

# LVMUN VII

7<sup>th</sup> Annual Las Vegas Model UN Conference  
February 7-8, 2020

Dear Delegates of the LVMUN VII United Nations Refugee Agency, otherwise known as UNHCR,

My name is Tacy Clifford, and I will be working alongside Robert Haag as a chair of this committee. I look forward to hearing proposed solutions on an otherwise broad topic. This is my third year in the Model United Nations program, as a junior. I have competed at multiple conferences, those being: LVMUN (2018), UCI at the University of Irvine (2018), and BruinMUN at UCLA (2018 and 2019), and NHSMUN (2019). I was placed into the Arab League as Syria discussing LGBT rights for my first conference (UCLA), so I can understand and sympathize with the difficulty of inexperience and an intricate topic. Afterward, for my next committee, I competed at LVMUN V in the Security Council, as a semi-periphery country, discussing the Jammu and Kashmir conflict. Finally, at UCI, I managed to get placed into a historical crisis committee as Uruguay, post World War II. Regardless of the difficulties in the challenge that is growth, I managed to succeed as a delegate, going as far as to earn the position of Best Delegate at UCLA in 2019.

As a chair, I have observed the skills of the mentors provided to me, and I've had the luck of experiencing such skills before. At LVMUN VI, I could chair the SOCHUM committee, with the topic of human experimentation. It is my pleasure to chair this committee, the UNHCR, with the topic of the complex situation within Myanmar, the stateless Rohingya, failing humanitarian efforts, and other intricacies that lay within.

With best regards,

Tacy A Clifford

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Dear delegates of the LVMUN VII United Nations Refugee Agency,

My name is Robert Haag and I will be working alongside Tacy Clifford. I look forward to getting closer to the answer that may provide solutions to the complex topic that is the Myanmar Crisis. I am a senior in high school and I am part of the International Baccalaureate Magnet Program, an internationally recognized program at Spring Valley High School, with a select number of students aimed to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who wish to help create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

I am also a very involved student within my community, as well as my school. I have been in band for the entirety of my high school career in which I have played the tenor saxophone. I have taken private lessons as well, in hopes of improving my musical ability. I have been part of the Las Vegas Youth Saxophone Ensemble, and ultimately earned the second of two spots in the All-State Honor Jazz band. I am also the captain of the cross country team and swimming team at my high school, which I have done in the entirety of my high school career. I also participated in Speech and Debate my first two years of high school, then transitioned to Model United Nations for my last two years. It is my pleasure to chair for this committee.

With warm regards,

Robert Haag

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## **Background**

In less than four months, 9,000 Rohingyas have been murdered within Myanmar.<sup>1</sup> The Myanmar conflict, which is a conflict between the Rohingya Muslim minority and the Buddhist Myanmar majority, has resulted in thousands of displaced Rohingya refugees, widespread human trafficking, and a lack of international response.<sup>2</sup>

Many claims that the mass slaughter, and general societal hatred, aimed towards the Rohingya populace range to anything more eugenics, all the way to mere apartheid. Of course, historically speaking, it is quite easy to find these similarities. For example, the parallels between the South African Apartheid in 1948 are often quite simple: the South African Apartheid was directly correlated to race and hate crimes, whereas the Myanmar conflict is due to religion; however, the general basis is simple: both of these apartheids, so to speak, occurred due to unchangeable factors within one's identity.<sup>3</sup> Cultural differences, since the beginning of time, have caused extremely bloody and chaotic wars. The difference now is that there is an international community, and they must respond to ensure international peace and security. The charges reported by journalists, governments, and non-governmental organizations alike usually point to human rights abuse, however, the increase of military abuses is simply inexcusable. The Rakhine state, or the state in which the Rohingya live, was recently ordered to be "crushed" by the Myanmar military. While the government claims to have nothing to do with the slaughter of the Rohingya, the increased deployment of military personnel to the

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<sup>1</sup> "Now We Know: Myanmar Has Killed At Least 9,000 Rohingya In Less Than 4 Months." *Thinkprogress.org*. N. p., 2017. Web. 16 Aug. 2019.

<sup>2</sup> "Why Are Buddhist Monks Attacking Muslims?." *BBC News*. N. p., 2019. Web. 16 Aug. 2019.

<sup>3</sup> "A History Of Apartheid In South Africa." *South African History Online*. N. p., 2016. Web. 16 Aug. 2019.

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Rakhine state begs to differ.<sup>4</sup> Purely because of the downright disgust from the Buddhist populace towards the Muslim Rohingya, nearly 38,000 Rohingya have fled to Myanmar's neighboring country, Bangladesh.

However, an alternative response from the Rohingya has been dubbed the "Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA)." This is a militia, focused on uplifting the Rohingya.

Unfortunately, an increase in violence often leads to a longer conflict. With that in mind, many journalists are beginning to consider this conflict to be a fight for independence, as well as a Civil War. The Rohingya believe they have rights to the Rakhine state, given their ancestry links them to that land. The Myanmar government, likely not wanting to lose land or resources, is reluctant to simply "give it up."<sup>5</sup>

Now, the international community has not completely ignored this conflict. Many human traffickers (usually stemming from Thailand) have taken advantage of it. Displaced persons, unidentifiable individuals, or those considered stateless are often the easiest to victimize. Due to this, the human trafficking of the Rohingya people is a common practice. In a human trafficking camp discovered within May of 2015 contained 30 Rohingya bodies, which has been considered a mass grave. The UN Human Rights Watch made an announcement, essentially stating that Thailand ought to allow an independent and authorized search of Thailand, to prosecute human traffickers, and save the trafficked.<sup>6</sup> In 2019, the Thai police

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<sup>4</sup> "New Report Shows Myanmar Military Still Committing War Crimes In Rakhine State." *Amnesty.org*. N. p., 2019. Web. 16 Aug. 2019.

