

ZAMUN 2019

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
COMITEE**

STUDY GUIDE

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1. Letter from chairs

Dear delegates

It is an honour for us to welcome you to the ZaMUN 2019 ECOSOC committee. We hope that we will all lead an interesting and thrilling debate on the topic and that our sessions would be as fruitful as possible. For this to happen it is strongly recommended to read this study guide and also do some additional research.

If you have never participated in the Model United Nations before, do not worry, it is not as hard as it looks. Yes of course, sometimes it can be stressful and scary to go in front of people and talk about something important and complicated, often not using your mother tongue. We have all been there and we can assure you, it is not a big deal and why even bother participating in conferences if you do not want to improve yourself? Do not worry, I am sure that our committee will **ROCK** and we will not bite you for doing mistakes.

The topic of our committee will be the *The medical and safety conditions of Rohingya people refugee camps*. It is a tricky and serious topic, nevertheless, with a good preparation, we can make a great debating experience, which would give us a little insight on how the real UN works. Therefore we ask you to get as much information and knowledge about your country's stance and position. It is really important to represent the country as authentically as possible.

We have both attended countless model conferences, in Slovakia, Poland, Austria... We gained a lot of experience and now we will try to pass it on to you guys. We hope that you will enjoy the sessions but we also encourage you to make friendships, learn about local culture, dance, sing and whatever else that will make this event memorable for you. After all, it is the people that really matter.

Yours chair and underchair

Samuel and Lucia.

2. Introduction to the topic

Most of us are lucky not to know how it is to be in a war, or how it is not to have food, shelter or basic human needs. In other words, we are used to peace, unable to imagine being without it. This, unfortunately, cannot be said about the Rohingya people.

In the outbreak of the 9th of October 2016 when Myanmar security forces started conducting what they referred to as "area clearance operations" where they claimed to have targeted militant Rohingya groups in the northern part of Rakhine State, a crisis has emerged. A conflict took an unexpected turn of ethnic cleansing and is still ongoing. The conflict has resulted in over 688 000 Rohingya refugees fleeing the country. On February 2017, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights published a report in which refugees told stories of gang rape, mass killings, and brutal beatings. More than half of the women interviewed reported having been a victim of sexual violence.

The vast majority of the refugees fled to Bangladesh due to their effort to be secured from violence from Myanmar. As of the 11th of December 2018, an estimated 860 000 Rohingya are in refugee camps in Cox's Bazaar in Bangladesh. There they are often confronted with inhumane conditions and at risk of dangerous deadly diseases that can make the situation drastically harder. These refugee camps are crowded and the situation in Bangladesh seems to be escalating into more and more difficulties, if not acted upon.

It will be our task to try to tackle the problem and to obtain a suitable resolution that would be able to help the people in need and secure the humanitarian aid for refugees in these camps. I look forward to a fruitful debate during sessions, and I hope that each of us will learn something new and get more knowledge about the problems all around the world.

