

BURMA **TASK FORCE**

Stop Rohingya Genocide A 2 Month Campaign Guide: Feb-March 2018

List of Content:

- Introduction
- Call-a-thon: Feb 1-Feb 28
- Write-a-thon: Feb 3-11
- Meet-a-thon: Feb 12-25
- Rohingya Advocacy Day: Feb 28
- Follow-a-thon: March 7-30

- Sample emails to mobilize people
- Sample emails to promote the events
- 3 Sample calling script
- 3 Sample organizational letters
- An organizational resolution

- Fact Sheet on Rohingyas with References
- Subject wise References
- Infographics on Repatriation Fraud
- Infographics on Apartheid before Genocide

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Burma Task Force is a coalition of 19 organizations in US and Canada to stop genocide of Rohingyas in Burma.
Burma Task Force is a project of Justice for All, an NGO with Consultative Status at the United Nations DPI.

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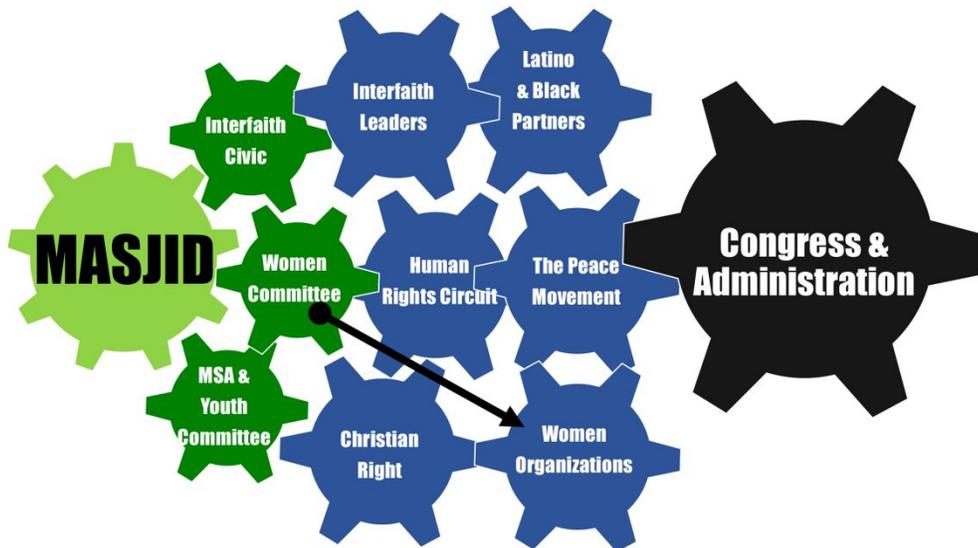
Introduction

Goals of the campaign:

- Passage of Senate Bill S 2060 and House Res. 4223 to impose sanctions on almost all leaders of Burmese military and facilitate a path to determine it as a genocide
- Demanding no repatriation of Rohingyas without security and citizenship

A Multi-Tier Strategy:

- **Mass Pressure Strategy**
 - Muslims mobilize their networks and allies to influence their representatives to actively work for the passage of these bills to become law of the land.



Summary of the Calendar

- Feb 1-Feb 28: Call-a-thon: Call senators and representatives for the bill and tweet them something every other day
- Feb 3-11: write-a-thon: congregations/constituents will gather in the evening and the weekend to write handwritten letters to enhance online activism.
- Feb 12-25: Meet-a-thon: Meeting representatives and senators in their constituencies
- Feb 28: Rohingya Advocacy Day will bring Muslim Americans and interfaith groups to meet their representatives in their Congressional Offices. Amnesty International is organizing a similar action on Feb 26th. We aim to gather as large a group as possible.
- March 7-30: Follow-a-thon: follow-up meetings with officials and their staff members.

Critical Resources:

- See a Factsheet at the end of this guide.
- Indivisible Guide is the best guide out there about influencing the Congress only if you can ignore their extreme anti-Trump stance. Download it from indivisible.org/guide
- If you cannot read the whole document, read what your elected leaders care for or don't care for: www.indivisible.org/guide/your-member-of-congress
- Check for the latest resources at BurmaTaskForce.org/resources
- Register your event at BurmaTaskForce.org/PlanFeb

Call-a-thon: 10,000 Calls a Week

Feb 1 - Feb 28

If a Senator is personally engaged on twitter, it is a good way to connect. However, senior Congressional staffers say, reaching out via social media isn't very effective. Staffers check these mediums only occasionally. Taking the time to call is the better approach.

