

Over 700,000 men, women, and children have been displaced from their ancestral home in the worst ongoing humanitarian crisis in the world: the Rohingya Genocide.¹ With talks of returning the Rohingya people back to Myanmar surfacing, it is essential to ensure that the Rohingya are protected upon repatriation.

A pervasive hatred and resentment for the Rohingya people has been bred in Myanmar, the premier manifestation of which is the Myanmar social hierarchy that places the Rohingya ‘at the fringes of society’, as indicated by freelance journalist and author Francis Wade.² The second-class treatment of Rohingya will never come to a close without shattering the psychological boundaries that are deeply-embedded in the culture of Myanmar. The most important measure that can be taken to force this radical reorientation of Myanmar attitudes towards the Rohingya in order to certify their safety upon repatriation is to grant them full citizenship status. Citizenship would serve as a validation of their humanity; it would demonstrate to the public and military alike that the Rohingya people are one of Myanmar’s own, and *not* a race of foreign subordinates.³

Citizenship status would also ensure that the Rohingya people are entitled to the same rights and security that the rest of Myanmar enjoys, and would free them from the confines of second-class citizenship that are currently imposed on them.⁴ Moreover, renewed infringement of the securities offered to the Rohingya by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights would be

¹ Robbins, Siobhan. “Rohingya Crisis: It's Still Not Safe for Refugees to Return to Myanmar.” *YouTube*, Sky News, 23 Aug. 2018,

² Albert, Eleanor, and Francis Wade. “How Myanmar's Military Wields Power From the Shadows.” *Council on Foreign Relations*, Council on Foreign Relations, 2 Oct. 2017

³ Beech, Hannah. “Across Myanmar, Denial of Ethnic Cleansing and Loathing of Rohingya.” *New York Times*, 24 Oct. 2017

⁴ “Myanmar's 1982 Citizenship Law and Rohingya.” *Burma Campaign UK*, Burmese Rohingya Organisation UK, 12 Dec. 2014

met with greater local and global outcry if the Rohingya were citizens, as such infringement would then be against the very law of Myanmar as well. This would further ensure that Myanmar's government would abstain from relaunching the military campaign against the Rohingya, as the threat of international pressure, outrage, and condemnation aimed at Myanmar would be both undesirable and entirely legitimate for them if they began to torture and execute their own citizens.

Continuing with the idea of international condemnation, another action that must be taken to guarantee the safety of the Rohingya upon their return is the thorough identification and trying of the military leaders who are guilty of perpetrating human rights violations and infringing upon the UDHR.⁵ This would protect the returned Rohingya from the violence they had suffered in the past, as those who inflicted such atrocities upon them would no longer be in power. Furthermore, trying these military leaders, such as Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, would also be invaluable to process of tearing down the racist anti-Rohingya ideologies of Myanmar.⁶ As with the conferral of citizenship, it would show the Myanmarese that the Rohingya are human as well, with inalienable rights that none, even those as powerful as Myanmar's own military leaders, are entitled to infringe upon. Thus, it is crucial that the international community forces the UN, as well as the government of Myanmar, to bring justice to those who committed such unthinkable crimes against the Rohingya, in the same way the Nuremberg trials brought justice to the criminals of Nazi Germany.

⁵ Domonoske, Camila. "Myanmar's Military Leaders Should Be Tried For Genocide, U.N. Investigators Say." *NPR*, National Public Radio, 27 Aug. 2018,

⁶ Bruce, Nick Cumming. "Myanmar Generals Should Face Genocide Charges Over Rohingya, U.N. Says." *New York Times*, 27 Aug. 2018,

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