



In the world today, it is not uncommon to hear the terms “immigration” and “asylum” mentioned in the news. Groups of people, all over the world, are forced to flee from their homes and seek safety and refuge, because their home can no longer provide comfort and the feeling of being secure it once did. An example of this can be seen in Myanmar, where it’s population of Rohingya Muslims, who lived in the Rakhine State, were forced to flee to Bangladesh seeking refuge after military attacks by the Myanmar government. This movement started in 2017, and has evolved to become an infringement on the human rights of the Rohingya. Myanmar has created detention camps in the Rakhine State, and limited the legal abilities of the Rohingya since 2012. Starting in 2015, the Rohingya began crossing the border and migrating to Bangladesh, and the restrictions imposed by the government of Myanmar became more intense and limited even more civil rights. Before and during 2017, more than 1 million of the Rohingya people fled to Bangladesh, and since then another 730,000 have followed.¹ Myanmar is a predominantly Buddhist country, and they are participating in ethnic cleansing, where smaller ethnic groups like the Rohingya are eliminated to leave a majority. This crisis concerns the UNHRC because the Rohingya are forced to become stateless refugees, with no citizenship or basic civil rights from their government. They are discriminated against and persecuted because

¹ <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/myanmar-burma>



of their religious beliefs, which is an obvious violation of human rights. This is an important topic to discuss because it is rarely mentioned in mainstream media, and the rights of the Rohingya people have been ignored for close to a decade. There are major human rights violations within this crisis, and Myanmar has ignored all attempts to amend the situation.

This crisis has an impact on many different groups of people, and countries. The group most impacted by this crisis is the Rohingya Muslims, whose natural human rights have been violated time and time again by the government of Myanmar. Since the start of the ethnic cleansing campaign, the Rohingya have been forced to move between Myanmar and Bangladesh, living in unprotected and unsafe refugee camps, which provide a minimal amount of shelter. The refugees are barely fed, and Bangladesh cannot support the volume of people seeking asylum they receive. For those who have not been able to flee, still primarily living in the Rakhine state of Myanmar, they are living in the same dilapidated detention camps, and can barely give themselves proper food and shelter. The government of Myanmar has also made it very difficult to stay in the country as citizens, and limited their civil abilities greatly. The Rohingya in Myanmar are not treated as real people, and seen as refugees in their own state. They have limited abilities in both countries, even with UN



Figure 2
This image shows the typical shelter for Rohingya Muslims in refugee camps. The conditions are obviously harsh and violate their basic human right to shelter.



intervention to try and help. No matter where the Rohingya Muslims go, they face many human rights and civil rights issues, and are the most greatly impacted by the Myanmar crisis.

The next area greatly affected by the Myanmar crisis is Bangladesh. The Rohingya Muslim refugees fled to the neighboring country of Bangladesh, following the August 2017 campaign by the Myanmar army. Since this event, Bangladesh has taken measures to keep their Rohingya refugee camps separated from the rest of the country. In September of 2019, it was announced that the Bangladesh government would be putting restrictions on cell service in the refugee camps, in an effort to improve security. There was also a recommendation to create fences around the camps to stop free movement and increase security, which the UNHRC advised against, as it violated the concept that aliens, or refugees had the same rights to movement as citizens do.² Bangladesh has also made efforts to repatriate the refugees, and get them to return to their home country of Myanmar. Bangladesh does not wish to support the refugees in their country, and wants to help them go back to the Rakhine State of Myanmar. This movement gained traction in Bangladesh after an incident involving the refugees killing a leader of the Awami Leagues youth division, a ruling group, occurred. This was in protest of repatriation, and the Rohingya believe returning to their home country would be unsafe for them

² <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/09/07/bangladesh-clampdown-rohingya-refugees>



and put them in a dangerous situation. Bangladesh has been unwillingly involved in the Myanmar crisis, and wants the refugees they house to return to their home country.