<sup>5</sup> "Six Things To Know About The Conflict In Myanmar's Rakhine State." *Six things to know about the conflict in Myanmar's Rakhine state*. N. p., 2019. Web. 16 Aug. 2019.

<sup>6</sup> "Thailand: Mass Graves Of Rohingya Found In Trafficking Camp." *Human Rights Watch*. N. p., 2015. Web. 16 Aug. 2019.

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released an official statement, agreeing that the Rohingya population was linked to human trafficking. In recent news, many of the Rohingya are choosing to board boats, similar to how many crossing the United States' southern border will hire what is called a "coyote" to help transport them across the border, however, such actions are proving to be far riskier within southeastern Asia. When boarding these boats, the Rohingya are told they will be taken to Malaysia, but that simply hasn't been the case in recent years.<sup>7</sup>

Given the current crisis within Myanmar, Bangladesh, Thailand, and Malaysia, the question is rather simple: is it best to begin by alienating the problem, or should the entirety be solved within one solution?

## **Bloc Positions**

### **Asia:**

For the nations most affected by this conflict, the general belief is simple: minimize the conflict as soon as possible. The strengthening of borders will be encouraged, and territorial disputes will almost immediately involve the largest world power in the region; China. For the Asian block, whom you decide to work with is up to the delegations. It's best to align yourself with countries that have a similar policy to yours, or long-term allies.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> "Stranded Rohingyas Linked To Human Trafficking: Thai Police." *The U.S.*. N. p., 2019. Web. 16 Aug. 2019.

<sup>8</sup> Ratcliffe, Rebecca. "Who Are The Rohingya And What Is Happening In Myanmar?." *the Guardian*. N. p., 2017. Web. 16 Aug. 2019.

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## **Africa:**

For the African block, some of the less developed nations have similar situations, however, it is still imperative that this block accounts for the resources they contain, and the international capabilities they legitimately have. Most African nations seem to have something special about them; for example, Uganda has amazing water sanitation technology, the DRC is mineral-rich, and South Africa is not only a business hub but also fully capable when it comes to trade.

## **North America:**

Multiple North American nations have condemned the actions taken within Myanmar.<sup>9</sup> Oddly enough, there is plenty of room to note the hypocrisy taken by some of the nations within this bloc; however, the ultimate goal of the United Nations is to encourage structure, peace, and international wellbeing. Due to this, these nations should use whatever leverage they may have to support the different groupings.

## **Central/Latin America:**

A variety of these nations have eerily similar situations, and due to this, it is important to research solutions that have worked within these nations, and potentially draw parallels to the situation within Myanmar. Remember: humanitarian aid is a band-aid solution. It is not permanent and does not prevent much if anything.

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<sup>9</sup> "Now We Know: Myanmar Has Killed At Least 9,000 Rohingya In Less Than 4 Months." *Thinkprogress.org*. N. p., 2017. Web. 16 Aug. 2019.

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## **Europe:**

The European block has had it's a fair share of immigration, just as it has unique policies entirely dependent on the government of your delegation. Luckily enough, most European countries are very straightforward. To truly represent your assigned delegation, you must pair with countries that are widespread internationally, seeing as European countries are often world-renowned for trade, but this does not mean that you can not work with other European countries.<sup>10</sup>

## **Research Guide**

### **Objectives:**

1. Understand and research successful humanitarian aid models, as well as unsuccessful humanitarian aid models. Use a case study to guide your research on this topic.
2. Grasp the bias that each grouping has in the perspective of your nation. By doing this, you will create more effective solutions per your country policy.
3. Understand what a proxy war is, and understand your country's perspective.
4. Be sure to research the history of the Rohingya in further detail than the aforementioned.
5. Research direct statements from the government of your nation.

### **Important topics/organizations to be knowledgeable of:**

- The South African Apartheid

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<sup>10</sup> "In Myanmar, Refugees From Muslim-Buddhist Conflict Remain In Limbo." *Public Radio International*. N. p., 2019. Web. 16 Aug. 2019.

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- The Jammu Kashmir Conflict
- Pakistani Independence
- Doctors Without Border
- The Dangers of the Region
- The role of natural disasters in infrastructure
- Involved NGOs
- Militaristic regimes
- Xenophobia
- The differences between an operative democracy and an alleged democracy
- The purpose of genocide
- Nationalism and how it correlates to territorial disputes (Case Study: Spain vs. Catalonia)

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## **Questions to Consider:**

1. Is it best to begin by alienating the problem, or should the entirety be solved within one solution?
2. Is the basis of the Myanmar Conflict on the premise of cultural differences?
3. Why is humanitarian aid a “band-aid” solution?
4. Is it for better or for worse that the Rohingya are leaving the nation?
5. If your nation was Myanmar, what response would your nation give to international pressure?
6. Is militaristic action the best route to take?
7. What are the practical solutions your country can feasibly assist in creating?
8. What limitations are imposed by the UN due to legality?
9. When has humanitarian aid work? Why?
10. When has humanitarian aid failed? Why?
11. What is the role of the United Nations in this conflict?
12. What is the role of the UNHCR in this conflict?
13. What is the role of the UNHCR, generally?
14. How does your country play a role in the UNHCR?
15. Is the reintegration of the Rohingya possible?
16. Have other conflicts drastically affected this conflict?
17. Would your nation gain anything from direct involvement?
18. Is your nation directly involved? Why/why not?