



MODEL UNITED NATIONS

SOCOMUN XXVIII

SECURITY COUNCIL

TOPIC: OPEN AGENDA



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Security Council

Open Agenda

Hello delegates! My name is Cole Parker. I am a junior at Santa Margarita, and will be your committee chair for SOCOMUN XXVII! Alongside my Vice Chair, Sara Morrissey, and my Rapporteur, Catherine Wong, I wish the best to all delegates and hope SOCOMUN will be a great experience for you to grow in your MUN abilities. A little bit about myself: I have been in the MUN program at Santa Margarita since my freshman year, I have been on the swim team since freshman year, and I am involved in many other activities inside and outside of school, such as tennis and Eagle T.V. Since my start with MUN as a freshman, I have been able to grow in my confidence when public speaking, researching tactics, debate skills, and many other useful life skills. In October, I will be travelling with MUN to Royal Russell MUN in the United Kingdom and I am so excited to debate using international rules, while having a great experience with my peers. Security Council is one of my favorite committees to be a part of, as I love the competition and that the debate hardly ceases. Therefore, I cannot wait to be your chair at SOCOMUN and wish the best to all delegates!

Hello, my name is Sara Morrissey and I will be your vice chair. I am currently a junior and this is my third year of participating in MUN. I love to play piano and I also enjoy singing and drawing for fun. MUN has greatly helped me in researching and writing thorough papers, as well as in improving my delegating skills. I believe that MUN is an amazing experience and I wish all of you delegates good luck at the conference!

Hi, my name is Catherine Wong and I'll be your rapporteur for SOCOMUN. I am currently a sophomore at Santa Margarita and this will be my second year in the MUN program. MUN is not only a great class because of the people I met in class and committee, but also from the communication and research skills that are learned there. When I'm not at school or in an MUN conference, I can be found playing tennis, at the beach, or taking photos.

SOCOMUN has always been one of my favorite conferences because while it is a great conference to start your MUN journey with, it also is a great way to hone your previously gained abilities and debate with other delegates. You will present your country's policy and solutions to a specific problem for the entire committee to informally debate and discuss during caucuses. You will then draft resolutions within your group and present your resolutions to the whole committee, when you then may be questioned on ideas presented in your resolution. Now, because our topic is open agenda, a delegate may present any possible topic for debate at the beginning of committee. However, for the sake of making debate fair for all delegates, this topic synopsis will be devoted to the Conflict in Myanmar. I *strongly* recommend that you prepare to debate this topic in committee, and that this topic is passed as the topic of the debate the day of the conference. However, you are more than welcome to prepare for any other topic you wish to debate as well. Just be aware that the chances of us debating the Conflict in Myanmar are much greater than any other topic at this point.



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If you would like to reach out with any questions, comments or concerns, please email me at (socomunsc@gmail.com), you can reach out about anything! I would be happy to assist any delegates with their research or give advice to any questions you may have.

Background:

The Background of a topic is one of the most vital aspects and will help you immensely if you proceed with thorough research on your topic. I have found that knowing the background helps with drafting solutions and the overall flow of debate in general. I have provided a background below to help guide your background research:

The conflict in Myanmar has been an ongoing minority persecution campaign that targets the Rohingya Muslims, an ethnic group in Myanmar that, since 1962, has been outlawed and stripped of their citizenship. In 1962, Myanmar's government was taken over in a coup and then turned into a military junta, or a government ran by a group of military leaders. After this military takeover, the Rohingya was falsely labeled as illegal immigrants and are now victims of violence, human rights violations, and abuse daily by the military. Then in 1972, Operation Dragon King was put into effect, which forced over 200,000 Rohingya to flee from the violence at their homes. The Rohingya were labeled as illegal immigrants due to the Citizenship Act of 1982, which listed 135 ethnic groups that would be granted citizenship and did not list the Rohingya. The Rohingya are denied basic rights that other citizens of Myanmar have, such as healthcare and education. Because of this, the Rohingya Muslims have been labeled the "World's Most Persecuted Minority" and while they are native to Myanmar, they are ruthlessly abused and tensions between the military and the Rohingya is heavy. Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, the military has burned whole Rohingya villages and caused enormous amounts of Rohingya to flee to neighboring nations, such as Bangladesh. In 1991, Operation Clean and Beautiful Nation forced over 150,000 Rohingya to flee as a part of the military's ethnic cleansing initiative. In 2016, the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army was created to retaliate against the military, however this army cause more dissension between the military and the Rohingya and in 2017, 400,000 Rohingya were forced to flee to Bangladesh.

