



The legal pathway to repatriating the Rohingya



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he persecution faced by the Rohingya community in Myanmar represents one of the most profound injustices of our times, yet it has received comparatively little public attention in the Western world.

In what constitutes one of the most violent and protracted humanitarian crises of the 21st century^[i], more than a million refugees have fled Myanmar as a result of successive waves of violence since the 1990s, with more than 700,000 of them leaving since 2017.

To fully understand why progress toward a peaceful and humanitarian solution to this crisis has been so grueling and slow, we must draw upon the experiences of the Rohingya refugees themselves and various stakeholders, including security personnel, administrators, nongovernmental organizations and local residents, along with the work of legal scholars who have been trying to resolve the issues within the complex and entangled frameworks of international and domestic laws.

The law is not, of course, the only approach available for addressing humanitarian concerns. Politics, while often — and certainly in this case — the principal cause of such crises, can also be the source of lasting solutions. Diplomacy

and international relations can also exert constructive pressure, even it that pressure is legal in form and function.

Therefore, in focusing on the legal solutions this crisis so desperately needs, it is also necessary to take a broader and more expansive view of the law and legal institutions, and set this within the political, demographic and diplomatic milieu of the region.

Through this approach, the violations of the human rights of Rohingya refugees can be seen to be posing a dual threat, not only to peace and security within main host nation Bangladesh but also to the rule of international law more broadly.

There is no centralized legislature, judiciary or executive for the enforcement of international treaties [ii]. To address this, it is therefore necessary to consider a wider range of ethical, legal and game-theory incentives to persuade all of the states involved to uphold respect for the rule of law.

This expansive understanding prescribes a proactive approach that involves neighboring countries and international organizations, and urges them to take concerted actions. These actions include diplomatic negotiations and exerting international pressure on the government of Myanmar with the aim of finding a resolution to the ongoing Rohingya crisis.



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I. INTRODUCTION

The humanitarian crisis the Rohingya people have endured has been going on for several years. It involves the forced displacement of the Muslim-minority group from Myanmar into neighboring countries, especially Bangladesh.

In 2015 the Allard K. Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic at Yale Law School conducted a legal analysis that collected substantial evidence of genocide committed against the Rohingya population in Myanmar's Rakhine State[iii]. The analysis recommended that a UN commission of inquiry be established to urgently investigate the human rights situation.

The clinic's research, which was carried out over a period of eight months and drew on testimonies, documents and other sources, concluded that the Rohingya have faced circumstances that indicate genocide, while acknowledging the challenges in proving intent.

Further research has focused on the change in attitudes toward the Rohingya in neighboring Bangladesh. A paper published in the Journal of International Humanitarian Action in 2021 identified three key factors affecting local attitudes: economic instability as a result of falling wages and rising prices;

The Burmese army systematically killed hundreds of Rohingya Muslims in Tula Toli village, Rakhine State in Aug. 2017,

according to HRW. AFP

unequal access to humanitarian aid and uneven distribution of resource opportunities created through substantial humanitarian operations; and political uncertainty about the future of the Rohingya crisis^[iv].

As the crisis continues, and Bangladeshi patience wears ever thinner, so the risk increases that the Rohingya will experience violations of their rights in host nations similar to those they endured in their home country.

The issues in Myanmar's Rakhine state, homeland of the Rohingya, have been well documented by legal researchers. For instance, Malang Faye's "A Forced Migration from Myanmar to Bangladesh and Beyond: Humanitarian Response to Rohingya Refugee Crisis," also published in the Journal of International Humanitarian Action, offers critical insights into the strategies employed by Myanmar's government to suppress the Rohingya, and highlights the rights violations and humanitarian struggles they have endured, and the humanitarian response to the crisis by the international community^[v].

This report will provide a summary of such evidence and analysis of the legal issues facing the Rohingya in their homeland and in refugee camps, before assessing the scope for a resolution of the crisis.





II. HISTORICAL AND CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

The Rohingya people, primarily Muslims and a small Hindu minority, are an ethnic group from Rakhine State on Myanmar's west coast. They have a millennial-long history in Myanmar and claim to be descendants of Arab traders and other groups who have been in the region for generations.

However, the government of Myanmar, a predominantly Buddhist country, denies the Rohingya citizenship. Refusing to recognize them as a people, it excluded them from the 2014 census and regards them as illegal immigrants from Bangladesh.

