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**The United Nations
Human Rights Council**

Research Guide



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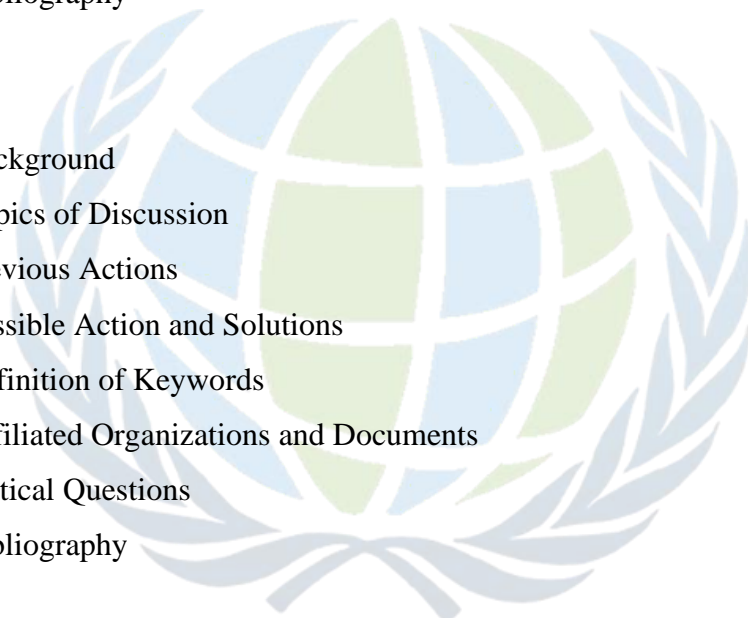
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I. Committee Introduction

The UNHRC, the United Nations Human Rights Council, is a committee that deals primarily with global human rights problems. The council is made up of 47 United Nations Member States which are elected by the UN General Assembly. It was created on March 15, 2006 by resolution 60/251. The Council held its first session from June 19 to 30 in 2006; a year later, it adopted its “Institution-building package” to guide its work and set up its procedures and mechanisms. The Council also established the subsidiary expert mechanism to provide the Council with thematic expertise and forums providing a platform for dialogue and cooperation. It further created open-ended intergovernmental working groups to negotiate and finalize new draft legal instruments, and to make recommendations on the effective implementation of existing documents.

The UNHRC is currently addressing global ethnic conflicts and monitoring human rights situations in Burma, Guinea, North Korea, Côte d’Ivoire, Kyrgyzstan, Syria, Libya, Iran, Sri Lanka, Venezuela, and more. It encourages respect for human rights regardless of race, sex, language, or religion, as outlined in the United Nations Charter as basic goals of the UNHRC.

The council conducts an important task of mainstreaming human rights into the United Nations systems, and works with governments, human rights institutions, United Nations entities, international organizations such as International Labor Organization, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations Children’s Fund, International Criminal Court, and relevant agencies with the aim of advocating and advancing human rights. It also interacts with the society on varying levels to promote and protect human rights.



Agenda 1: The Human Rights Situation in the Hyperinflated Countries: Guarantee of Citizens' Fundamental Standard of Living and Empowerment of Political Capability.**II. Background**

Inflation, a common feature of global economies, is a sustained increase in price of goods and services. A typical inflation rate for any healthy economy is approximately two percent, as is the yearly inflation rate of the United States. But large and accelerating rates spark concerns, since constant price increase causes drop in the value of currency and brings a series of economic troubles. Countries in hyperinflation are said to be in a severely inflating economy, thus in a “hyper” inflated one. When a country experiences a monthly 50 percent increase in the prices of goods and services, it is in hyperinflation. This economic condition is seen most commonly in third-world countries or emerging economies.

Though various causes of inflation exist, inflation frequently starts when the government begins to print money to pay off the existing debt, or to pay for its excessive domestic spending. This naturally increases money supply in the economy, causing prices of goods and services to soar. Hyperinflation occurs when the government already in chaos tries to assuage the situation by simply printing more money. The value of cash soon becomes worthless and consumers' purchasing power declines. This drastically decreases government tax revenues; the government then cannot provide public services (maintaining airports, etc). Hyperinflation also sends the value of the currency plummeting in foreign exchange markets, driving domestic importers to go out of business as the cost of foreign goods skyrockets. Companies go bankrupt and soon out of business as they fall into inflationary cycle and face uncertain economic prospect. Because they no longer have the financial resources to support its employees, people are laid off and this increases the overall unemployment rate of the economy.

