



United Nations Human Rights Council

Junior Model UN 2018

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to Junior Model United Nations 2018! Thank you for joining us in the United Nations Human Rights Council. I am honored to be serving as your Director alongside your Chair Tej Sathe and your AD Aaliyah Wu. With the current daunting, real-world challenges facing the UNHRC, now is truly the time to take part in it, and I hope through this simulation you will come to understand importance and impact of the UNHRC's work.

I expect great professionalism and poise, the implied expectation of any delegate, but something especially needed in UNHRC where we will be debating the basic spirit of human dignity. The topic we will be tackling contains issues of the utmost gravity, and, as aforementioned, the integrity and necessity of the UNHRC has recently come into question. Thus, all delegate conduct should not only serve one's own interests, but also understand how it's being reflected upon the greater UNHRC. How this crisis is handled could not only save those involved, but also set future UNHRC perceptions, and thus protect countless future lives.

For such greater success, it is my recommendation that a delegate focus on several specific facets of the Myanmar Crisis. When delegates come together in committee, they could then potentially combine all of their findings and ideas into one comprehensive solution.

A final note that this UNHRC simulation will still contain and consider the United States normally despite recent real-world events.

Any questions or concerns regarding committee can be directed to juniormunUNHRC@gmail.com.

Best,
Jack Li

Committee Description

Formed on May 15th, 2006, the United Nations Human Rights Council is a subsidiary body of the UN General Assembly. 47 countries are represented from said General Assembly -- 13 from Africa, 13 from Asia, 6 representing Eastern Europe, 8 representing Latin America and the Caribbean, and finally 7 composing the 'Western European and Other Group'. Together they "uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights" through investigation and report, examples being freedom of speech, expression, and religion, as well as access to fundamental basic needs such as sufficient nutrition, clean water, and shelter. The council works in close cooperation with governments, regional organizations, human rights institutions and civil society to protect human rights. This committee has the jurisdiction to call on other States to take certain actions, and it can also issue investigations into areas of concern. It can mandate "special procedures" to monitor human rights in specific nations or regions and also receives complaints of human rights violations.

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Topic 1: Rohingya Crisis

Topic Intro

The Rohingya are a stateless, Muslim ethnic group located in the northern state of Rakhine within Myanmar, a primarily Buddhist nation. Although historical tensions between the Rohingya and the greater state of Myanmar have always been present, in 1982, these tensions came to a head when a new citizenship law was passed which identified the various national ethnic groups in Myanmar. The Rohingya, however, were specifically excluded and thus rendered stateless.

The Rohingya Crisis then, began on August 25, 2017 when a Rohingya nationalist group in opposition to the oppression of the Rohingya people, known as the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), attacked state police and military outposts in Rakhine state. In response, the Myanmar military began to “root out” Rohingya “fighters” hiding in villages. The result has been indiscriminate mass violence towards Rohingya civilians, forcing 1000s of Rohingya to flee from their homes. This violence has included their rape, torture, and extrajudicial killings of thousands, among other atrocities. Over 750,000 Rohingya alone have been forced to flee into neighboring Bangladesh.

Topic History

Myanmar is a country in southeast Asia. Originally the Kingdom of Burma, the country fell under British East India Company rule in 1885. It was in this period, under British rule, that Burmese xenophobia, with an especially strong aversion to anything British, began to take form. Traditional Burmese society crumbled, and while the Burmese economy as a whole grew, the majority of wealth and power came to be vested in an Anglo-Burmese elite and its allies. In reaction, popular activism, led by student protests, came to a head during the early 1900s. This was interrupted, however, by the outbreak of World War II. With promises of an independent Burmese state, many prominent leaders of the Burmese independence movement assisted Japan in its 1942 invasion of British Burma.