Tensions and discrimination against the Rohingya community have built over time. The conflict arises chiefly from the religious and social differences between Rakhine Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims.

During the Second World War, in what was then Burma and is now Myanmar, Rohingya Muslims, who allied with the British and were promised a Muslim state in return, fought against Rakhine Buddhists, who sided with the Japanese.

This historical tension has been exacerbated by subsequent political factors. In 1982, Myanmar passed a citizenship law that denied the Rohingya people citizenship, making them the "world's largest stateless population[vi]," numbering more than 3.5 million. As non-citizens, they lack basic political, economic and human rights within Myanmar.

Authorities in the country refuse even to call them "Rohingya." Doing so would acknowledge their separate legal and cultural identity, and so they instead refer to them only as "foreigners" or "Bengalis," and in doing so deny them the protections afforded to specific groups of people under the 1948 UN Genocide Convention.

In 1974, the military regime in the country formulated a new constitution for Myanmar that recognized 135 races but excluded the Rohingya^[vii].

Myanmar's problem with Islamophobia emerged in earnest during a period of political and economic crisis in 1938, when it was still colonial Burma. A nascent fascist movement targeted the Muslim community as a scapegoat, demonizing people from the Indian subcontinent and the religion of Islam as the exploiters, colonizers and invaders responsible for Burma's problems. This led to Islamophobic riots countrywide.

The proportion of Muslims within the population of Myanmar has decreased from

ARSA operates in northern Myanmar's Rakhine state, where the Rohingya Muslims have endured persecution. AFP



3.9 percent to 2.3 percent in the past 35 years [viii]. Yet the Islamophobic fear generated by the nation's leaders is based on the notion that the Muslim population will eventually constitute a majority [ix]. Meanwhile, many still entertain the conspiracy theory that the Muslim minority is attempting to institute Shariah in the country.

The Advisory Commission on Rakhine State, led by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, delivered its findings to the UN Security Council in 2017 and presented options for the economic improvement of Rakhine State and the deescalation of ethnic tensions. Predictably, nothing came of it, as Russia and China used their powers of veto.

The specific recommendations by the commission included investment in infrastructure to help lift the region out of poverty, a lifting of the restrictions on Rohingya human rights, the repeal and replacement the 1982 citizenship law, and new security forces distinct from the military junta's hierarchy that might be better able to protect the Rohingya and prevent radicalization among them.

In anticipation of the commission's final report in August 2017, which contained recommendations that would have affected all parties in the conflict, the Myanmar military, known as the Tatmadaw, bolstered its forces in Rakhine State, recruited civilians and increased their incursions into Rohingya villages. It is believed by some that the Tatmadaw, in partnership with the Rakhines, had already decided at this point to eradicate or expel the Rohingya minority from the region.

On Aug. 24, 2017, the commission's final report was published. The following night, a coordinated attack on government outposts in and around Rakhine State was launched by a small Rohingya rebel group known as the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army. It admitted orchestrating the attacks on several police stations, leading to the deaths of a dozen security personnel.

The military, having already augmented its forces and initiated incursions into Rohingya communities, intensified its attacks under the pretext of an "antiterrorist clearance operation." This operation, aided by Rakhine Buddhists, led to thousands of people in Rohingya villages, primarily civilians, being killed, injured or raped^[x].

It also resulted in most of the 600,000 or more Rohingya population of Rakhine State being driven into neighboring Bangladesh. This collective and disproportionate response caused the destruction of hundreds of Rohingya settlements and the deaths of thousands of innocent men, women and children. Numerous others were subjected to torture and countless Rohingya women and



The military government perpetuated a massacre of the Rohingya girls were sexually assaulted, often in gang rapes. Some refugees have recounted horrific incidents, such as being made to watch as their infants were thrown into burning buildings [xi].

In short, the military government perpetuated a massacre of the Rohingya and expelled about 90 percent of them from the country, most of whom fled across the border to already overcrowded refugee camps in Bangladesh^[xii]. The government of Myanmar has repeatedly denied allegations of genocide.

The plight of Muslim Rohingya communities in western Myanmar continues without any clear resolution in sight. However, two significant legal cases at the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court offer vital chances to maintain the pressure on the authorities in Myanmar.

The current administration, which has a mix of militaristic, democratic, ethnonationalist and conservative interests, consistently downplays the severity of the situation^[xiii]. This, coupled with the intricate and politically powerful relationship between former Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy and the military, fosters an environment of impunity among military and civilian decision-makers.