Who:

- Everyone should call to their elected representatives. And call often!
- The best is to organize call parties. People do better when they are together.
- We are recommending that individuals, masjids, churches, student groups, and women's groups take the initiative of organizing these parties through their networks.
- Sign up for the host package at BurmaTaskForce.org/PlanFeb
- Then check your email for your host pack, which will contain all the information you need to make calls. All you and your friends will need is your phones.

When: Jan 29-Feb 28, 2018.

- You decide the time. It can be a lunch time.
- You can schedule multiple sessions.

Where: Pick a place you like, and register your details and the event details via the form at BurmaTaskForce.org/PlanFeb

Publicize:

- **Post this status on your Facebook, Twitter, and other social media.**
 - Join BURMA TASK FORCE's call-a-thon to stop genocide of Rohingyas by encouraging your elected leader to sign and support bills (HR. 4223) and (S. 2060) that place stronger sanctions on the government of Myanmar. Give time and location of your call-a-thon party but also give out the congressional number (202) 224-3121. Ask to be connected to your senator or representative or find your representative at whoismyrepresentative.com/
- Announce in your masjid, church and temples.
- Reach out to humanitarian organizations, women's rights advocacy groups, and cultural and religious centers in your area. Ask them to:
 - Email their members about the call-a-thon and post on social media
 - Spread the word to organizations they are affiliated with

Learn more about the coordinated calls at:

<https://www.indivisible.org/guide/advocacy-tactics/coordinated-calls/>

Write-a-thon

Feb 3 - Feb 11

A letter written in your own handwriting is very powerful since not many people do this now. It stands out. Form letters don't work. Letter writing is so powerful that Amnesty International had gotten hundreds of prisoners including some from Burma released despite the authoritarian regime which imprisons them. Amnesty says that "Letter writing has always been at the core of Amnesty's work, and 55 years of human rights activism show that your letters really do have the power to change lives."

Who?

- Everyone can write and promote the write-a-thon.
- But you must modify and personalize your letter.
- It is better to organize a Write-a-thon party.

What?

- Post this status on your Facebook, Twitter, and other social media.
 - Join BURMA TASK FORCE's write-a-thon week (Feb 3 to Feb 11) to encourage your state representative to sign and support bills (HR. 4223) and (S. 2060) that place stronger sanctions on the government of Myanmar. Find your representative at <https://whoismyrepresentative.com/>
- Reach out to humanitarian organizations, women's rights advocacy groups, and cultural and religious centers in your area. Ask them to:
 - Email their members about the write-a-thon.
 - Post about the write-a-thon on social media
 - Spread the word to organizations they are affiliated with

Best Practices:

- Just google: "how to write an effective letter to your congressman"

What is our Goal?

- 5,000 hand written letters to senate and congress

Meet-a-thon

Feb 12 - Feb 25

The Idea is to get a huge group that Congress can't ignore. They also don't ignore those who donate them so work with those in the community who donate to politicians. Convince donors to promote the Rohingya issue and meet the politicians they have been funding so far.

Who?

- Donors of elected representatives
- Organizational leaders
- Church leaders
- Interfaith delegations
- Human rights organizations

What?

- Reach out to humanitarian organizations, women's rights advocacy groups, and cultural and religious centers in your area. Ask them to:
 - Meet with their representatives. Share with them the Burma Task Force talking points, fact sheets and powerpoint information.
 - Spread the word to organizations they are affiliated with:
 - The most important thing you can do is meet with your representatives. If you've written to them and called them, they'll finally be able to put a face to the name. Meeting with your representative underlines how seriously you take this issue and it makes it that much more important for them. Build a relationship.

When:

- Check with the local offices of your senators and representatives when they are visiting the local offices.
- The congressional calendar is a good guide about when they are off from the Congress:
https://www.senate.gov/legislative/2018_schedule.htm

Best practices:

<https://www.indivisible.org/guide/advocacy-tactics/district-office-visits/>

<https://www.indivisible.org/resource/successful-district-office-visit/>

The Rohingya Day Advocacy Day at Congress

Feb 28, 2018

Now that your Senators and Representatives have heard from you through their local offices, phone calls, letters, and tweets, it's time to visit them at their Washington DC offices.

Register:

Pre-registration is the key to organize better for a more effective advocacy. So register at BurmaTaskForce.com/RegisterFeb28

Who?

- Those politically active in the community
- Interfaith groups (mosques, churches, synagogues, etc.)
- Students and college graduates

Where?

