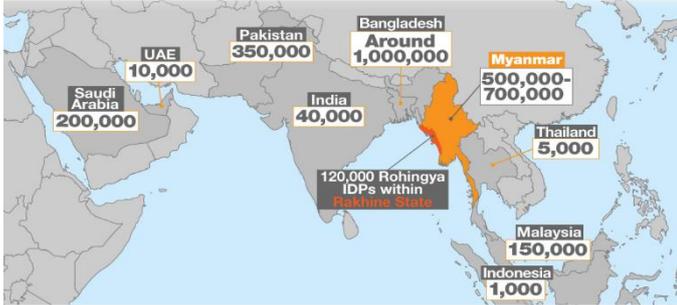




Action on the Rohingya Crisis

To Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Boris Johnson



BACKGROUND

- *UN involvement*

2017: draft resolution introduced by the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and accepted. Includes:

- Entrance for UN fact-finding missions
- Full and unhindered humanitarian aid access to Rakhine State
- Demands full citizenship rights for the Rohingya
- Appointment of a Special Envoy by Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, to negotiate with Burma.

- *Statelessness in international law*

Definition: individual 'who is not considered as a national by any state under operation of its law'

Universal Declaration of Human Rights: 'everyone has the right to a nationality'

UN Conventions:

- 1954 Convention: Ensuring basic human rights to stateless persons (right to education, employment and housing, right to identity, travel documents)

➔ these are not currently fulfilled for Rohingya

- 1961 Convention: Aim to prevent statelessness

VIEWS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

- **The United Kingdom** has advocated for the United Nations Security Council to address the crisis, ceased assistance to the Burmese military, and contributed £59 million to the refugee crisis. The government considers repatriation of refugees premature.
- **Bangladesh** has registered 690 000 Rohingya refugees since August 25, 2017, called for international pressure to be exerted on Burma, and agreed to repatriate refugees beginning 2018.
- **India** supports the Burmese government, is concerned about Islamic terrorism, and seeks to extend influence into Southeast Asia. Investments include the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, linking eastern India to the Bay of Bengal.
- **China** supports the Burmese government in dealing with the situation. Investments in Rakhine state includes Kyauk Phyu port, from which oil and gas are supplied to Kunming.
- **The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation** urges humanitarian access, voluntary return, and citizenship for Rohingya.

- **The United Nations** has referred to the crisis as 'ethnic cleansing', approved the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation's resolution, and suggested Burmese officials could face genocide charges.

ABOUT MILITARY INTERVENTION

Why we should not intervene militarily:

- Attack on national sovereignty
- Burden to diplomatic relationships
- Bad picture of Britain in the international community
→ act of neo-colonialism

Why we should take other actions:

- Britain must fight for liberty and freedom
- Humanitarian aid easily justifiable in parliament
- Human rights: everyone has the right to a home and a nationality

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ Reconsider (alongside the international organization of Human Rights Watch) urging the Burmese Government to repeal the 1982 citizenship law or amend it in accordance with the recommendations of the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Burma and to grant the Rohingya population **full citizenship**.
- ❖ Make clear **military engagements in Burma will not take place** without the support of UN Peacekeeping Forces: we recommend endorsing the establishment of a Civil-Military Coordination strategy to promote dialogue and interaction with the Burmese Government.
- ❖ Sustain, augment, and cooperate with international humanitarian organisations/programs (e.g. UNICEF, UN High Commissioner for Refugees) to provide **humanitarian aid** within Burma's borders: this will help Rohingya people reintegrate back into society and the UN fact-finding mission continue its engagements.

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

- **RECOGNITION FOR CITIZENSHIP:** Lack of cooperation and possibly retaliation from the Burmese government is to be expected. Pushing recognition into the conscience of the international community is the outcome to prioritize.
- **AID WITHIN BURMESE BORDERS:** The success of humanitarian aid relies on the environment. Internally the hostile government hinders the aid pathway. Aid will have to be supplied where and when possible given the circumstances to avoid the need for military assistance.
- **REFUGEE AID:** Countries currently harbouring refugees will be the most viable for successful humanitarian aid. The establishment of camps, especially in Bangladesh will be controversial and likely unsuccessful. Acute aid should be the focus: basic necessities to avoid famine and loss of education should be supplied.
- **PEACEKEEPING ASSISTANCE:** In the case that the UN engage, we will mobilize and contribute.

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