3. Definition of key terms

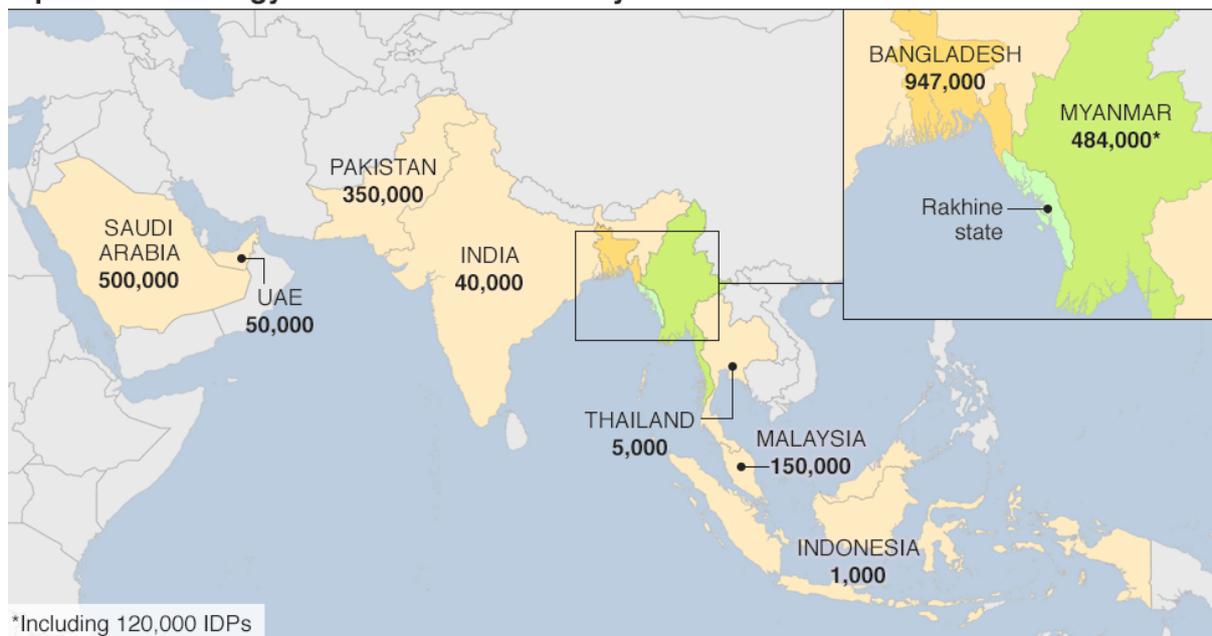
ROHINGYA MINORITY

The Rohingya people are a stateless ethnic group of about 3.5 million, who reside in the Rakhine state, Myanmar (also known as Burma) From the 50 million group of people in Myanmar, 90% is Buddhist, while only 4% of the population is Muslim. Rohingyas form the largest Muslim minority in Myanmar.

The group has suffered a longstanding marginalization over the course of the years. Many people in Myanmar believe that Rohingyas originate from Bangladesh and many people in Bangladesh similarly think that they originate from Myanmar. Nevertheless, neither of the states is willing to recognize them as their citizens. Beyond the refusal of citizenship, the Rohingya have been denied access to higher education and also suffered restrictions in their freedom of movement. Their land has been confiscated, males from the group exploited in forced labour.

At this moment hundreds of thousands of people from this group are on the run, displaced in refugee camps either in Bangladesh or other neighbouring countries. This comes as a result of Myanmar's governments "clearance operations" that left over 3000 dead, many more injured, tortured or raped, villages burned.

Spread of Rohingya inside and outside Myanmar



Source: The Arakan Project / October 2017



INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSON (IDP)

An internally displaced person is a person which is forced to flee his or her home but remains within his or her country's borders. Often referred to as refugees, although they do not fall within the legal definition of a refugee.

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

Humanitarian access refers to the ability by neutral humanitarian actors such as NGOs and the UN, to enter the area of conflict, provide humanitarian help as well as monitor and also promote human rights.

REFUGEE CAMP

A refugee camp is a temporary settlement built to receive refugees and people in refugee-like situations. Refugee camps usually accommodate displaced people, who have fled their home country, but there are also camps for internally displaced persons (IDP)