One of infamous historical cases of hyperinflation is one of Germany from 1918 to 1924. When Germany was required to pay 132 billion gold marks (US \$33 billion) to the Allies in order to compensate for civilian damage caused during World War I, huge loss of financial resources occurred, causing the government to continuously print banknotes to pay off the debt. This led to severe devaluation of the German currency and hyperinflation began. Working class Germans had a difficult time obtaining basic goods such as bread and even began to use banknotes as toilet paper as they became worthless. It is noted that such economic hardship delegitimized the regime in power and empowered far-right forces, including the Nazi Party. Currently, countries with highest rates of inflation or hyperinflation are: Venezuela, Zimbabwe,



South Sudan, Argentina, Iran, Sudan, Liberia, Haiti, Sierra Leone, and Angola. Venezuela, currently embroiled in its own distinct political crisis, tops the list with the inflation rate of almost 300,000% (measured in April 2019). Zimbabwe, having experienced deadly hyperinflation a decade ago, comes in second with the rate of 175% (March 2019). South Sudan holds the inflation rate of 56% as of March 2019.

Weakened economic capability causes deficiencies in social realm. People's human rights are infringed upon because their basic standard of living required for maintaining a sustainable life is not met. People often run to the market during the day because to wait until the end of the day would mean the money would depreciate so much that they could no longer pay for the goods needed. Citizens, as hyperinflation drags on, are left searching for food in the garbage and relying solely on efforts of others such as non-profit organizations. As the public revenues drop and economy contracts, people face violations of their social and economic rights. Despite several increases of the minimum wage by the government, workers' purchasing power decreases to the extent that it can no longer be considered a living wage. Previously controlled and eliminated diseases such as vaccine-preventable diseases like measles and diphtheria, have re-emerged. Healthcare infrastructure declines, hallmarked by an exodus of doctors and nurses, unsanitary conditions, and severe shortages in basic medical equipment, supplies and medicines.

Hyperinflation also creates an atmosphere of political uncertainty. Corruption, suppression, and ambiguities and irregularities in election processes are common in hyperinflating nations, with citizens left confused and distrusting of their own political leaders and national government. Shrinkage of the democratic space is another problem; peaceful protests and dissents are criminalized, and abuses by security forces and armed groups which lead to arbitrary killings, detentions, torture are prevalent. Restrictions on freedom of speech and of the press, use of arbitrary force to shut down journalists and opposition leaders are commonly seen. All these issues lead up to create unstable political climate that makes hyperinflation even more difficult to solve. Misallocation of resources, corruption, lack of maintenance of public infrastructure, and severe underinvestment has resulted in violations to the right to an adequate standard of living related to the collapse of public services such as public transportation, access to electricity, water, and natural gas.



III. Topics of Discussion

A. Hyperinflation and people's fundamental standard of living

Although hyperinflation is an economic phenomenon at its core, it reaches all levels of the society from daily living standards of the people to the effectiveness of the national political process. To avoid paying for the same good at the higher price tomorrow, people stockpile goods, which creates heavy shortages in the market. When the shortage of these daily goods continues, the economy falls apart and the citizenry faces the devastating consequences of the economic collapse in forms of worthless money, job loss, and eventually, starvation and death.

Because hyperinflation stymies all economic activities and people cannot afford basic goods, their standard of living drastically declines. The right to an adequate standard of living – access and minimum entitlement to food, clothing, and housing - is recognized as a basic human right in international treaties and texts, such as in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 11 of the international Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. This right to an adequate standard of living is not guaranteed in hyperinflating countries, which amounts to a violation of the citizens' fundamental human rights. Food shortages in Venezuela, for instance, have pushed more than 15 percent of Venezuelans to eat garbage as regular part of their diet while restricting their access to adequate housing and clothing. Due to the human rights crisis, massive number of people flee their homes. It is reported that more than three million Venezuelans have fled their homes since the beginning of the economic downturn. Neighboring countries, as a result, confront massive arrival of people who are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. These people require jointly coordinated efforts of regularization and family reunification as well as better access to food, healthcare, work, shelter, and education. The government must implement relevant policies in order to guarantee citizens' fundamental standard of living that is integral to the protection of their basic human rights.