But as Myanmar faces the prospect of national elections and economic challenges as a result of the fallout from the global COVID-19 lockdowns, hopes among its rulers that international scrutiny might be fading seem misguided.

Despite any sympathy there might be for Suu Kyi's situation — she was arrested on corruption charges in 2021 and is serving a 27-year sentence following a series of trials that were condemned by the UN, US and other international observers as politically motivated — her reputation remains irreparably damaged.

Her inability to prevent, and refusal to condemn, the ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya raises unanswerable questions that undermine her image as an Oxford-educated, Western-minded, Nobel Peace Prize winner with hopes of reforming her homeland^[xiv].

III. OVERVIEW OF RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL LAW

The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948, defines genocide as any act committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group^[xv].

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted by the UN in 1966, guarantees certain fundamental rights and freedoms, including the right to life, freedom from torture, and freedom of thought^[xvi].





Aung San Suu Kyi, the ousted Myanmar civilian leader, faced two criminal charges on March 1, 2021, following a military coup that led to widespread protests. AFP Although Myanmar is not a party to the covenant, its principles are widely regarded as customary elements of international law, both for diplomatic purposes and due to the universal nature of these rights. Signatories affirm that these rights are inalienable and belong to all people, though their de facto jurisdiction is not extra-territorial in nature^[xvii].

The internationally recognized Responsibility to Protect principle, known as R2P, asserts that sovereignty is not only a matter of protection from outside interference, it also places upon states a positive responsibility for the welfare of their populations. The international community also has a "residual responsibility" in cases where a state is unable or unwilling to protect its population from mass atrocities^[xviii].

However, the application of R2P in the Rohingya crisis has been limited, as a result of issues such as sovereignty and lack of international consensus.

The Genocide Convention mandates that state parties must act to avert and penalize acts of genocide. This responsibility encompasses the creation of pertinent laws and the punishment of those responsible, irrespective of their status as constitutionally accountable leaders, public functionaries, or private citizens.

This duty is not discretionary but mandatory and has become a part of customary international law, placing an obligation on even those states that have not signed up to the convention. Consequently, all states are subject to this obligation.

While states do have some latitude in how they meet their obligations to prevent and punish genocide, they must interpret those obligations within the wider context of international law. This implies that a state is not permitted to breach other international obligations to fulfill its duties relating to genocide.

Indeed, the global community, under the auspices of the UN, also has a duty, in line with chapters six and eight of the UN Charter, to employ suitable diplomatic, humanitarian and other non-violent methods to aid in the protection of populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

In March 2022, the US formally recognized the treatment of the Rohingya as genocide. This recognition would support a further case to be brought to the International Criminal Court, although the UN Security Council, in which Russia and China are two of the five permanent members who hold the power of veto, remains a hurdle to realizing that goal. Since Myanmar is not a signatory to the Rome Statute, the founding document of the International Criminal Court, the only way

the case against it can be heard there is as a result of a referral by the Security Council.

Nevertheless, advocacy efforts at the UN level are not wasted, not least, as this report will illustrate, on the issue of arms embargo resolutions, and on efforts to leverage domestic law.

Another court that faces issues with sovereignty is the International Court of Justice. It has jurisdiction in two types of cases. Firstly, it can issue binding rulings between states that agree, or have previously agreed, to submit to the decisions of the court^[xix]. Secondly, it can offer "advisory opinions," which are reasoned but nonbinding rulings on properly submitted questions of international law, usually at the request of the UN General Assembly.

It is important to note that the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice is based solely on consent, and that permanent members of the Security Council are able to veto the enforcement of its rulings, even those by which the affected parties have consented to be bound.

In the case of the Rohingya, this means that Russia and China can use their veto power to defang any ruling, reducing its status to no more than a statement of political will.

IV. HUMAN RIGHTS CONVENTIONS AND THE ROHINGYA CRISIS

Despite clear evidence of human rights abuses committed against the Rohingya, there has been a lack of decisive legal action by the international community.

UN Human Rights Office reports offer clear evidence that the people have been victims of torture, discrimination and arbitrary detention^[xx]. Satellite imaging has provided proof that close to 200 Rohingya villages have been destroyed. Reports of human rights violations in the most recent attacks against the Rohingya include the killing of civilians, torture, rape and other forms of sexual violence, as well as the burning and destruction of entire villages^[xxi].