- Washington DC.
- We request all interested to register.
- There will be a selection process for the lead advocate of each delegation.

Getting an Appointment:

The best thing is for you to call and set up an appointment and let us know beforehand. If you are facing difficulty, Burma Task Force will do its best to set up an appointment for you and others from your district.

Training:

On the Advocacy Day, you will be able to:

- Join training workshops that will guide you through the process
- Learn current best practices on how to advocate in today's legislature
- Prepare for briefings and hearings with advocates from your legislative district

More to come:

A lot of more material will be sent your way once you register.

Follow-a-thon

March 7 - March 30

Burma Task Force

Nothing can be achieved without a follow up. Here us a guide developed by Segermark Associates.

STEP ONE: IF YOU DIDN'T GET A RESPONSE:

If your legislator hasn't answered, you can check the status one of two ways.

(1) Write a follow-up letter (all representatives have the same address: U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515; for senators, it's U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510), give the approximate date of your original letter, summarize what you asked for, express surprise at the lack of response, and request a reply about his/her position).

(2) Call the Capitol at 202-224-3121. Ask for the office of the member of the Senate or your Representative. The legislator's receptionist should know about the backlog and whether you should have gotten a reply yet.

TWO: WHAT CONSTITUTES A POSITIVE RESPONSE?

The letter you receive may say something like: "Thank you for your thoughtful letter. I agree with you that (fill in the blank)."

But there are different levels of agreement. If the legislator doesn't explicitly state he/she is a cosponsor of the legislation you support, follow up with a return letter:

"I appreciate your stated support for _____. However, your letter failed to indicate that you are a cosponsor of the necessary legislation (H.R. XXX or S. YYY). It is important to me that you sign on as a cosponsor of that bill, and I look forward to your favorable reply."

THREE: THE WISHY-WASHY NON-ANSWER:

If the officeholder hasn't taken a position, you may get one of these answers: "This bill is presently pending in the _____ Committee. If it comes before the full (House/Senate), I'll keep your thoughtful comments in mind." Or, "The senator/representative has a policy that he doesn't cosponsor bills."

The first response is deliberately vague. The second is a cop-out. Virtually every legislator cosponsors some bills. After all, his or her job is to represent his constituents' interests. The key is to make it obvious when an issue is important to those constituents.

FOUR: DON'T TAKE BALONEY FOR AN ANSWER:

First, write again. Tell the legislator you appreciate the response, but it didn't answer your question. Provide more information, if available. If you belong to an organization working on an issue, you can often get fact-sheets, accurate articles or other material from that. Ask again for the legislator's position and urge him/her once more to cosponsor the legislation.

FIVE: OR, SMILE 'N DIAL:

Or you can call the Capitol (202-224-3121) and they'll connect you with the delinquent office. Ask the receptionist, "Could you tell me who handles legislation about [your topic]?"

Generally, in a congressional office the Administrative Assistant (AA) is the chief of staff. Legislative Assistants (LAs) do research, draft speeches and advise on legislation. Legislative Correspondents (LCs) just draft letters to folks like you. Talk to the Legislative Assistant, if you can. That's who advises your elected official and tells the LCs what to write. If you get a "her line is busy," "he's in a meeting," or "she's on the Floor with the Senator," leave a message describing your concern. Good staffers will call you back.

SIX: NO CALLBACK? CRACK THE WHIP:

If you get no call in 24 hours, call once more. Still no luck? Ask for the Administrative Assistant/Chief of Staff (the "A.A." is supposed to keep the staff from ignoring voters). The A.A. is often up to his/her ears, but you can leave a message: "I tried both Monday and Tuesday to reach your legislative assistant, Jane A. I'm very concerned I haven't had a return call and would like to speak to you or the Senator/Representative about my concerns." Chances are, you'll get a prompt, apologetic response.

SEVEN: YOU'RE ALL SWEETNESS AND LIGHT:

It's best not to be indignant, but to be apologetic yourself: "I'm sorry to bother you, but I just feel so strongly, and I hope you can help me out." Or, "I was worried you weren't getting my messages, and I know how busy you must be." Remember, you'll get more results with honey than vinegar.

Once you get the L.A., you want more than a statement of general support. To get the legislator really on record, he or she should cosponsor the bill you support.

EIGHT: PERSISTENT DIALOGUE:

YOU: Let me be sure I've got your name right. Is it Jane, J-A-N-E? And your last name? [get the name for your next call, or for sending information.]

JANE: Yes, that's right. What can I do for you today?