The situation in Myanmar is regarded by the United Nations as an act of "ethnic cleansing", or the removal of an ethnic group by another ethnic group by acts or means of terror and violence. The Rohingya have had their rights infringed upon by the military and cannot exercise simple freedoms such as education or movement. The turmoil that the Rohingya face includes: sexual assault, murder, abuse, and the military has even burned villages to the ground. The Rakhine State, or the area where the Rohingya are from and where they live has experienced the most turmoil because of the violence that persists throughout the region. The Rakhine State has received aid from different organizations, but until the persecution of the Rohingya by the military is stopped, the conflict will never end.

UN Involvement:

The United Nations has been very involved with the ongoing Rohingya crisis and has helped with the issue moderately and has recognized the seriousness of the problem in many statements. The United Nations recognized that the issue is an act of ethnic cleansing and that the military is pursuing this act of violence on the Rohingya Muslims. The United Nations also has mentioned agreement with the fact that the violent counterattack by the military on the ARSA



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(Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army) was very disproportionate and should be addressed. The United Nations has also provided aid on child protection through the Kachin Independence Army in the Rakhine State. The United Nations has also taken steps to halt the recruitment of children in the Myanmar military. Most of the work done by the United Nations is verbal, such as calling upon violence to halt and recognizing that the need for a solution is urgent.

Possible Solutions:

To help you with your research, I have provided below a few solutions that may aid you in your research. These solutions could provide a basis for broader solutions, however it is recommended that you draft solutions based on your research and knowledge. Your country policy should follow the goal of your solutions. Solutions should be well-rounded and encompass all aspects of the conflict. If more elaborate, thorough solutions are presented in committee then it is more likely for your resolution to pass. Feel free to think outside the box when deciding on a solution and be detailed:

Peace Talks on Ceasefires:

One viable way to encourage peace within the Rakhine State is to encourage peace talks between those groups who have signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, and those groups who have not signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. This Ceasefire agreement has not been signed by the Burmese military or the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army, which are two of the most violent groups within the region right now. By calling upon these groups to meet together, the conflict could deescalate and leave the region in peace. It is also good to think about how you could get these groups to meet, along with a mediator. Keep in mind that development, peace, and security is needed in the Rakhine State, so maybe these can be discussed in these talks.

Border Security and Peacekeepers:

Since a significant amount of violence happens along the border to Bangladesh and the Rakhine State, border security should be reevaluated, along with the passage from the Rakhine State to Bangladesh, considering land mines have been placed along the border by the military. You should also come up with ways to place troops more efficiently in the Rakhine State to ensure maximum security. Also think about peacekeepers, including existing ones and ones that could be implemented to ease tensions in the region and along the border. Peacekeepers could be from the United Nations or another NGO that is willing to help.

International Pressure:

Since the military of Myanmar has proven to have a strong stance on the topic, and wants nothing to do with the Rohingya, international pressure through many ways can be used to spark reform in the government and the military. International pressure can be in the form of sanctions, embargos, or even conferences to discuss the need for reform in the nation's infrastructure. Reform in Myanmar's infrastructure could include incorporating more minorities, or anything else you find to be a viable solution. Also keep in mind that it is not allowed to infringe on a nation's sovereignty, so when researching find ways to make reforms through international pressure peacefully.



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Humanitarian Aid

Humanitarian aid is needed in the Rakhine State, and while it is already provided, new solutions should be more efficient and prioritize all of those who are being persecuted. Be sure to think about the diverse forms that aid can be provided in and what different NGOs can help, whether they be internationally or locally. Aid can also be provided using United Nations organizations that are already in the Rakhine State, but solutions should revise the way that they help, considering inefficiency with humanitarian aid is widespread. Think about other struggling minorities in the region that may need assistance like the Rohingya. You should also keep in mind the tension around the borders and the refugees that are facing turmoil.

Funding for Solutions

Please note that funding in solutions should be covered by the United Nations, unless the delegate wishes to call upon other sources for funding. (such as donations from different countries or organizations).

Questions to Consider:

To also help with your research, I have provided some questions to consider while researching your topic and forming solutions/speeches. Please be aware that you will NOT need to answer these questions in committee, but that they could be useful for research. These questions are optional and may provide assistance when forming policy and solutions:

1. What is the policy of your country on the conflict in Myanmar? What actions has your country pursued in the past that related to or helped this conflict?
2. What is your country's position on the status of the Rohingya?
3. How can the international community prevent any further attacks on the Rohingya Muslims from happening, considering it is unlawful to infringe on Myanmar's sovereignty?
4. What does your country refer to the conflict as, whether it be ethnic cleansing, genocide, or another label, and is there a reason backing the label?
5. What are some ways the refugees along the border can be assisted with their health and safety, whether that be NGOs or other programmes?
6. How should the large amount of refugees entering Bangladesh be dealt with, considering the lack of resources they have and the amount of support they need?
7. How can peace talks be organized once tension settles, if your nation believes in the viability of them?
8. Has your nation taken any action to stop the military from harming the Rohingya, furthermore is your nation interested in donating aid?



