

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



CLUB



OUR MISSIONS:
**-LEARN MORE ABOUT HUMAN
RIGHTS ISSUES**
**-BRING POSITIVE CHANGE TO
THE WORLD**



2018-2019

Rohingya Crisis



After reading the short summary and/or the suggested article, answer one of these questions-

- 1. Has religion changed over time? In what ways are religious beliefs used for harm in modern society?*
- 2. Canada has remained "Neutral" when dealing with the Rohingya crisis as opposed to US's Strong and polarized demands when dealing with the crisis. Which diplomatic strategies do you favor more and why?*
- 3. What impact did Canada's decision have on the Rohingya Crisis in Myanmar and what does it show about Canada as a country?*
- 5. Do you believe that the ideology of nationalism is becoming more and more prevalent in our world today? Why or why not?*
- 6. Is nationalism the biggest cause of xenophobia and genocide?*

The winner will get a prize!

If you want to become more involved in educating yourself about issues like this/contributing a new, creative voice to the group, come to Amnesty International's meeting Tuesday at lunch and sign up on ManageBac

Written by Matthew Wong

The Rohingyas.

Genocide.

Massive casualties.

Discrimination.

Prosecution.

If you simply connect all the keywords above together, you will find out that it's all pointing at one very significant crisis that's happening right at this moment. Nine thousand Rohingyas were killed in just one month, thousands were left homeless, innocent girls were raped and sexually assaulted. This has been regarded as possibly the most inhumane genocide since the start of the 21st century. But who are the Rohingyas and why have they been prosecuted?

The Rohingya are a stateless Muslim minority in Myanmar's Rakhine State, thought to number about 1 million people.

Myanmar regards them as illegal immigrants, a view rooted in their heritage in East Bengal, now called Bangladesh.

Though many Rohingyas have only known life in Myanmar, they are widely viewed as intruders from across the border.

According to Human Rights Watch, laws discriminate against the Rohingya, infringing on their freedom of movement, education, and employment.

It is the nationalistic, patriotic, and even superior feeling of their own race and religion that started this crisis.

Civilization has fought against inequality all the time. From the Renaissance Era where the Church reigned supreme across the Globe to the 18th century, where many African Americans were enslaved for their entire lives, and even to women in the early 20th century, who had fought hard for years to gain universal suffrage. We can't decide other's identity, but what we can do is treat people equally with respect. 90% of the Myanmarese demographics are Buddhist believers and less than 6% are Muslims, which can suggest something about why the Rohingyas are persecuted. Religion is part of many people in South East Asia's daily routine.

Traditional and dogmatic countries like Myanmar don't accept the large fluctuation of Muslims to the country. In the last century or so, religion have transformed completely, from a sacred subject that all of us pay reverence to, to a subject that is utilized by leaders for conspiracy and political purposes - without being too biased. I think it's a good topic to think about--Has religion changed over time? In what ways is religion utilized in both positive and negative ways?

In 1982, when the citizenship passed, 135 ethnic groups were recognized but, unfortunately, Rohingyas weren't one of them. I think in modern society everyone should have equal rights, and we shouldn't judge someone by their religion, the color of skin, or race. Instead, we should judge them by their true character and their ability to lead a life of purpose in their given circumstance...

Written by Robbie Evans:

Aung San Suu Kyi, the leader of the National League for Democracy in Myanmar and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, was among only five others (including Malala Yousafzai and Nelson Mandela) recognized in Canada with honorary citizenship. In the past month, her **Canadian honorary citizenship has been taken away** due to an "unwillingness to take any moral leadership" for alleged **ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya people in Myanmar**. As an ambassador for peace and morality, it's quite shocking to see that Aung San Suu Kyi is being negligent toward the crisis instead of advocating peace and rebuking

the Myanmar Government for their unethical acts imposed upon thousands of innocent Rohingya Citizens. Aung San Suu Kyi's recent actions reveal a lot about her character.