These violations are in direct contravention of several international human rights treaties. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for example, upholds the right to life, liberty and security of person, and prohibits torture and arbitrary detention. Similarly, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment explicitly forbids torture, which has been rampant throughout Rakhine State.

On Jan. 23, 2020, the International Court of Justice issued a landmark decision. It directed Myanmar to take necessary actions to protect its Rohingya population from further atrocities. The case, an advisory one, was brought by Gambia, a small, African,



Muslim nation. It was one of the first times an African country had brought such charges to the court. Backed by the 57-member Organization of Islamic Cooperation at the UN's highest forum for state-level disputes, Gambia accused Myanmar of breaching the 1948 Genocide Convention in its treatment of the Rohingya.

The court conducted a trial on Dec. 10 and 11, 2020. Suu Kyi, who at the time was still Myanmar's state counsellor, or leader, appeared in person to defend her country.

She argued that the allegations against her government were based on an "incomplete and misleading factual picture of the situation." She categorically denied the allegations of genocide and requested the charges be dismissed, to the great detriment of her legacy^[xxii].

The judging panel ruled in favor of Gambia's request for preliminary measures. The ongoing nature of the threat to the Rohingya meant that Myanmar was told to "take all measures within its power to prevent all acts" prohibited under the 1948 Genocide Convention. The court ordered authorities in Myanmar to report back on progress within four months, and every six months thereafter^[xxiii].

Despite the evidence presented to it, the UN Security Council has failed to adopt any resolutions relating to the Rohingya situation, as a result of the veto powers exercised by Russia and China^[xxiv]. Both countries view Myanmar as an opportunity to extend their influence in the Indian Ocean area, with Russia in particular cultivating a deep military partnership.

In May 2023, Tom Andrews, the UN's independent investigator on human rights in Myanmar, reported that the country had imported more than \$1 billion worth of military equipment since the military coup there in 2021. This included high-spec Russian Mi-35 attack helicopters and Yak-130 fighter jets^[xxv].

Meanwhile, Beijing views Myanmar not only as a customer for arms sales, but as an integral part of its economic Belt and Road Initiative infrastructure project, as the country offers access to the Indian Ocean from China's southwestern Yunnan Province.

Myanmar holds additional significant value for China, as its port of Kyaukpyu marks the end point of preexisting oil and gas pipelines. This offers Beijing an alternate option for importing energy that bypasses the easily blockaded, US-leaning nations on the Malacca Strait.

Elsewhere, however, the International Criminal Court has stepped up. In 2019, its Pre-Trial Chamber gave the green light to further examination of the atrocities inflicted on the Rohingya. Later that year, the court



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approved a full investigation into allegations of crimes against humanity targeting the Rohingya people, including systematic acts of violence, forced deportation and persecution based on ethnicity and religion.

Yet because Myanmar has never recognized the authority of the court, and given that Russia and China will veto any ruling by the Security Council, this avenue is once again fraught with difficulties.

Enforcing the principles of international law in the context of the Rohingya crisis therefore presents significant challenges. They include issues of state sovereignty, security concerns, and lack of an international consensus.

Furthermore, bodies such as the International Criminal Court have yet to demonstrate their ability to compel changes in governmental behavior, even in situations where they do have the right to hear cases.

V. DOMESTIC LEGAL PERSPECTIVE

Myanmar's racist and largely dysfunctional domestic legal framework has had a significant impact on prolonging the Rohingya crisis. The country's 1982 Citizenship Law, for instance, deprived the Rohingya of their citizenship.

This law bases full citizenship primarily on membership of those "national races" that are considered by the state to have settled in Myanmar prior to 1824^[xxvi]. As the Rohingya are not considered to be one of these national races, they are regarded as foreigners. This has resulted in a situation where many Rohingya, including children, are stateless. This statelessness denies them everything from employability and education to the right to own property. It is regarded as the defining legal challenge to be resolved prior to any enduring solution.

In response to the crisis, Myanmar's domestic judicial system has faced numerous challenges. The judiciary is seen as lacking independence and fairness, with judges accused of lacking intellectual and moral values, and failing to properly exercise their discretionary powers^[xxvii].

Lawyers representing people charged under section 505 (a) of Myanmar's Penal Code (incitement against the military junta) are closely monitored and sometimes threatened, securing judgments in the regime's interest [xxviii]. Furthermore, there is a widespread lack of confidence in the justice system among the general public [xxix].