B. Hyperinflation's link with national politics

Hyperinflation is difficult to root out because it is intricately linked to politics. Conditions that commonly cause hyperinflation - government's large investment in projects and printing of more money to compensate for the financial loss created by those projects - are inherently political, designed to help the regime stay in power. It is also difficult for governments to enact immediate measures to



help the economy since the effects have spread uncontrollably and it takes some time for the effects of new policy to take root in the economy. The ruling regimes are often not inclined to genuinely help to improve the status quo, as remaining in power is their utmost priority. As a result, citizens' confidence in the political process declines. If the government is one of authoritarian nature in particular, seeking external support and transitioning to a more democratic regime that can more effectively implement sound economic policies are very difficult. The corruption among top government officials and irregularities in polling results prevent democratic political transition, which also prevent escape from hyperinflation or from any other forms of economic uncertainty. Citizens are unable to influence the politics in any possible way and left feeling powerless and anxious. Government's political capability must be dramatically enhanced so that they are able to make decisions that wisely help the economy, either through domestic or foreign interventions, and improve citizens' confidence in the political process.

IV. Previous Actions

A. General Actions

Economic Actions

Because lower interest rates directly correlate to more borrowing power for the average citizen, increasing interest rates have long been used as a solution. As increasing borrowing power leads to more money being put out in the economy, which increases the purchasing power of citizens, a factor leading to inflation, decreasing the purchasing power by increasing interest rates can help reduce inflation.

Also, when the Federal Reserve (US), or the central banking system in other countries, decide to lower the reserve ratio, consumer banks are required to keep less money in stock. As consumer banks can have less cash in stock, they are more inclined to give loans, which causes inflation to happen as it increases the purchasing power of citizens. On the other hand, when the Federal Reserve alters the requirements so that banks are mandated to keep more money within their banks, they will refrain from giving out loans, which decreases the purchasing power of individuals. By decreasing the purchasing power, inflation can be combatted.



Although increasing interest rates and altering reserve requirements can reduce the money supply indirectly, there have been ways implemented to reduce the money supply directly. For example, by calling in debts owed to the government and by increasing the interest paid on bonds so that more people will buy bonds, the government can have less money out on the public and keep more money in the reserve.

Providing Supplies

Many countries have resorted to providing supplies to the people in need. Due to double and triple, sometimes even quadruple digit inflations, people have not been able to purchase the basic necessities in which they need, such as food, water, medicine, and other household necessities. Seeing that this has led to degradation in the quality of life in many citizens, human rights activists, NGOs, and regional governments have often sought to provide basic necessities such as food, water, and soap. However, this has caused citizens to become increasingly dependent on these resource-providing organisms for basic necessities, a phenomenon that is not ideal for the long-term sustainability of the country.

B. Specific Actions

Bolivar Fuerte (Venezuela, Introduced March 7, 2007, Implemented January 1, 2008)

Hugo Chávez, former president of Venezuela, reduced the valuation of the Bolivar, revaluing it a ratio of 1,000 bolivars (former) to 1 bolivar (new), a form of currency reform. Although the government claims it was done to make transactions and accounting easier, citing double digit inflation had been seen, many economists view it as an attempt of the Venezuelan government to raise the value of bolivars to pursue the appreciation of it in foreign exchange markets.

Change of inflation rate calculations (Venezuela, September 2014)

The Banco Central de Venezuela, or the BCV, changed the inflation rate calculation method of the Bolivar from the Laspeyres price index to the Fisher price index. Due to the difference in algorithm for the calculation of inflation of the two price indexes, inflation rates decreased anywhere from 0.4% up to 1.4%, depending on the month. By changing the inflation rate calculations, the government tried to lower the inflation rates, but were only partially successful.



Higher Denomination Banknotes in Circulation (Venezuela, 2016)

The 2 and 5 Bs.F banknotes are no longer in circulation due to the inflation in 2015, but are legal for transaction. Seeing as the 100 Bs.F note, the largest value of currency, was worth only \$0.23, new notes were introduced. The new denominations are 500, 1,000, 2,000, 5,000, 10,000, and 20,000 Bs.F notes.

A 100,000Bs.F note was introduced by disputed President Nicolás Maduro as of November 3, 2017. However, at the time of introduction, the note was worth only \$2.42 and it is now currently worth less than \$0.01.

Ultimately, introducing higher banknotes have not been very fruitful although it attempted to make things more uncomplicated in transactions and accounting, also including the daily usage of paper money.