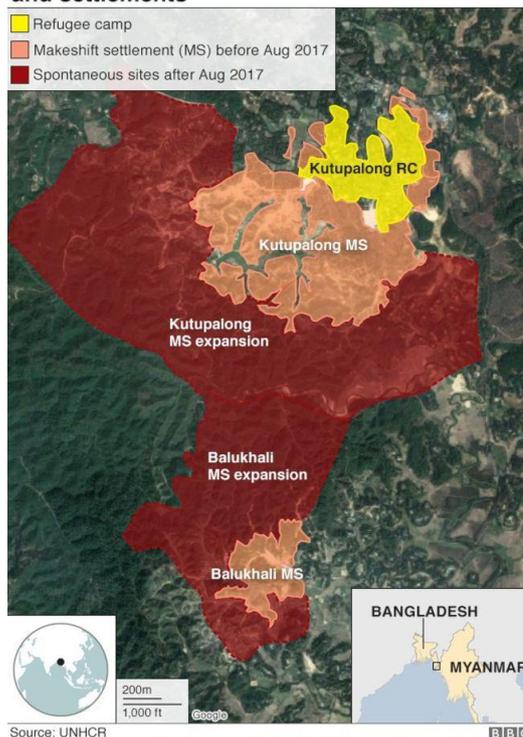
GENOCIDE

Genocide is an intentional action to destroy a people (usually defined as an national, ethnic, racial, or religious group) in whole or in part. The *United Nations Genocide Convention*, established in 1948, defines genocide as "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic or religious group."

ARSA

The Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army is a Rohingya insurgent group active in the northern Rakhine state, Myanmar. The group claims to be responsible for the insurgent attacks on the Myanmar police posts conducted on 25 of August 2017. ARSA states that their purpose is the defence of the Rohingyas, however The government of Myanmar declared them a terrorist group, suspected of being trained abroad.

Expansion of existing refugee camps and settlements



4. History of the crisis

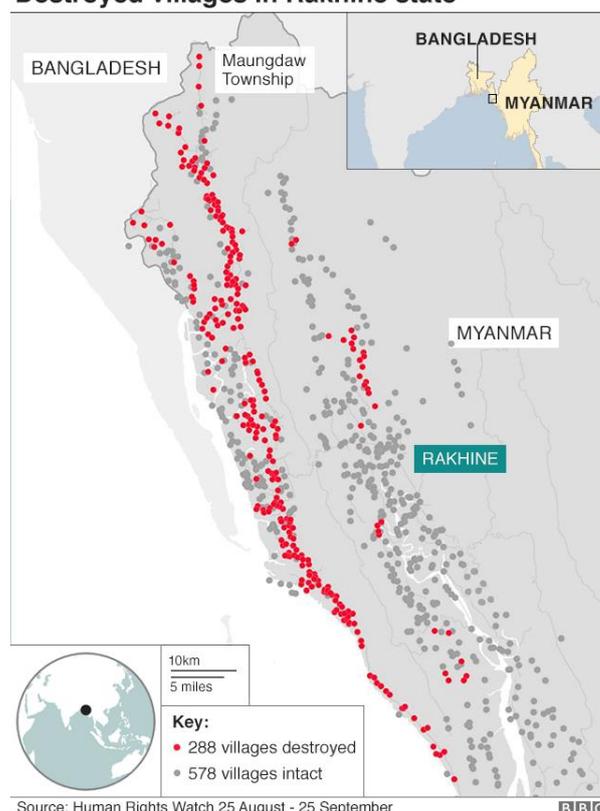
The start of the conflict

The latest crisis and the violence on the Rohingya people started as a result of the attacks on the police posts in Rakhine state. The Myanmar's government announced on the 25 of August 2017 that 71 people (one soldier, one immigration officer, 10 policemen and 59 insurgents) had been killed overnight during attacks coordinated by up to 150 insurgents on 24 police posts and army base in Rakhine state. The insurgents were armed with explosives, small weapons and machetes. A militant group known as Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) claimed responsibility for the attacks. The ARSA group claimed that they were merely taking "defensive actions" in 25 different locations and accused the soldiers of raping and killing the civilians. They also claimed that Rathendaug, small town in Rakhine state was under a blockade for more than two weeks, starving the Rohingya population, and that the government forces were preparing to do the same with more towns in the area, therefore the attack was justified from their point of view.