The youngest Nobel Laureate Malala Yousafzai has tweeted the following condemning Aung San Suu Kyi's incompetence of dealing with this crisis:

Written by Matthew Wong:

Canada's Actions toward the Rohingya People:

Adam Austen, the spokesperson for Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland has stated earlier during his speech: "We will continue to support the Rohingya by providing humanitarian assistance, imposing sanctions against Myanmar's generals and demanding that those responsible be held accountable before a competent international body,"

Canada is determined to be helping the Rohingyas financially and with humanitarian aid. In 2017, the Government of Canada committed more than \$66.1 million to support the hundreds of thousands of people in Bangladesh and Myanmar affected by the violence in Myanmar.

The Canadian Government has recently adopted the following four part strategy to resolving the Rohingya Crisis.

1. Alleviating the Humanitarian Crisis

2. Encouraging Positive Political Developments in Myanmar
3. Ensuring Accountability for the Crimes committed
4. Enhancing International Cooperation (Such as the United Nations)

For personal comments I believe that Canada is trying its best to help and support Rohingyas who are fleeing but on the other hand they're trying to stay as "Neutral" as possible because Canada doesn't want to be involved in too many controversies and it's crucial for them to maintain positive and healthy diplomatic relationships with different countries.



Written by Bassem Sandeela:

The Burmese Perspective of the Rohingya Crisis

Oppression, persecution, conflict, violence, law – all of which are the defining features of the Rohingya crisis. The Rohingya are an ethnic minority of Muslims in the Rakhine State of Myanmar that have historically been oppressed by the Burmese since their implementation of the 1982 Citizenship Law, which denied all of the Rohingya Burmese citizenship. As such, they have become one of the largest groups of stateless people in the world. The UN Declaration of Human Rights dictates that every human being has the right to a nationality and therefore, the Rohingya are facing major human rights violations due to that. But at the end of the day, what motivated Myanmar into branding the Rohingya as outcasts?

The Burmese nationalists, like Firebrand Monk Wirathu, who has been dubbed “Monk Bin Laden”, frequently find themselves outraged by the outside condemnation of the crisis by the United Nations (UN), the International Criminal Court (ICC), as well as several other non-governmental organizations. Just recently since September 2018, the ICC has begun inquiries into the atrocities of the situation. Many nationalists see the Rohingya as illegal immigrants or outsiders from Bangladesh. However, the Rohingya have had themselves long since established in Myanmar, claiming themselves to be indigenous to the region. The Burmese government claims for these people to be “Bengali” and just not one of them. As such, they determine the Rohingya to not be citizens of Myanmar. Oh, nationalism strikes once again but in a different time and different place.



Me Too Movement

Put together by Matthew Wong:
Personal Stories and Experiences

America Ferrera:

"First time I can remember being sexually assaulted I was 9 years old. I told no one and lived with the shame and guilt thinking all along that I, a 9-year-old child, was somehow responsible for the actions of a grown man. I had to see this man on a daily basis for years to come. He would smile at me and wave, and I would hurry past him, my blood running cold, my guts carrying the burden of what only he & I knew — that he expected me to shut my mouth and smile back. Ladies, let's end this silence so the next generation of girls won't have to live with this bullshit."

Bjork

"I am inspired by the women everywhere who are speaking up online to tell about my experience with a danish director . because i come from a country that is one of the worlds place closest to equality between the sexes and at the time I came from position of strength in the music world with hard earned

independence , it was extremely clear to me when i walked into the actresses profession that my humiliation and role as a lesser sexually harassed being was the norm and set in stone with the director and a staff of dozens who enabled it and encouraged it . i became aware of that it is a universal thing that a director can touch and harass his actresses at will and the institution of film allows it . when i turned the director down repeatedly he sulked and punished me and created for his team an impressive net of illusion where i was framed as the difficult one . because of my strength , my great team and because I had nothing to lose having no ambitions in the acting world , i walked away from it and recovered in a years time . i am worried though that other actresses working with the same man did not . the director was fully aware of this game and i am sure of that the film he made after was based on his experiences with me . because i was the first one that stood up to him and didn't let him get away with it"