Freeing of People in Detention Centers (Venezuela, 2019)

Although many have been sent to detention centers by the Venezuelan government, some strides have been made to mitigate the situation. For example, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), alongside her team, has visited the Ramo Verde Military Processing Center and in that process, helped release 83 detainees from the shackles of the government. This also included Judge Afiuni and journalist Braulio Jatar.

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights's Actions with the Venezuelan Government (Ongoing)

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet has been working with the Venezuelan government in order to create a mechanism in which individual cases will be dealt with. Until now, the office of the UNHCHR and the UNHCHR herself have already selected 27 priority cases to be reviewed, considering the downtrodden, bleak medical situation they are in.

V. Possible actions and solutions

A. Facilitating CLAP(The Local Committees for Supply and Production)boxes

The Local Committees for Supply and Production are food distribution committees promoted by the Venezuelan government in which the communities themselves supply and distribute the priority foods through a house-to-house delivery method. It was established in 2016 by president Nicolás Maduro in response to the ongoing shortages in Venezuela.



For the formation of a CLAP, the communities must organize around their communal councils, choose responsible people and carry out a census that specifies the number of families that live in that territory. With the data collected, the number of bags or boxes of food needed to supply all households is counted and the request is made to the Ministry of Popular Power for Food (MINAL), the body in charge of distribution. When the products arrive, which are paid at subsidized process, the people in charge of the CLAP distribute them through bags and make the delivery family by family.

Even though CLAP is essential project to deliver food to citizens in need, there are lots of problems in CLAP program. First, there are no sufficient contents to deliver inside of the country itself. Because of hyperinflation happening inside of the country, there are less things to produce and deliver. There needs to be a way to strengthen the contents that CLAP deliver to the citizens

Second, because of weak local governance, it is hard to deliver and trade between regions. CLAP is the program that needs the cooperation of local governance or regional council. However, since citizens are lacking political rights and lacking of local or regional council system, CLAP program is not sufficiently facilitated. There needs to be a way of solving the problem of delivery

Third and lastly, there are lots of corruption related. The transparency of CLAP is not secured. Due to the corruption, citizens are limited to the access of food and lots of program that can increase their quality of rights. The transparency of CLAP should also be discussed and secured to facilitate more program in hyperinflated countries.

Moreover, the problems of CLAP can be related with right to food generally but at the same time, can be related with right to health. There needs discussions of how to deal with malnutrition and additional health problems that can arise from malnutrition.

B. Preventing excessive use of force and killings in the context of security operations

According to the Government, the implementation of its citizen security operation has led to a steady decrease of crime in the country, especially homicides. However, OHCHR documented cases of extrajudicial executions by security forces in the context of security operations conducted in poor neighborhoods. Since early 2018, security operations by FAES, created to combat drug trafficking and criminal organizations, replaced the security operations known as “Operations for the Liberation of the People” implemented from 2015 to 2017. Interviewees consistently referred to FAES as a “death squad” or “extermination group”. NGOs have reported that the FAEs is responsible for hundreds of killing.



The authorities classify the killings resulting from security operations as “resistance to authority”. The number of these deaths is unusually high. In 2018, the Government registered 5,287 such killings, while the NGO “Observatorio Venezolano de la Violencia” (OVV) reported at least 7,523 killings under this category. Between 1 January and 19 May 2019, the Government reported 1,569 killings for “resistance to authority”. The OVV reported at least 2,124 of such killings between January and May 2019. Information analysed by OHCHR suggests many of these killings may constitute extrajudicial executions.

Like this, instability of government can lead to decrease power or judicial system which is directly related with citizen’s political rights and freedom. There needs to be control over hyperinflated countries regarding how they take over the problem of security and also about peaceful and righteous ways of improving the security of citizens and regions.

VI. Definitions of Key Words

A. Hyperinflation

Extremely high and accelerating inflation. Designated when domestic inflation rate reaches and surpasses 50 percent a month.

B. Living standard

A standard of living is the level of wealth, comfort, material goods, and necessities available to a certain socioeconomic class or a certain geographic area. The standard of living includes basic material factors such as income, gross domestic product (GDP), life expectancy, and economic opportunity.

C. Political capability

Effective power is a function of the latter two, the political capability both to mobilize human and material resources and to use these resources coherently in the pursuit of national objectives.

Political capabilities point to four strongly intercorrelated indicators of performance: effective decision-making and the maintenance of civil order and legitimacy pay off in the form of institutional durability.