Governments response

Soon after the attacks, Myanmar's government responded harshly. The military conducted a "heavy counter-offensive" and supported by the Buddhist militia, started "clearance operations" against the Rohingyas. This brutal campaign destroyed hundreds of Rohingya villages and forced nearly 700 000 Rohingya to leave Myanmar. Although some Myanmar officials claimed that the Rohingyas were burning their own homes, these claims later resulted as false. At least 6,700 Rohingya were killed in the first months of attacks, between August 25 and September 24, 2017, according to the international medical charity Doctors Without Borders. The security forces of Myanmar allegedly opened fire on fleeing civilians and planted land mines near border crossings used by the Rohingya to flee to Bangladesh. Speaking on 11 September, Mr Zeid (Jordanian diplomat) said that the operation seems a "textbook example of ethnic cleansing"

Destroyed villages in Rakhine state



Since the start of 2018, Myanmar authorities have reportedly cleared abandoned Rohingya villages and farmlands to build homes, infrastructure and security bases. The government claims this development is in preparation for the repatriation of refugees, but right activists have expressed concern these moves could be intended to accommodate other populations in Rakhine state. Furthermore, some raised doubts that the government tactics have been in response to the attacks committed by ARSA, with the reports showing that the military began implementing its policies a long time before ARSA struck.

The response of the region

Protesters have at times gathered in cities in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Thailand and Indonesia to condemn the killing and persecution of Rohingya minority. The Bangladesh's minister of foreign affairs condemned the violence in Rakhine as "genocide" in September 2017 and Indonesia and Malaysia called on the Myanmar authorities to halt their campaign and bring an end to the violence. Furthermore Bangladesh, which was the most affected neighbouring country and Myanmar have held bilateral discussions aimed at repatriating the Rohingya and guaranteeing their rights in Myanmar, but these have been ad hoc and yet to produce a breakthrough.

In October 2018, authorities in Bangladesh and Myanmar agreed to repatriate several thousand refugees but offered few specifics on how those refugees would be selected. Human Rights Watch suggested that those slated repatriation had not volunteered, but rather were chosen random by Bangladeshi authorities. Moreover, Myanmar officials did not specify whether returning refugees would be granted full citizenship rights, including freedom of movement.

Alongside the criticism of the plane by the United States and human right groups, the United Nations urged a cancelation and warned that conditions in Myanmar were still unsafe for Rohingya. ultimately, the Rohingya in Bangladesh refused to return until their citizenship rights were guaranteed. Experts predict that the Bangladeshi government must decide whether to keep the refugees and struggle to provide shelter for them, or expel them from Bangladesh and suffer the consequences from the Western governments and human organizations.

The response of the world

In 2017 a U.S. sanctions were imposed against Myanmar military general for his alleged role in the military's attacks in Rakhine, and the U.S. government has continued to widen its sanctions on the military of Myanmar commanders in 2018, as evidence of the Myanmar atrocities mounts.

Meanwhile, countries including United States, Norway, Canada and South Korea, as well as international donors, have upped their humanitarian assistance as the flow of refugees has grown, and in early 2018 a team of UK medics led an emergency response to help stem the spread of disease in camps. The UN has requested \$951 million in immediate relief funds for 2018.

28th of February 2019 (The crisis is rising)

On this day, Bangladesh has told the UN it cannot accept any more refugees from Myanmar, this is the first time the country has threatened to close its borders to Rohingya fleeing from the violence.

Speaking to the UNSC, Bangladesh foreign secretary Shahidul Haque said: "I regret to inform the council that Bangladesh would no longer be in position to accommodate more people from Myanmar."

In particular Haque expressed his frustration with both the UN security council and the international community at the lack of concrete action to solve the crisis. He accused Myanmar of trying to shift the blame by accusing Bangladesh of harbouring terrorists when in fact the Bangladesh government had "a zero-tolerance policy" in this regard.

Haque was joined in his condemnation of Myanmar's failure to take steps towards repatriation of Rohingya by envoys from western governments including the UK and the US. "We are very disappointed that there hasn't been more progress on getting the refugees back," said British ambassador Karen Pierce.

Initial attempts to begin a repatriation process for the Rohingya last year failed spectacularly after Myanmar failed to provide assurances to the refugees that they would be safe from violence, be allowed to return to their original homes, have freedom of movement and be given a pathway to citizenship in Myanmar, which Rohingya were stripped of in 1974. As a result, the thousands of Rohingya listed for return refused, and many went into hiding.