Under Japanese rule, the majority of Burmese nationals, at least outwardly, had accepted Japanese authority. There was, however, a notable exception with the Rohingya people, who refused to recognize Japanese power and remained loyal to the British. As a result, pro-Japanese forces frequently persecuted and killed Rohingyas, and, although Burma would eventually turn on its Japanese occupiers and assist the Allies' liberation, negative Rohingya association with Britain became ingrained in the minds of the majority Buddhist Burmese people.

With the conclusion of World War II, Aung San, one of the most prominent leaders of the Burmese independence movement, was able to finally negotiate independence for Burma in 1947. As “Father of the Nation”, he began a dialogue of peace, national unity, and cooperation, attempting to bring Burma's many diverse groups and factions into one cohesive populace. However, barely several months into their tenure, Aung San and his entire cabinet were brutally assassinated by political rivals. From there, Burma descended into decades of civil war and chaos, with scores of various factions fighting for power.

In 1962, out of the chaos, a military junta staged a coup d'état and seized control of the country. The Burmese military has ever since had a dominant position in all Burmese politics. Under the military's rule, Burma has become one of the world's poorest and least developed nations and the nation has been sanctioned and condemned by numerous nations on charges of human rights violations and improper federal management. It was also under the military's rule that the country was renamed Myanmar.

The military junta has also been notably involved in frequent clashes and tensions with the Rohingya Muslims of Rakhine State. While the military government has reconciled with most of Myanmar's ethnic minority groups, the Rohingya remain an exception. Their historical siding with the British in World War II, as well as their distinct Muslim culture, has stirred fears of ‘foreign invasion’ and an end to Myanmar's unique Buddhist history and heritage. This, and continued Rohingya separatist movements, both armed and peaceful, have led to constant military action against the Rohingya people. As early as 1948, an armed Rohingya rebellion, calling for an autonomous area was defeated. As recent as 2015, the Rohingya people were denied the right to vote in Myanmar's elections.

Currently, in the face of the Myanmar Crisis, the UN has called for an immediate halt to military operations by Myanmar's forces against Rohingya civilians. The UN has also issued a statement demanding that the Rohingya be allowed to return to their homes.

In February 2018, Britain, France and the US called upon the UN Security Council to discuss the crisis. However, Chinese support for the current Myanmar regime has stifled any chance of real action. As a result, the UN has only been able to call for an end to the “genocide”, but has yet to take any true proper action.

Beyond the UN, international outcry has been fairly prominent, calling the crisis a case of “textbook ethnic cleansing”. Criticism has been especially focused around Myanmar’s current prime minister Aung San Suu Kyi, the daughter of Aung San and a Nobel Peace Prize recipient, who has been called despicable and a hypocrite for overseeing and enabling the “genocide” and for thus disparaging her family legacy and award. However, some of Myanmar’s allies have either not acknowledged or supported the Myanmar regime’s actions.

Topic Timeline

- 1948: Myanmar is released from British rule, and the Mujahid rebellion is put down by the Myanmar army
- 1962: Many rights of the Rohingya, such as education and health care, are taken away
- 1977: Myanmar conducts Operation Nagamin, which forces many Rohingya into Bangladesh
- 1982: Myanmar make the Rohingya stateless by not recognizing them as an ethnic group
- 1991: Many Rohingya are once more forced into Bangladesh by the Myanmar army; The Rohingya receive UNHRC aid this time
- 1998: 230,000 Rohingya are returned to their homes in Myanmar after reparations by the Myanmar army are stopped
- 2010: Aung San Suu Kyi is released from house arrest
- 2015: Suu Kyi is elected as a state counsellor
- 2016: Members of the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) attack 20 Myanmar military border posts in Rakhine state
- 2017: Myanmar state media sources declare the ARSA insurgents as the perpetrators of the 2016 attack on Myanmar military border posts
- February 2018: Britain, France, and the United States call upon the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to discuss the Rohingya refugee crisis
- June 2018: Bangladesh and India start discussions about accepting more Rohingya refugees
- July 2018: UN calls for immediate halt to military operations by Myanmar’s forces against Rohingya civilians and repartitions of the Rohingya
- August 2018: Myanmar rejects UN reports on mass killings of Rohingya, didn’t agree nor accept the resolutions made by the Human Rights Council