VII. Affiliated Organizations and Documents**A. S/2017/789**

Letter dated 20 September 2017 from the panel of Experts on South Sudan addressed to the president of the SC

B. E/ESCWA/EDID/2017/1

Survey of Economic and social developments in the Arab region 2016-2017

C. E/2018/20

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian region

D. A/HRC/39/47/ADD.1

Report of the independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order on his mission to the Bolivian Republic of Venezuela and Ecuador

VIII. Critical Questions

- A.** What are the ways that can facilitate CLAP program?
- B.** How can we strengthen political accessibility of citizens in hyperinflated countries?
- C.** What are the possible solutions to enhance the living standard (health, food, security) of people in hyperinflated countries?
- D.** What are the elements that can enhance the living standard of citizens?
- E.** How can the government efficiently facilitate the aid that they receive from NGOs or International organizations?



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Agenda 2: The Situation of Human Rights Rohingya Muslims and Other Social Minorities in Myanmar.

II. Background

Heightened awareness on global refugees has allowed one compelling issue to grab international attention: Myanmar (formerly Burma) and its treatment of the country's ethnic minority group, the Rohingya Muslims. Since August 2017, more than 400,000 Rohingya men, women, and children have fled their homes in Myanmar's Rakhine state to neighboring countries such as Bangladesh, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand. The mass displacement is the result of escalating violence between the Rohingya Muslim groups and Rakhine Buddhist communities, and the military crackdown on Rohingya civilians by Myanmar's security forces. The Rohingya are also dubbed "boat people" by the media, as they utilize rickety boats to cross the waters of the Strait of Malacca and the Andaman Sea to reach neighboring Southeast Asian countries. People on boats face sickness, starvation, and harsh weather in the sea. Boats often capsize, killing hundreds on board.

The recent wave of violence is only the latest in a pattern of discrimination that started several decades ago. When Myanmar was taken over by the General Ne Win and his Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) in a coup d'état in 1962, the country's constitution was thrown out and political and social organizations were dissolved. Fierce nationalism was promoted based on the country's Buddhist identity, and the fear of "foreigners" strengthened. In the midst of nationalist fervor, the Rohingyas, the Muslim population in a majority Buddhist country, were singled out as a serious ethnic threat. In fact, the tensions between the Rohingya and the Buddhist majority go back to the second World War, when each group supported opposing sides in the war. The Rohingya sided with the British colonialists, who then ruled the country, while the Buddhists sided mostly with the Japanese invaders, hoping to end the British domination after the war.

Through 'Operation Dragon King' which was commenced in 1978, the military launched violent crackdown on the Rohingya minority, causing 200,000 of them to flee to Bangladesh. In 1982, Myanmar passed the citizenship act from which the Rohingya was excluded. Another campaign dubbed 'Operation Clean and Beautiful Nation' was launched in 1991, driving 250,000 Rohingya out of the country once again. Another round of violence broke out in 2012 when four Muslim men were accused of raping and killing Buddhist women in Rakhine state; Buddhist nationalists backed firmly by Myanmar security forces attacked Rohingya villages and



displaced hundreds of Rohingya. As recently as 2016, Myanmar's state security forces, specifically known as Arakan Rohingya salvation army, launched attacks on border police stations, leaving 12 officers dead and sparking a humanitarian crisis that has continued since then.

III. Topics of Discussion

The Muslim Rohingya have continuously faced human rights abuses by the Myanmar government. The government controlled by the military launched violent attacks on the Rohingya through years of several operations, while blaming the Rohingya for its failed economic programs and domestic economic hardship. The attacks include burning of homes and farms, shootings, beatings, execution, sexual violence, and the use of mass graves when burying the dead. These practices create dire humanitarian condition. The United Nations have reported that "A vicious cycle of persecution, discrimination, radicalization and violent repression has led more than 400,000 desperate people to putting regional stability at risk." Myanmar's exclusion of the Rohingya from the list of recognized ethnic groups largely contributed to the crisis. The document that designates them as non-citizens leaves them ever more vulnerable to human rights abuses by government and strips them of institutional protections needed to guarantee and enhance their rights. Denied to Rohingya are freedom of movement, access to healthcare, and voting rights. International cooperation on addressing the citizenship issue for the Rohingya, in this sense, is ever more important.

