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NSC 1: Reunification of Rohingya Refugee Family Members

Background:

In August 2017, more than 700,000 Rohingya Muslims had fled their homes because of the destruction and persecution in their country. In Myanmar, there has been several accounts of assault and murder, amidst numbers that reach higher than 288 burned villages and 6,700 Rohingya Muslims killed, including about 630 children, within a few months. To add on, many Rohingya women reported cases of sexual abuse and rape from the Myanmar military. In the beginning of 2017, the Rohingya Muslims, one of the many ethnic groups in Myanmar, made up over one million people of the population. However, the Rohingya people have been displaced by their own government due to the Myanmar government's denial of the Rohingya people's citizenship and complete exclusion of the group from the 2014 census. They are considered illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, although they had been in Myanmar for many centuries. The government's reasoning for their actions is to reinstate stability in the nation as well as Islamophobia. Due to the many ethnic groups in Myanmar, culture can be a conflicting matter especially towards religion. Despite the fact that there is not an official state religion, the government favors Theravada Buddhism; therefore many consider this as a factor. To add, the Myanmar government considers their action as a response to a terrorist attack from a group called the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (Arsa). On August 25, the group attacked more than 30 police posts using knives and home-made bombs, causing the tension between the Myanmar

police enforcement and the Rohingya people to grow. However, Bangladesh consider the Rohingya as unwelcomed and unwanted because the enormous community of undocumented immigrants would be a threat to their national identity. Additionally, Bangladesh designed these strict policies in order to protect their own people. Starting from the 1970s, the Rohingya have been fleeing and migrating between the Southeast Asian territory, mainly amongst Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Within the 2010s, Myanmar has enforced laws that advocate for ethnic cleansing that has motivated communal violence and/or alleged abuses by the security/enforcement in the local communities. The most recent attack began on August 25th of 2017. Rohingya Muslims who were migrating to a district named Cox's Bazaar in Bangladesh, were greeted by burning of the Rohingya communities, attack of civilians, raping of young girls, and fatally abusing the children and women. Through this violence, nearly 6,700 Rohingya Muslims, including more than 730 children aged less than five, were killed. The Myanmar military was reported to have also raped and abused Rohingya Muslim girls and women. The Myanmar government claimed that less than 400 people died compared to 6,700 people who were brutally killed through the attacks. The violence halted on September 5th. Newscast companies such as BBC proclaimed that the militants were occupying the communities beyond the proclaimed date. In the violence of August 2017, more than 288 villages were destroyed partially or completely demolished through arsen, committed by the Buddhist supporters of the Myanmar government. Before August of 2017, more than 307,500 Rohingya Muslims had been displaced and claimed as official refugees. When many of them reached Bangladesh, they were not provided with water, food, or shelter. This issue caught the eyes of many in the United Nations, pushing for more light to be brought to the issue. In 2018,

the Rohingya refugees were allowed food aid, more than 100,000 people have been treated for malnutrition, and vaccination assistance has been given to the children of the Rohingya Muslims.

UN Involvement

The United Nations has been quite blatant in publicizing and reporting about the current situation with the Rohingya refugees and their troubles, through spokesman campaigns and the news through their official website. Although the displacement has not been discussed through the United Nations, the Third Committee approved 13 draft resolutions based on The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), in which in particular has lobbied for a new response regarding the issues most recent spike, in 2015, to be passed. The newly lobbied resolution, the “Joint Response Plan” was launched in February 2019 to aim to aide the refugees in search of their new life through improvements being made to disaster aid teams and allowing an abundant amount of visas and legal work to be prioritized for the displaced people. Requesting \$1 billion, the UNOCHA, serving as a mediator for other countries to assist 1.2 million refugees with integration to new life. Since the process is occurring as of this very moment, success is difficult to determine at the current state of the issue, due to the rise of tensions about the movement of the people; the resolutions passed are taking motion to help the displaced Rohingya Muslims to be able to have legal documents to be permitted to stay in a country. This harassment is difficult to control from the higher levels, especially using peaceful methods and avoiding corruption from city governments as well, which forces the issue to continue ever since 1978. The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) also has been involved in the situation, with airlifting 1,500 metric tons of supplies, including bedding, tents, kitchen utensils,

and utilities, funding infrastructure for easy access to refugee camps through roads, giving them easier methods to find drinking wells with clean water to prevent diarrhea and cholera and farms as a method of integrating into the workforce. Overall, the UN is at work improving the lightly impactful resolutions that were seen to be ineffective.

Questions to Consider:

- 1) How does the political tension or alliance between border states help or worsen the refugees' situation?
- 2) What can be done to prevent native jingoist sentiments in countries such as Bangladesh against the Rohingya refugees, keeping in mind that corruption on the local level is very prominent?
- 3) How have the humanitarian steps taken to help the Rohingya refugees negatively influenced the steps toward the decrease of tension in?
- 4) In what ways can the United Nations assist the Rohingya Muslims to be able to assimilate back into society?
- 5) How does Myanmar's diverse ethnic groups contribute to the complexity of this issue?

NSC BLURB:

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 global goals adapted by the United Nations General Assembly. The SDGs were released in 2015, and the goal year was claimed to be 2030. The SDGs are part of Resolution 70/1 of the United General Assembly (2030 Agenda). Novice Security Council will be attempting to help solve the Rohinya Refugee crisis. Our assigned SDG is the 4th goal, quality education. Currently, thousands of displaced

Rohingya Muslims are stranded with no place to reside. The children are not getting proper care or any education. During our conference, we will try to come up with different solutions that can be helpful and adapting to nearly all displaced Rohingya Refugees in many different multitudes and degrees. In our committee, we will be exploring the various ways as to saving the Rohingya Refugees from persecution as well as the best way to get the Rohingya children education, in the safest way possible.

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