The final main party involved in the Myanmar Crisis, who essentially started this human rights issue, is the government of Myanmar. As mentioned previously, in August of 2017, the Myanmar national army launched an ethnic cleansing campaign against the Rohingya Muslims. The government of Myanmar was looking to purify their ethnic population, and decrease ethnic diversity. The most famous example of an ethnic cleansing campaign is the Holocaust, when the Nazi party of the 1940's committed genocide targeting mostly jews. They wanted to have a population of aryan descent only, and aimed to eliminate anyone who didn't fit their mold. The Myanmar government wants to have a population of people from Bamar descent, who are ethnically from Myanmar. The leaders of Myanmar are willing to take extreme measures to eliminate the Rohingya Muslims from their population, and the government has set rules and laws specific to the Rohingya to restrict their basic human and civil rights. There are frequent attacks against the Rohingya, and they are frequently pushed to move to Bangladesh

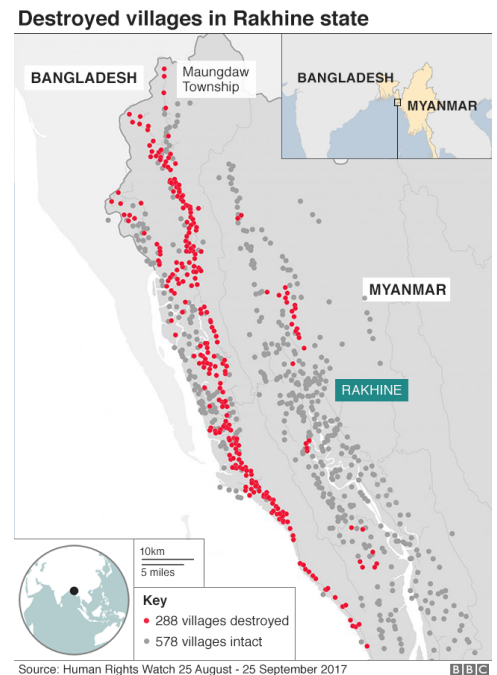


Figure 1
This image shows a comparison of villages destroyed by the Myanmar army to villages still in tact. This represents the devastating impact ethnic cleansing has had on the Rohingya Muslims

United Nations Human Rights Council

MetMUNC XLIX

Topic: Myanmar Rohingya Muslim Crisis

Chairpeople: Kasha Bhatia, Isabel Lagnado, Hannah Quintin



or into the no man land zone between the two countries, just to decrease their population percentage. The government has also destroyed villages in the Rakhine state, and killed thousands of children. Women have also been abused, and overall the Rohingya have been tortured. Some countries who have previously participated in ethnic cleansing, as well as countries with similar political policies have come to the support of Myanmar and affirmed their campaign. Many predominantly Islamic countries however, have fought for the Rohingya, and argued how the injusticed they have received must be acknowledged and stopped.

This crisis has not gone past the UNHRC, and action has been taken and is currently being taken to ensure the safety of the Rohingya so they can live pecaefully and practice Islam. In 2018, one of the most famous resolutions regarding the Rohingya was passed, and today is known as the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar, better known as the IIMM. This was a recommendation for how Bangladesh and Myanmar could deal with the refugee crisis, and why human rights violations were being committed according to UN code. This resolution was particulary important because it made sure that Myanmar would be a continued topic of discussion during UNHRC sessions. As well a fact finding mission, or FFM, was ordered to establish the situation in Myanmar, and get more definitive facts about the crisis. Later a subcouncil was created for more in depth conversations on Myanmar outside of the UNHRC

United Nations Human Rights Council

MetMUNC XLIX

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general council. As recently as March 2020, interactive dialogues have been held on the Myanmar crisis, and more resolutions with the same goal have been passed. Like many other things in the world, the novel coronavirus has further complicated the crisis, and the UNHRC, in its latest regular session, came up with resolutions which would address the problems created by the global pandemic. The UNHRC has done extensive work to resolve the crisis, but there is still a lot more work to be done regarding Myanmar.

The goal of this committee is to further address the Rohingya Muslim crisis in Myanmar, and create resolutions which will appeal to the government of Myanmar, Bangladesh, and the Rohingya Muslims and their supportive Islamic nations and groups. The injustices against the Rohingya are numerous and unacceptable from a human rights perspective. Action must be taken to prevent genocide of an entire ethnic group, as a result from ethnic cleansing, which is depriving yet another group from their basic human and civil rights. In this session, think about how you as a representative can elaborate on the work done by the UNHRC already, while still keeping the beliefs of the main parties involved in mind. What is being done to the Rohingya Muslims in the Myanmar Crisis is not acceptable, and in this committee we will aim to resolve an issue which has been going on for far too long.

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Questions To Consider

1. To what extent has the Myanmar crisis impacted your country?
2. How will the political beliefs of your country impact your stance on the crisis?
3. Does your country have a history with similar events to this crisis?
4. Why is your country significant to this topic, and what can you offer to help?
5. Why are the human rights of the Rohingya Muslims being violated?

Helpful Links

<https://iimm.un.org/>

<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/myanmar-burma>

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/09/07/bangladesh-clampdown-rohingya-refugees>

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=25702&LangID=E>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41566561>