Myanmar military forces systematically employ rape and other sexual acts against Rohingya women, girls, boys, and men. Prevention of these ruthless activities is the first immediate step that needs to be taken. The Rohingya also face widespread social dislike and prejudice as citizens of Myanmar consider the Rohingya illegal "Bengali" immigrants. Anti-Muslim sentiments are provoked by Buddhist extremist groups who created public support for systematic campaigns of violence, discrimination, and propaganda. Although animosity toward the Rohingya is not shared among everyone in the society, there is clearly little sympathy for the ethnic minority in the majority Buddhist country, making adjustment to the society challenging and human rights violations easier. The Rohingya live in deplorable situations without access to proper education, and such condition has made Rakhine breeding ground for extremist ideologies, illustrated by the terrorist organizations' consistent attempt to target the Rohingya for recruitment. International community must take seriously how they might support the Rohingya through resettlement opportunities and other tangible measures, so that the violent



activities are prevented, the living standards improved and recruitment to the dangerous ideologies are put to end.

Humanitarian access is also a crucial issue to be combatted. Currently, the Burmese government is blocking most forms of humanitarian access from reaching the Rakhine state so that the supplies are not delivered to the Rohingya population. A plethora of Rohingya remain without humanitarian assistance, in terms of food, water, medicine, and other basic necessities crucial for their sustenance.

Unless conditions that enable safe and voluntary returns are created, Rohingya refugees cannot go back to their homes in Rakhine. Rohingya live in the largest refugee settlement in the world, where more than a million people await the chance to go home one day. Creating safe environment that Rohingya can be willing to go back to, addressing the citizenship issue that underlies discriminatory practices and prevalent social prejudice, as well as distributing resources to neighboring countries, especially Bangladesh, must be done. The world is witnessing gross violations of the Rohingya's fundamental human rights; it is an issue that deserves international attention and care, as well as strategic responses from the international community as a whole. Global actors and international organizations must insist that the refugees are allowed to return to their homes or to any safe place nearby, and ponder upon the ways to eradicate human rights crisis in the area: systematic persecution, violence, and statelessness.

IV. Previous Actions

A. Advisory Commission on Rakhine State (Est. August 23, 2016)

The Advisory Commission on Rakhine State was an advisory commission headed by former UN secretary General Kofi Annan to mitigate the situation in the Rakhine State where the Burmese government persecuted the Rohingya. This was done in order to secure not only the social well-being of the Rohingya but also the economic well-being of them too. This was later expanded to include both the Buddhist and the Rohingya communities in the Rakhine state, a region extremely infamous for the heinous acts of crime exhibited. However, one point to note is that many of the commission members were Myanmar nationals, who may have had a biased view towards the Rohingya although the advisory commission itself was supposed to be an unbiased organization.



The commission's aim was to find solutions to resolve the situation where unrest and hardship plagued the Rakhine region. Because there were many groups opposing each other, usually the Rohingya, who were subject to abject poverty, exploitation, and oppression. Also, they were tasked with finding civil solutions to the economic hardship and widespread unrest happening, observing that many of the Rohingya and Buddhist population retaliated after the alleged invasion of human rights by the Burmese military.

The Advisory Commission on Rakhine State closed down on March 16, 2017 after many inquiries that although at first the commission was effective, the commission was becoming more and more ineffective after time had passed.

B. October 24th Memorandum of Understanding between Myanmar and Bangladesh (October 24, 2017)

Myanmar signed an agreement with Bangladesh to repatriate the Rohingya refugees, although it is up to the individual refugee's will to repatriate. In September, Myanmar and Bangladesh agreed to bring back refugees that can prove their residence in Myanmar, if the refugees themselves wanted to repatriate, under the 1993 agreement between Myanmar and Bangladesh. This theoretically allowed the Rohingyas to come back to the Rakhine state if wanted (something that was not formerly an option), but not many has since returned due to the unrest and turmoil happening in the Rakhine state.

C. Presidential Statement on the Situation in Rakhine State (November 6, 2017)

The President of the UN Security Council at that time, Sebastiano Cardi (Italy), condemned the violent actions that have been taken against the Rohingya. The speech called out the Burmese government to end the military force and violence that have destroyed many villages and devastated the Rohingya population.

This speech also stressed the responsibility of the Government of Myanmar to protect the Rohingya population, although the Government of Myanmar still fails to recognize the Rohingya as their citizens. It also emphasized the importance of reform of security and justice within the Burmese government and relevant infrastructures.