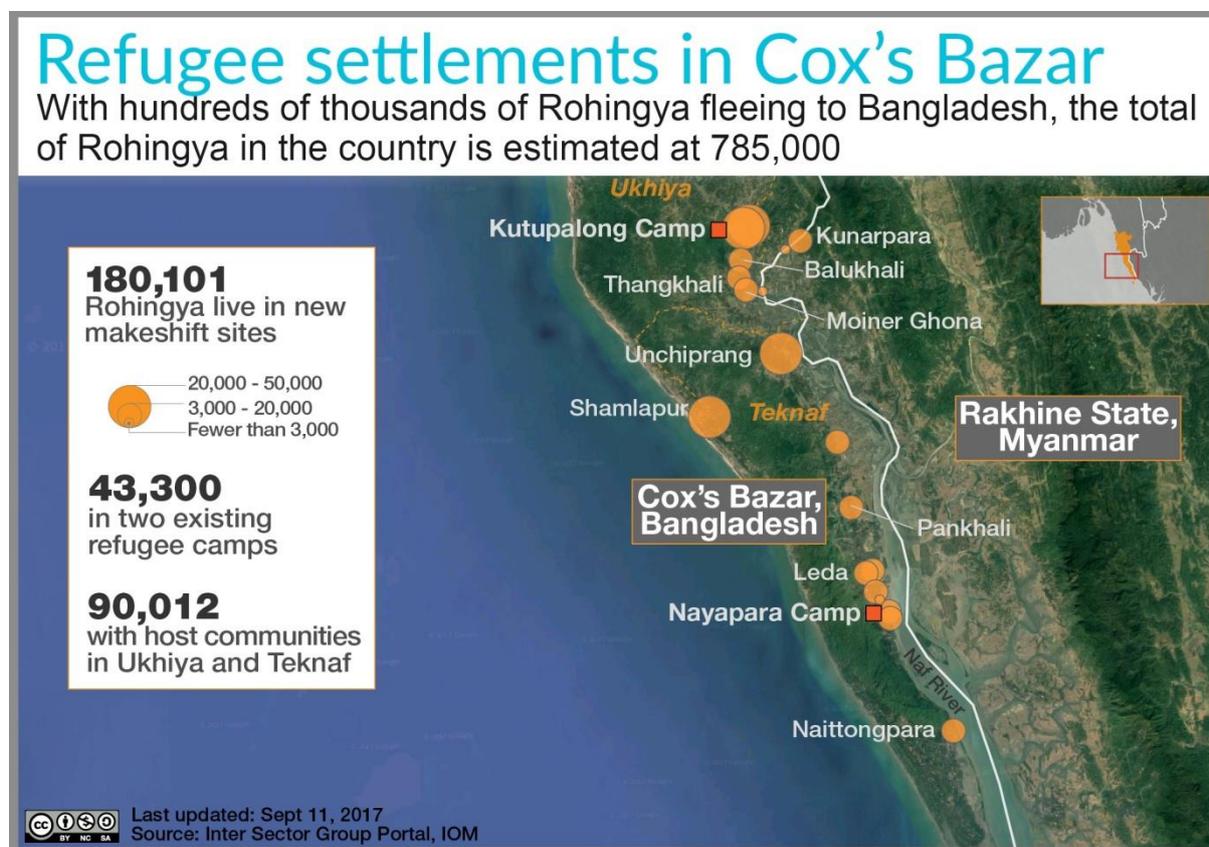
5. The refugee camps

Most Rohingya from Myanmar fled to nearby Bangladesh which has very limited resources and land to host refugees. There are over 1.1 million refugees in the country, according to the Bangladeshi authorities. The World Health Organization (WHO) projected the birth of sixty thousand babies in Bangladeshis crowded camps in 2018. Meanwhile, the risk of disease outbreak in camps is high, with health organizations warning of possible outbreaks of diseases such as: measles, tetanus, diphtheria and acute jaundice syndrome. Moreover, more than 60% of the available water supply in camps is contaminated, increasing the risk of spread of communicable and water-borne diseases.