YOU: I wrote Senator Blank on May first, and the letter I received, dated, May 15th, really only told me the status of the bill, not his position on it.

JANE: I'm not familiar with it, could I look it up and perhaps get back to you?

YOU: That won't be necessary, I'll just read a paragraph to you. (Read the guts.)

JANE: Oh, I see. Well, I think the Senator has not taken a position on that yet.

YOU: I'm hoping to convince him to take one (and HERE is the time for a short, sweet sermon). You know, many people like me think: (facts A, B, and C). What do you think we can do to get him to cosponsor this bill? Do you think he needs more information? Would more letters help him/her decide?

JANE: If you have added information, I would be glad to bring it to his/her attention. Or, if added letters come in, I'll be sure to bring them to him/her.

If her boss is really uncommitted, this may push him/her to make a decision, and the easiest justification for a position is "the heat I'm getting from home."

If Jane cuts you off, you should become the nicest, most courteous, pain in the side that ever was. Call back in two weeks. Ask Jane about the mail. Ask when this is coming up.

Put yourself in her shoes. Do you want to have to talk to this person every Thursday? If the only thing that's going to get rid of you is to cosponsor a bill that her boss might wind up voting for anyway, then why not just get him to cosponsor the bill?

NINE: STONEWALLED BY THE STAFF:

If you get no response from the staff, go higher. Every legislator visits his/her state or district often. Perhaps you can schedule a personal appointment at an office near you. If not, find out when there will be a public appearance at a Rotary, Kiwanis, town meeting or other function where you can exchange views. If at that meeting, the official disagrees, you can ask, "If we provide information that shows your position might not be as factual as you have been told, would you consider supporting us?" Public officials can't say "no" to that.

TEN: A MEETING IN HIS/HER OFFICE:

If you can get an appointment with your Representative/Senator, it helps to bring a one-page memo outlining your views, or a copy of your letter(s) to leave. If you belong to an organization working on this issue, call its headquarters and request fact sheets/reference material. They'll want to help you be the best lobbyist you can be during that meeting.

Take a knowledgeable friend or two to show more constituent support. Be sure to thank the legislator for his/her time. Keep the spiel short and sweet. Ask if and how you can help the official move in your direction. Ask if more letters help? Ask if you could meet with him/her again in a month or so. That'll let him know you're not going to go away.

ELEVEN: WHO'LL GET GROUND DOWN FIRST? :

Don't get discouraged. Inquiry volume counts, and persistence pays off. Legislators don't ignore issues that generate lots of mail and calls.

YOU: Well, Jane, would you be able to talk to the Representative/Senator about this in the coming days? Perhaps a decision can be made.

JANE: I do expect to talk to him/her, and I'll mention our conversation.

YOU: I'd appreciate it. Could you give me a call next week or should I call you?

JANE: I'll try to call, and if I don't, please feel free to call me.

Newton's first law of motion -- an object at rest tends to remain at rest -- applies to public policy. Things won't change on their own. It takes many individual contributions to tip the great scales of public affairs in the right direction.

If you follow just half of these instructions, your input will be more sophisticated than 97% of the contacts Congressmen receive. If you follow up on your letter, you're in the top one percent of all voters. Few people get active, so they are the ones who do really count. It's true -- the squeakiest wheels really do get the grease.

* Before you even write that first letter, you might follow a couple easy rules: (a.) The more personalized the letter, the greater the consideration given – this includes clear, handwritten letters; (b.) Talk about only one issue in a given letter; (c.) Threats like “do this or I’ll not vote for you,” or insults like “you’ve got to be stupid not to understand this,” destroy your credibility; (d.) Include an action item like “vote for H.R. 2345,” or “cosponsor S. 678;” (e.) As for a specific response like, “and if you can’t, please let me know your reasons for not doing so.”

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Burma Task Force note: saving Rohingya lives is really very important, and we hope it will not be necessary to twist arms to get action on stopping genocide! Please let us know if you are having difficulties.

Sample email to promote Call-a-thon

The Rohingya have been described as the world's most oppressed people. Genocide is taking place right under our own noses. Future generations will look back and wonder why we did not help. As an organization that prides itself in standing up for the rights of others, we encourage you to do your part to support Burma Task Force this week by joining the call-a-thon from Jan. 29 - Feb 28.

One of the most effective ways to have your voice heard is to call your congressional representatives. Many people don't know who their senators and representatives are, and that's

okay! You can find your representatives through the link below. Then use one of the scripts provided below (or your own) to leave a message.