There are multiple reasons as to why the presidential statement was so significant. First of all, it has not been often that the president of the UN Security Council has spoken so definitively about such a



controversial topic. As the speech brought the Rohingya crisis to attention, it can be seen as a formal acknowledgement of the Security Council for the international community to condemn the actions of the Burmese government.

D. Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement, and Development in Rakhine (UEHRD)

The Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement, and Development in Rakhine (UEHRD) was an organization created, which employs 10 task forces to provide multiple areas of support the Rohingya population. Such examples include providing humanitarian, resettlement, development, and raising funds and awareness.

Humanitarian assistance task forces aims to provide healthcare checkups, screening, operations and training local nurses and doctors. It also provides cash aid, and provides access to safe water, sanitation, hygiene, and nutrition treatment services.

Resettlement focus task forces aim to build camps and healthcare and other humanitarian assistance to returnees, rebuilds houses, villages, communities, and livelihoods for the people of Rakhine. It also brings Myanmar youth volunteers from across the country to provide humanitarian assistance.

The development task force provides loans to small and medium enterprises, opens new banks, and adds mobile agents. It also provides vocational training and creates jobs while also promoting tourism in Rakhine to bolster the nearby economy. The task force also develops border trade zones while building roads, dams, rice mills, and other types of basic infrastructure so that long term development is facilitated.

V. Possible Actions and Solutions

A. Improving of basic rights of each tribe

Myanmar contains (officially) 135 major ethnic groups and seven ethnic minority states, in addition to seven divisions populated mainly by the Burmese majority. More than 100 languages are spoken in Burma. Minority ethnic communities are estimated to make up at least one-third of the country's total population and to inhabit half the land area. However, even though, there are lots of ethnic tribes in Myanmar, their rights are being denied starting from their life, liberty



and security, they are also being denied of the right to death and right to education. To solve this problem, there are needs to facilitate Myanmar National Human Rights Commission to play a critical role in upholding and protecting the human rights of all people in Myanmar. Also, we need to promptly lift the curfew order in northern Rakhine State, remove arbitrary limitations on the right to freedom of assembly, and guarantee freedom of worship. This will enable them to strengthen power themselves.

B. Reform of the 1982 citizenship law of Myanmar

The 1982 citizenship law deprives the Rohingya of citizenship in Myanmar. Under the law, full citizenship is primarily based on membership of the “national races” who are considered by the state to have settled in Myanmar prior to 1824, the date of first occupation by the British. Despite generations of residence in Myanmar, the Rohingya are not considered to be amongst these official indigenous races and are thus effectively excluded from full citizenship. This criterion for citizenship is based on deeply flawed and outdated notions about race and ethnic identity formation that were prevalent during the colonial period in Myanmar. The 1982 Citizenship Law is discriminatory on the grounds of race, since access to citizenship is primarily based on race, and excludes certain races and ethnic groups, most notably the Rohingya hundreds of thousands for whom have been made stateless. Naturalized citizenship in Myanmar may be applied for by individuals and their children who can provide “conclusive evidence” that they entered and resided in Myanmar prior to 4 January 1948, the date of state succession from the British.

The main law that deals with citizenship is discriminatory and against international human law. It violates the Convention on the Rights of the Child which obliges states to ensure a child’s right to acquire a nationality, and international norms prohibiting discrimination of racial and religious minorities, such as the UN General Assembly Resolution on the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination. One of the ways that can make legal rights for Rohingya is to modify this law with abiding international law and rights. Additionally, they need to ensure the replacement of issuance of identity documentation for all individuals residing in Myanmar, regardless of their citizenship status and ensure that all children are registered at birth, without discrimination, and implement promptly a process to register all unregistered children, including all Rohingya children.



VI. Definitions of Key Words

A. Accountability

Accountability is the division of responsibility in regard to a particular situation. Those held accountable for an action must also take responsibility for its consequences. Although the Burmese government initially promised the Rohingya with repatriation, thereby seemingly taking accountability for their own actions, they rescinded this and shows us that they are not holding themselves accountable for the heinous crimes that they have caused.

B. Ethnic cleansing

A policy designed by one ethnic group to remove by violent means the civilian population of another ethnic group from certain geographic areas; it is often carried out in the name of misguided nationalism or historical grievances.