Vulnerable refugees have turned to smugglers, paying for transport out of Bangladesh and Myanmar and risking exploitation, that includes sexual services and enslavement.

The Rohingya exodus to Bangladesh has created a rather complicated situation. Due to the resource scarcity that Bangladesh faced, repatriation of the

refugees that had arrived from Myanmar often seemed like the only viable solution. Their integration seemed to be extremely difficult for the local authorities. Consequently, even though there has been support for those registered in the legal camps in Bangladesh, the rest are treated like illegal immigrants.



FACTS

- About 70% of the one million refugees are now receiving food aid, according to the Inter Sector coordination Group report from mid-April 2018.
- Almost 100,000 people have been treated for malnutrition.
- Large scale vaccination programmes have been launched to try to minimise the risk of diseases. By mid-January 2018, 315, 000 children under 15 years of age had received a five-in-one vaccination, including cover for diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough.
- 47,639 temporary emergency latrines have been built by Bangladeshi military.
- The UN Security Council appealed to Myanmar to stop the violence but no sanctions have been imposed whatsoever.
- Bangladesh plans to build more shelters in the Cox's Bazaar area but also wants to limit their travel to allocated areas.

- The UK has pledged 59m in aid to support those fleeing to Bangladesh. UK Prime Minister Theresa May also said the military action in Rakhine had to stop. The UK has suspended training courses for the Myanmar military.

6. Issues to be solved

In order for the debate to be fluent and fruitful and also to get a great experience, we recommend you to focus on few topics, rather than on the problematic as a whole, these are.

1. How to ensure the need of humanitarian aid for the camps? (Food, water, clothes...)
2. How to ensure the safety of the Rohingya in the refugee camps? How to prevent violence, sexual harassment and other kinds of exploitation?
3. How to prevent refugees from escaping the refugee camps and getting lost in foreign country? How to identify them?
4. What should be done about the attitude about Myanmar?
5. How to cooperate with Bangladesh to help solve the situation?

Possible subtopics

1. Prohibition of sexual violence against Rohingya women
2. Protection of Rohingya children's right to education
3. Creation of employment for Rohingya refugees.
4. Relations with Bangladesh

We expect you to address some of these questions in your POSITION PAPERS, which are to be send to us until 17. March to the following e-mail address - **samuel.nguyen.conference@gmail.com**

7. Conclusion

So this is it. You have made it. You have read the study guide as a responsible delegate. We guess you are asking yourself: "What now? Am I prepared for the committee now?" And the answer is, NO. You have just started the research. Now it is your turn to dig to the vast unknown territories of the internet or books and get as much knowledge about the topic as you can. But beware! Do not forget that you are representing a country, not an individual, so try to stay as true to its stance as you can. However it is always good to have your own opinion and to bring some fresh air to the debate, with innovative thoughts and resolutions.

We wish you good luck, next time you hear some words from us, it will be at the ZaMUN committee in a small but beautiful land called Slovakia. There, our paths will cross and we will talk about the topic. And who knows? Maybe we will become friends. We certainly hope so. See you soon!

8. Useful links

WIKIPEDIA OF COURSE

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2017%E2%80%93present_Rohingya_genocide_in_Myanmar

INSIGHT ON THE CRISIS FROM MEDIA

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-47412704>

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

<https://www.cfr.org/background/rohingya-crisis>

https://www.unicef.org/emergencies/bangladesh_100945.html

<https://www.unocha.org/rohingya-refugee-crisis>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41160679>

OTHER STUDY GUIDES (INCLUDING COUNTRIES AND THEIR POSITIONS)

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

<http://www.thesismun.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/UNSC-2018-The-situation-in-Myanmar-Final.pdf>

OFFICIAL UN NEWS

<https://news.un.org/en/tags/rohingya-refugee-crisis>

VIDEOS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yRnWtbZv83w>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KXWG4NQNllo>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F25qrkboV3o>