The country's legal system currently faces monumental problems, ranging from poorly qualified judges and lawyers to corruption and interference by the executive. The comprehensive suspension of habeas corpus, which is supposed to protect against unlawful imprisonment, and other legal





protections of human rights, as well as the misuse of military tribunals to try civilians, often resulting in the death penalty or lengthy prison sentences with hard labor, serves to highlight the domestic legal context in which the Rohingya are attempting to assert their human rights. Myanmar simply does not have the rule of law in a form recognizable to Western jurists^[xxx].

Yet this does not mean the case for domestic law as a solution is a dead end. Even the final report and recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State, chaired by Kofi Annan[xxxi], which provided the spark that set off the most violent phase of the crisis, was "accepted" in Myanmar in 2018, under intense international pressure. As a result, a new international commission was established with the supposed intention of implementing the findings.

One of the members of the commission was veteran US diplomat Bill Richardson. He has spoken at length about the failings of the new commission, from which he resigned, describing it as a "whitewash^[xxxxii]."

Nevertheless, it did demonstrate that pressure from outside the formal structures of the UN could achieve concessions from Myanmar including, in this case, tacit acceptance that the Rohingya deserve citizenship.

Numerous nations have legislation that empowers their judicial bodies to probe and prosecute certain grave breaches of international law, irrespective of where they occur or the nationality of the suspects or victims. In 2021, judicial authorities in Argentina initiated an investigation into military and civilian leaders of Myanmar for alleged crimes perpetrated in Rakhine State,

Cox's Bazar District in Bangladesh is home to 920,000 Rohingya refugees. AFP including war crimes and genocide[xxxiii].

It has been argued throughout the literature on the subject that investigations under domestic Western laws that define the crime of genocide committed overseas, such as the US code on genocide, would be effective in mobilizing both political and military support^[xxxiv].

The Rohingya people have been displaced to many countries. Those who are refugees in Bangladesh lack legal status there, which puts them on a precarious footing under the domestic laws of the country and leaves them vulnerable to further rights violations, according to Human Rights Watch^[xxxv].

The process of recognizing them as refugees would result in political tensions and costs to Bangladesh and also compromise the hope of returning them to their homeland in Myanmar.

The point, nonetheless, is that domestic law in the context of the Rohingya crisis is not limited to discussions about what Myanmar ought to do.

VI. REFUGEE LAW AND THE ROHINGYA CRISIS

Since 2017, nearly 1 million Rohingya refugees have fled violence in Myanmar's Rakhine State and settled in densely populated camps, such as Cox's Bazaar, in Bangladesh. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has described the Rohingya refugees as "one of, if not the most-discriminated people in the world."

The 1951 Refugee Convention, and its 1967 Protocol, are the key legal documents that form the basis of the work of the UN Refugee Agency^[xxxvi]. They define the term "refugees" and outline their rights and the international





Protesters demonstrated in support of the Rohingya outside the Hague's Peace in 2019. AFP

standards of treatment for their protection.

However, Rohingya refugees remain in a precarious situation. As they have not been formally granted refugee status in Bangladesh^[xxxvii], they are unable to integrate into communities there and start to rebuild their lives.

Rohingya in Bangladesh face numerous challenges. These include food insecurity, the maintenance of law and order, economic instability due to wage cuts and price hikes, unequal access to humanitarian aid, and political uncertainty about the future of the Rohingya crisis [xxxxiii][xxxix]. They also face health risks as a result of disease outbreaks, malnutrition, inadequate educational opportunities, and risks related to neglect, exploitation and violence, including gender-based violence, child marriage and child labor [xi].

Host countries have legal responsibilities toward refugees, based on international law. The 1951 Refugee Convention outlines the basic minimum standards for the treatment of refugees, including the right to housing, work and education while displaced, so that they are able lead a "dignified and independent life." However, host countries such as Bangladesh face significant challenges in fulfilling these responsibilities, in part due to resource constraints but also legal ones.

Bangladesh is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol, and only officially recognizes Rohingya who arrived in the country as refugees prior to 1992^[xli]. Those who arrived after 1992 are instead termed "Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals," which allows Bangladesh to shirk many of its responsibilities toward its desperate guests.

While saving money and resources is one reason for its reticence to do the right

thing, there are other concerns facing the Bangladeshi government. The country has been negotiating with Myanmar to facilitate the repatriation of the Rohingya, and officially recognizing them as refugees might complicate those talks^[xliii].