C. International Intervention

International Intervention, in terms of international law, is the use of force by one sovereign state in the internal or external affairs of another.¹⁸ Examples include humanitarian aid, military support, backing of a certain group or organization, and so forth. In most cases intervention is considered to be illegal and unlawful but can be justified in certain cases. It may be necessary to justify the intervention by the international community into Myanmar's affairs, as without international intervention, it will be hard for change to occur and the Rohingya will continue to suffer. The potential benefits of success in intervention also comes with a few drawbacks, as the violation of Myanmar's national sovereignty may cause even more problems in the future for the international community to deal with.

D. National Sovereignty

Nation Sovereignty (or state sovereignty) is defined as the ability to be independent and have autonomy and control over itself and its decisions. This means that a state has complete and exclusive control of all the people and property within their territory. This is the most important aspect of the Rohingya crisis, as Myanmar believes that it should maintain its sole control over the region and the Rohingya people despite its inhumane treatment of the Rohingya. It is the utmost priority to justify going against Myanmar's national sovereignty in order to provide aid to the Rohingya people.



E. Persecution

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, persecution refers to “unfair or cruel treatment over a long period of time because of race, religion, or political beliefs”.¹⁹ The discrimination by the Myanmar government against the Rohingya is a form of persecution, as the Rohingya are stripped of their rights and treated cruelly based on their religious and ethnic identity. The Rohingya persecution of 2016 in Myanmar in which armed forces and police instigated a crackdown on the Rohingya through inhumane tactics. Due to this crackdown, “176 Rohingya villages, more than 30% of the total in northern Rakhine, were now empty” according to government spokesman Zaw Htay.²⁰ Despite the international community accusing the Myanmar military and its forces of human rights violations and inhumane actions to prove the persecution happening, the Myanmar government has denied its actions and have not conceded to its malicious attacks.

F. Rakhine State

The Rakhine State is the Southwestern coastal landmass of Myanmar. This is the main homeland of the Rohingya people, and thus the target of attacks and violence by the Myanmar government and its military forces. This area is the most in need of help and aid, and direct intervention into this area is necessary. Although the region is characterized by poverty and conflicts between different religious and ethnic groups, it has a rich historical importance on a cultural level. This land was home to different Rakhine people, most notably the Buddhist Rakhine and Muslim Rakhine (the Rohingya) ever since the 1800's. As the majority of the population, the Buddhist Rakhine always regarded the Muslims as foreigners and never accepted them as part of the community. The Rohingya were basically treated like slaves, with no respect for their dignity.¹⁷ Therefore, the Rohingya were exploited and discriminated against, and this subjugation continued on until present day in which Rohingya are still not granted citizenship, restricted on their freedom, and have no access to higher education. The recent violence can be seen as an extension and active portrayal of cultural conflict and hatred from the past; the Rakhine states symbolizes the longstanding discrimination and pain of Rakhine Muslims.



G. Refugee

A refugee is defined by the UN as an individual who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence for reasons race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. The Rohingya people have been officially declared as refugees, and how to deal with and aid them is a crucial solution that needs to be taken. The refugee aspect of the Rohingya crisis has become one of the most important issues to deal with.

H. Rohingya

The Rohingya are a Muslim group originally living in the Rakhine state of Myanmar. They are disenfranchised and are also denied citizenship. Their currently population is about 600,000.

VII. Affiliated Organizations and Important Documents

A. UNHRC Thirty-second session's annual report(A/HRC/32/18)

- This document describes the situation of human rights of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar

B. BROUK (A Briefing by Burmese Rohingya Organisation UK)'s report of Myanmar's 1982 Citizenship Law and Rohingya

- This document explains about the 1982 citizenship law and points out the problems related with Rohingyas

C. S/2013/258

- Secretary-General report on children and armed conflicts in Myanmar (covered the period from April 1st 2009~January 31 2013)

D. S/PRST/2017/22

- Presidential (Security Council) statement on the situation in Rakhine

E. S/2018 938

- Letter to the president of the Security Council objecting to a briefing by the Chairperson of the Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar established by the Human Rights Council



F. S/2018/956

- Secretary-General report on children and armed conflicts in Myanmar

VIII. Critical Questions

- A. How can we reach negotiation with Myanmar government with the issue of Rohingya and other minor tribes?
- B. What are the ways that can strengthen the self-governance or basic human rights of each tribe?
- C. In what ways should the 1982 citizenship law of Myanmar be changed?
- D. How can global actors (organizations, NGOs) get involved in Myanmar?
- E. What are the ways that can prevent genocide and massive killings toward Rohingyas and other minor tribes?

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