Reese Witherspoon:

"I have my own experiences that have come back to me very vividly, and I found it really hard to sleep, hard to think, hard to communicate. A lot of the feelings I've been having about anxiety, about being honest, the guilt for not speaking up earlier or taking action. True disgust at the director who assaulted me when I was 16 years old and anger that I felt at the agents and the producers who made me feel that silence was a condition of my employment. And I wish I could tell you that that was an isolated incident in my career, but sadly, it wasn't. I've had multiple experiences of harassment and sexual assault, and I don't speak about them very often, but after hearing all the stories these past few days and hearing these brave women speak up tonight, the things that we're kind of told to sweep under the rug and not talk about,

it's made me want to speak up and speak up loudly because I felt less alone this week than I've ever felt in my entire career...For the young women in this room, life is going to be different because we're with you, we have your back and it makes me feel better...If we can raise consciousness and really help create change, that's what's going to change this industry and change society. So I'm so sad that I have to talk about these issues, but it would be, I would be remiss not to."



Written By Matthew Wong

Students and Teachers Opinions on the Me-Too Movement:

Nikita Manyrin (Year 9)

"In my opinion, I do not think that Brett Kavanaugh is guilty because of a lack of evidence and because the main accusers cannot recall basic information such as at which house it happened, when it happened, as well as how old they were when the alleged assault happened.

However, I also believe that even though he can not be proven guilty (because of lack of evidence, since there is no evidence, he can't be guilty as innocent until proven guilty), I think that he should not be granted a position on the Supreme Court of the United States. As even though there is no evidence to these claims, it should still be noted that the accusers gain nothing politically from these accusations which could further prove them to be true. I also feel that since he is running for a position on the Supreme Court, his slate of judgement shouldn't be stained with accusations such as these as it could prove hypocritical in certain cases. Also, how can judgement be blind when it itself could have committed such crimes? "

Ms.H (Denise Hui Bon Hoa)

"Over the last year, my social media news feeds have been populated with #MeToo. The movement truly serves its purpose of demonstrating the shocking magnitude of the global sexual assault problem. Each time someone steps up to tell her story, on any platform, I am overcome with both sadness and admiration. But each time, I also dread the reactions that I know are coming.

Victims often don't report, usually because they are terrified of the repercussions, which include being aggressively shamed and threatened. And in an era where people have elected an accused sexual predator to lead one of the world's most powerful nations, it must come to no one's surprise that women feel unsafe; that we know our bodies and our truths are undervalued. So imagine the damaging effect it would have when a woman who has suffered a sexual assault musters up the extreme

courage to speak out - only to have people either blame her for what happened ("Did she drink too much? Did she flirt or lead him on?") or to totally discount her story and accuse her of lying ("Why would she wait so long to come forward? Why doesn't she remember each precise detail of what happened?"). If you find yourself asking these questions, I urge you to put yourself in the shoes of the victim. Ask yourself these questions instead: What could she possibly have to gain by coming forward? Why would she lie? If it weren't true, why would she further risk her safety and her reputation knowing that there's no guarantee her assaulter will even face a punishment?

It is horrifying enough that the least taxing way for a victim to deal with her assault is to keep quiet about it. So, when people do speak out, please make it a point to listen to them. Understand that this is a widespread epidemic; that the likelihood any given woman has been assaulted is alarmingly high. Even if you have your own preconceived notions about assault accusations, put those aside for a moment. Don't doubt their stories. Choose instead to lift victims up by believing them."

After reading the short summary and/or the suggested article, answer one of these questions-

1.

2. What do you think are some of the reasons that woman remain silent when facing sexual assaults? What are their emotions, thoughts, and concerns?

3. What key messages do Kavanaugh's appointment as Supreme Court Justice for life say about our society and its' priorities in the modern day?

4. Do you see any connection/relevance from Kavanaugh's past to our institution?

5. Why have movements such as #MeToo grown exponentially within the last 18 months?