. An agreement between both parties should provide Bangladesh with benefits, recognition, and possibly financial help from the international community as to motivate the country to continue helping in the overall solution of this massive issue.

## Bibliography

Al Jazeera. (2018, April 18). *Who are the Rohingya?*. Al Jazeera, Retrieved from:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/08/rohingya-muslims-170831065142812.html>

BBC News. (2018, September 3). *Myanmar profile - Timeline*. BBC News, Retrieved from:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-12992883>

BBC News. (2018, April 24). *Myanmar Rohingya: What you need to know about the crisis*. BBC

News, Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41566561>

BBC News. (2017, January 10). *Who will help Myanmar's Rohingya?*. BBC News, Retrieved

from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-38168917>

Dewan, A. (2017, September 13). *Who are the Rohingya and why are they fleeing?*. CNN,

Retrieved from:

<https://edition.cnn.com/2017/09/05/asia/rohingya-myanmar-explainer/index.html>

Hunt, K. (2017, November 13). *Rohingya crisis: How we got here*. CNN, Retrieved from:

<https://edition.cnn.com/2017/11/12/asia/rohingya-crisis-timeline/index.html>

Mizzima. (2018, January 13). *UEHRD stresses the importance of health care in troubled*

*Rakhine*. Mizzima, Retrieved from:

<http://www.mizzima.com/news-domestic/uehrd-stresses-importance-health-care-troubled-rakhine>

Omlo, M. (2017). *The position of the Rohingya people*. Leiden Model United Nations, Retrieved

from:

<https://www.lemun.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/GA4-The-position-of-the-Rohingya-People.pdf>

Ratcliffe, R. (2017, September 6). *Who are the Rohingya and what is happening in Myanmar?*.

The Guardian, Retrieved from:

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/sep/06/who-are-the-rohingya-and-what-is-happening-in-myanmar>

Reuters. (2016, October 10). *Myanmar says nine police killed by insurgents on Bangladesh*

*border*. The Guardian, Retrieved from:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/oct/10/myanmar-nine-police-killed-insurgents-bangladesh-border>

United Nations Association of Sweden (2018). *The Situation in Myanmar*. United Nations

Association of Sweden, Retrieved from:

<https://fn.se/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Model-UN-Myanmar-2018.pdf>

Warzone Initiatives. (2015, October). *ROHINGYA BRIEFING REPORT*. Warzone Initiatives,

Retrieved from:

<http://www.equalrightstrust.org/ertdocumentbank/Rohingya%20Briefing%20Report.pdf>

What's In Blue. (2017, August 30). *Consultations on Myanmar*. What's In Blue, Retrieved from:

<https://www.whatsinblue.org/2017/08/consultations-on-myanmar.php>

Wikipedia. (2018, November 17). *1962 Burmese coup d'état*. Wikipedia, Retrieved from:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1962\\_Burmese\\_coup\\_d%27%C3%A9tat](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1962_Burmese_coup_d%27%C3%A9tat)

Wikipedia. (2018, December 13). *Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army*. Wikipedia, Retrieved from:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arakan\\_Rohingya\\_Salvation\\_Army](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arakan_Rohingya_Salvation_Army)