Myanmar Bloc Coalition (Myanmar, Russia, China, Vietnam, Philippines, India)

Myanmar, Russia, China, Laos, the Philippines, Cambodia, Vietnam, Belarus, Zimbabwe, and Syria opposed a UN resolution which called for the granting of full citizenship for Rohingya as well as for aid workers to return the Rohingya to their homes. Myanmar's community and government themselves, despite some discussion, have rejected the idea. As for Myanmar's allies, Russia has been selling fighter jets to Myanmar, a decision which it has been criticized for by the US for supposedly further aggravating the situation. As for Myanmar's other allies, in 2017, Rodrigo Duterte, president of the Philippines, stated that he doesn't "mind the human rights" violations taking place, further saying they were a "noisy bunch". However, he has recognized the crisis as genocide, and has agreed to take some Rohingya refugees provided that European countries do the same.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a regional, intergovernmental organization comprised of ten Southeast Asian states, those being Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. While most of these ASEAN countries have condemned the crisis and urged that it ends, each country has posed different solutions to it, and Myanmar's part in ASEAN has also complicated its ability to address the crisis. Laos, for example, though it still accepts and provides for some Rohingya refugees, rejected a UN resolution which called for more aid workers for Rohingya refugees, that would have helped increase chances of employment and citizenship for refugees.

Countries Directly Affected by the Myanmar Crisis

The Rohingya Crisis has affected many beyond just the Rohingya, most especially those countries bordering Myanmar, Bangladesh, China, India, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Laos. Of these countries, Bangladesh has been affected the most, taking in many Rohingya refugees. As of July 2018, they are hosting more than a million refugees and, despite support from Germany, China and India, will soon not be able to take more.

Not Affected, Condemning and Providing Some Support

While this crisis is taking place in Southeast Asia, many other countries not in geographical proximity have spoken and acted on the matter, most especially the United States of America, Germany, Australia, France and the United Kingdom. They have provided humanitarian aid, money, and other resources to countries harboring Rohingya refugees. Besides said prominent actors, many other countries have spoken about and condemned the Rohingya Crisis and strongly agree with resolutions that help end or relieve their pain.



Possible Solutions

There are a variety of potential short-term solutions to this crisis. One such solution could be the opening up of more host countries for refugees. Other solutions could involve the basic providing of more resources, such as food and water, to refugees and the better establishment, maintenance, and regulation of refugee camps.

Long-term, the UN could consider sanction as well as other similar measures such as condemnations, and seek out better information on the situation through the support of more international media representation, as well as the UNHRC's own special investigators and rapporteurs, in Myanmar. A long-term solution should also look into solving the crisis' underlying problems, some perhaps being stigma against the Rohingya people and Myanmar's current ruling regime.

Both short-term and long-term solutions will be necessary, and delegates should look into providing a comprehensive solution that covers multiple, if not all, aspects of the issue. Short-term solutions on their own would not suffice to prevent similar future occurrences, and long-term solutions on their own, though they might eventually pay off, would ignore the immediate threat to the lives of Rohingya peoples and would be a singularly irresponsible move on the UNHRC's part. Other aspects might include general research and investigation, as well as initiatives to prevent similar crises that might happen in the future across different parts of the globe.

Guiding Questions

- What can be done to address Rohingya statelessness?
- What can be done to help Rohingya refugees without compromising the sovereignty of other nations?
- What can be done to provide immediate relief to Rohingya refugees in refugee camps and on the run?
- What can be done to stem the Myanmar military's use of force against the Rohingya people?