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Works Cited

“History of Conflict and the border.” *Burma Link*, 1 May 2015, <https://www.burmalink.org/background/thailand-burma-border/history-of-conflict-and-the-border/>.

This further illuminates the general history of the Myanmar conflict. It gives a very detailed timeline of events in Myanmar up until 2015. This is an unbiased source and provides much factual information on this topic. It can be useful in writing the background of the paper.

“Model UN On the Situation in Myanmar 2018.” *UNA Sweden*, <https://fn.se/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Model-UN-Myanmar-2018.pdf>

This document gives an overall summary of the situation in Myanmar as well as important country positions. It allows the reader not only see the animosity between religious groups but some of the issues within the government of Myanmar. Since this document was created for delegates of a Model United Nations conference, it is extremely useful with in committee.

“Myanmar Chronology of Events.” *Security Council Report*, www.securitycouncilreport.org/chronology/myanmar.php.

Giving a timeline of actions taken on the situation of Myanmar, Security Council Report is a beneficial source for seeing all issues and solutions within the country since 1948. It includes changes to the country including the name shift of Myanmar and the Security Council briefing of the current state of the country. This can be of use when getting familiar with the issues of Myanmar.

“Myanmar Country Profile.” *BBC News*, BBC, 3 Sept. 2018, www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-12990563.

Giving a background of the countries state, leaders, and timeline, BBC’s country profile of Myanmar can be considered resourceful. Since the names of activists or leaders are generally not included in most articles referring to Myanmar, this article is unique. Overall, this is an in depth article that will be used throughout the whole position paper.

“Myanmar – United Nations Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.” *United Nations*, United Nations, <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/myanmar/>.

This website gives a general explanation of how the UN is involved in the Myanmar conflict. In addition, it includes many statistics on the humanitarian violations seen in the country and a list of the parties involved in humanitarian protection. This is slightly biased against the actions taken against children and provides a humanitarian rights standpoint. This will be useful for UN Involvement.



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“Myanmar | World News.” *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media,
www.theguardian.com/world/myanmar.

This website allows readers to see the latest news stories in Myanmar. This includes stories such as “Rohingya crisis: UN investigates its 'dysfunctional' conduct in Myanmar” and “Myanmar army shelling villages in Rakhine state, rights group told”. These and many more stories can aid in making more specific solutions.

“Rohingya Crisis: Humanitarian Situation Catastrophic, UN Says.” *BBC News*, BBC, 14 Sept. 2017, www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41260767.

This article gives UN official’s perspective of the situation in Myanmar. This document is beneficial because it includes statement’s from the UN Secretary General as well as past UN actions. This article is useful because it gives ideas for solutions as well as past UN action.

“The Current Situation in Burma.” *United States Institute of Peace*, 8 June 2018,
www.usip.org/publications/2018/06/current-situation-burma.

The article written by the United States Institute of Peace gives examples of what solutions can be performed by a country to aid in the issue. The use of solutions and actions that were taken in order to support Myanmar give the website extreme value. This website can be used in order to create powerful solutions and speeches.

Safi, Michael. “‘Tied to Trees and Raped’: UN Report Details Rohingya Horrors.” *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 18 Sept. 2018,
www.theguardian.com/world/2018/sep/18/tied-to-trees-and-raped-un-report-details-rohingya-horrors.

This article gives a true story about how some Myanmar government officials treat the Rohingya people. It states that, “a summary of which was released in August, includes accounts of women tied by their hair or hands to trees then raped; young children trying to flee burning houses but forced back inside; widespread use of torture with bamboo sticks, cigarettes and hot wax; and landmines placed at the escape routes from villages, killing people as they fled army crackdowns”. By reading this article, the issue within Myanmar becomes more personable and thought-provoking. It allows delegates to get a true idea of the situation from the perspective of the victims.

“UN Security Council Calls on Myanmar to End Excessive Military Force in Rakhine State | UN News.” *United Nations*, United Nations, 7 November 2017,
<https://news.un.org/en/story/2017/11/570082-un-security-council-calls-myanmar-end-excessive-military-force-rakhine-state>.

This describes the actions taken by a meeting of the UN Security Council. It mainly addresses the humanitarian issues Myanmar faces and resolutions they presented to fix them. This website is biased against the conditions in Myanmar and is reliable. It can be used for the UN Involvement section.



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“What Is Happening in Myanmar? - CBBC Newsround.” *BBC News*, BBC,
www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/41242024.

BBC’s news article on the situation in Myanmar explain the origin of the animosity between the Myanmar government and the Rohingya Muslim minority. By explaining UN actions, this article gives necessary information when discussing past UN and country actions. BBC’s article is resourceful and informational in both background and solutions.