This issue does not solely concern Bangladesh; the international community also has responsibilities toward refugees. The Global Compact on Refugees, affirmed by the UN General Assembly in 2018, provides a framework for more predictable and equitable sharing of responsibility. It recognizes that a sustainable solution to refugee situations cannot be achieved without international cooperation[xliii].

However, there is a need for additional measures to promote the social and economic inclusion of refugees, and to ensure they are recognized as such in order to secure their rights.

VII. LEGAL SOLUTIONS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

In "Myanmar's Rohingya Conflict," authors Antony Ware and Costas Laoutides extensively address this complex crisis. The book underscores the persisting plight of the Rohingya community, to which there is an apparent lack of any resolution on the horizon. It places significant focus on crucial international legal cases, notably those unfolding at the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court, which offer strategic opportunities for exerting pressure on Myanmar's government.

The authors analyze the composition of Myanmar's current administration, which encompasses a blend of militaristic, democratic, ethno-nationalist, and conservative interests. This amalgamation consistently downplays the severity of the Rohingya crisis.

The intricate relationship between Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy and Myanmar's military is explored, shedding light on the environment of impunity that prevails among the nation's decision-makers^[xliv].

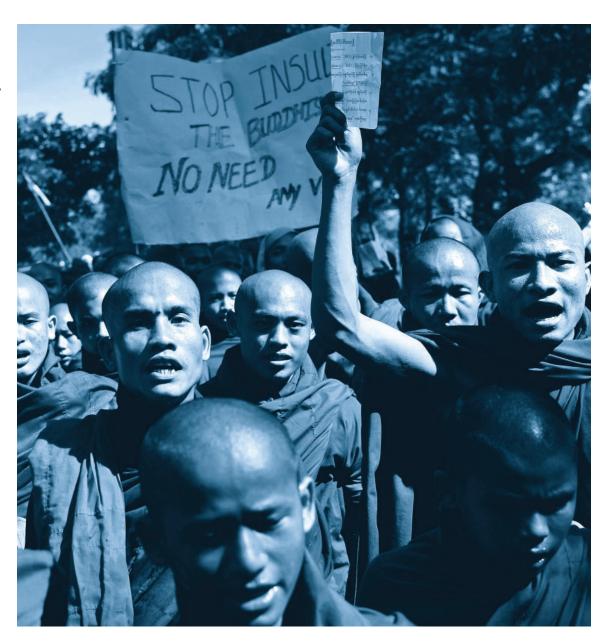
The impending national elections in the country and the continuing economic challenges resulting from the global COVID-19 pandemic, as discussed by Ware and Laoutides in their book, seem to render hopes among authorities in Myanmar that international scrutiny might be waning as unlikely, due to the ongoing legal proceedings.

The authors also examine Suu Kyi's reputation in the context of her inability to prevent, and hesitancy to denounce, the ethnic cleansing.

There remains great scope for diplomatic



The conflict stemmed from religious and social differences between Rakhine Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims. AFP



efforts and negotiations between Myanmar and other countries, complemented by international pressure and sanctions to enforce compliance with human rights norms.

There is a need to strengthen domestic legal reforms in Myanmar, as well as in the neighboring countries that host refugees and in Western countries that might eventually try junta officials under US, UK or EU laws. Such reforms are crucial for addressing the systemic discrimination the Rohingya community faces within Myanmar's legal and political structures.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The power of the legal approaches discussed here can be unlocked in earnest only when they are brought to bear in tandem with concerted diplomatic efforts. The two elements are strongly complementary, both in terms of their effects and in terms of game theory; the more progress we can make, the more it will be in Myanmar's own best interest to resolve the crisis with haste.

Also, just because many of the processes of international law can be blocked within the UN Security Council, this does not mean that international law has nothing to say on the matter or that the international community is powerless.

When considering the plight of the Rohingya, it is critical that we do not take a myopic, Myanmar-focused view of the crisis, and that we remember the dozens of nations that are hosting significant numbers of Rohingya refugees, and the legal protections that must be advocated at the local, national and international levels.

Furthermore, understanding and addressing local attitudes toward refugees, as highlighted in Ansar and Khaled's research is critical for ensuring peaceful coexistence with host communities.

Economic instability, unequal access to humanitarian aid, political uncertainty and media representation are among the factors that influence these attitudes, which cannot be addressed through the rule of law alone.



NOTES

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