Further Research

- <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41566561>
- <https://www.cnn.com/specials/asia/rohingya>
- <https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2017/09/rohingya-refugee-crisis-myanmar-burma-spd/>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/11/world/asia/myanmar-rohingya-ethnic-cleansing.html>
- <https://www.cfr.org/background/rohingya-crisis>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-44762425>
- <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/09/myanmar-video-and-satellite-evidence-shows-new-fires-still-torching-rohingya-villages/>
- <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/MM/FlashReport3Feb2017.pdf>
- <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-38505228>
- <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/world/news/2018-08/myanmar-reject-un-report-genocide.html>

Topic 1: Phillipine Drug War

Topic Intro

On June 30th, 2016, the 'War on Drugs' is started by Rodrigo Duterte's, president of the Philippines. Reports have found the potentially indiscriminate and extrajudicial killing of anyone even slightly associated with drugs without hesitation. While it is true that his orders have decreased usage rates, general crime levels, and brought down some crime syndicates, numerous human rights groups have criticized the measure for its use of capital punishment in relatively modest crimes, even against basic drug use. Since Duterte's declaration, Filipino police have killed over 12,000 suspects of drug dealing and drug users.

Topic History and Background

Prior to his election as President of the Philippines, Rodrigo Duterte, as mayor of Davao City, oversaw the systematic assassination of any apparent criminal, suspected or otherwise. At the time, the Philippines had the highest drug abuse rate in East Asia, its strategic location in Southeast Asia made it a large drug hub. These drugs included methamphetamine, marijuana and cocaine, among others. As such, during his campaign for president, one of Duterte's main platform points was the eradication of crime, especially drug use. Upon his being elected, Duterte immediately acted on this campaign promise, declaring a "state of national emergency" in September 2016, something that allowed the military policing power among other loopholes through the proper standard of human rights. The result has been widespread killings of anyone, including civilians, even slightly associated with drugs through unidentifiable murderers, vigilantism, and the military alongside traditional police. The UN has condemned Duterte's actions, with the UNHRC itself writing an 843-page report. Duterte, however, has largely ignored and rejected these comments, stating "I don't care about human rights, believe me...there's no due process in my mouth". Over 12,000 people have been killed since he has been taken office.



Bloc Positions

Condemning

For most countries, Rodrigo Duterte's "War on Drugs" has gone too far. In 2017, two UN condemnations, led by Iceland, were delivered. The condemnations urged the end of the killings and call for the Philippines open to change led by the international community. Along with Iceland, 37 other nations signed this agreement including Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States. Thus far, their actions have not affected much, and the killings have continued.

Supporting

A 2017 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) conference, has shown that the leaders of Brunei, Indonesia, and Malaysia support Duterte's actions. Agreeing that drug crime has plagued the Philippines for many years, they commend Duterte's work. Besides these ASEAN members, China-Philippines relations have been improving recently, and China has pledged to potentially provide support.

Possible Solutions

Some possible short-term solutions could be the sending of UNHRC rapporteurs and envoys to the Philippines. The UNHRC could also consider sanctions and other similar measures such as condemnations.

Long-term efforts should seek to address the causes of the human rights crisis such as President Duterte and his reasons for imposing such harsh measures. They could also, in this case, consider the reformation of the crises process through the implementation of such things as judicial measures.

Delegates should attempt to come up with a comprehensive solution that both provides immediate relief and also addresses the crises underlying causes, as well as one that includes precedents for potential similar future situations.

Guiding Questions

- What alternatives preventative measures can be taken against drug crime in the Philippines?
- How can Duterte's initiative, if it needs to, be stemmed or stopped without violating national sovereignty?

Resources

<http://time.com/4495896/philippine-president-rodrigo-duterte/>

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/02/08/world-must-pressure-philippines-drug-war-accountability>

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/02/01/philippines-endorse-un-inquiry-drug-war-killings>

<http://news.abs-cbn.com/focus/09/29/17/39-un-member-states-express-serious-concern-over-ph-drug-war>

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/01/18/philippines-dutertes-drug-war-claims-12000-lives>

<https://www.npr.org/2017/11/13/563841402/philippines-rodrigo-duterte-sustains-support-for-deadly-war-on-drugs>