If for some reason you are unable to find your state representative, you also have the option of dialing 202-224-3121. This number will direct you to the Capitol switchboard. When you call, ask to be connected to your senator or representative. The operator will direct your call to their office.

Please spread the word to your members and encourage them to tell their family and friends as well. Encourage your state representative to sign and support bills (HR. 4223) and (S. 2060) that place stronger sanctions on the government of Myanmar. (202) 224-3121 and ask to be connected to your senator or representative or find your representative at <https://whoismyrepresentative.com/>

You can find more information and resources at BurmaTaskForce.org

Note: If you are organizing a Call-a-Than Party to modify the text by adding what, when and where.

Sample email to promote Write-a-thon

A genocide is taking place right now against Rohingyas but the world is silent. We must act now. As an organization that prides itself in standing up for the rights of others, we encourage you to do your part to support Burma Task Force this week by joining the write-a-thon from Feb 3 - Feb 11.

If you prefer ink on paper, writing letters to your representatives is a powerful way to have your voice heard. But don't choose one or the other! If you've already called, you should still write to your representatives. It's important to constantly call and write to your representatives to keep this issue relevant, on their desk, and in their face. Below are sample letters that you can customize to your liking.

Please spread the word to your members and encourage them to tell their family and friends as well. Encourage your representative to sign and support (say Senate Bill 2060 if connecting with your Senators or HR. 4223 if writing to your Representative) and that place stronger sanctions on the government of Myanmar. Find your representative at <https://whoismyrepresentative.com/>

You can find more information and resources at BurmaTaskForce.org

Note: If you are organizing a Write-a-Than Party to modify the text by adding what, when and where.

Sample Phone Scripts

Choose any of the following three perspectives when calling.

A sample script from a Humanitarian perspective!

Hello, I am _____, a constituent calling to ask (Name your Senator, or Congressperson) to sponsor and actively support the bills that place stronger sanctions on the government of Myanmar. The current mass displacement of over a million Rohingya men women and children amounts to a genocide.

I would like you to sponsor (say Senate Bill 2060 if connecting with your Senators or HR. 4223 if talking to your Representative)

Rohingyas are indigenous people of Burma living in their ancestral land. They were always citizens, voted and elected their representatives. But a military regime took away their citizenship, created an apartheid type situation and now is committing a genocide.

The situation is very urgent. Suffering is widespread. Please support these bills that pressure the government of Aung Suu Kyi, and please work on a bipartisan basis to pressure the State Department to do much more.

A sample script speaking from a Women's Rights Perspective

Hi, I am _____, a constituent calling to ask (Name your Senator, or Congressperson) to sign and support the bills that place stronger sanctions on the government of Myanmar, which as you know has been ignoring international pressure to restore basic human and civil rights to the Rohingya minority.

I would like you to sponsor (say Senate Bill 2060 if connecting with your Senators or HR. 4223 if talking to your Representative).

52% of Rohingya women interviewed by the UN were victims of sexual violence and rape with the actual number suspected to be higher. The Burmese Military has used rape as a devastating weapon for genocide. A large number of refugees are single mothers since their husbands are murdered. Putting an extra burden on the women.

Please support these and other bills that pressure the government of Aung Suu Kyi, and please work on a bipartisan basis to pressure the State Department to do much more.

A sample script speaking from a Cultural Crisis Perspective

Hi, my name is _____ and I am calling to ask (Name your Senator, or Congressperson) to sign and support the bills that place stronger sanctions on the government of Burma. Burma is ignoring international pressure to restore basic human and civil rights to the Rohingya minority.

I would like you to sponsor (say Senate Bill 2060 if connecting with your Senators or HR. 4223 if talking to your Representative).

Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International has documented that 354 villages have been burned to ashes. Some of these villages including historic cultural buildings and artifacts.

This is a not only a genocide of a people, but a genocide of their language, culture, traditions. The situation is dire and very urgent. Suffering is widespread. Please support these and other bills that pressure the government of Aung Suu Kyi, and please work on a bipartisan basis to pressure the State Department to do much more.

**Sample Organizational Letter 1:
Customize • Customize • Customize**

Form letters don't have an impact unless they are in millions.
Use our fact sheet to find more points which you may want to use.
So customize and personalize!

<Date>

The Honorable Senator _____ <or Representative _____>
<State>

Subject: Support <choose Senate Bill 2060 if connecting with your Senators or HR. 4223 if writing to your Representative).

We are constituents in your district, are alarmed by the Human Rights emergency in Myanmar. The Rohingya minority have been severely persecuted over the last several decades and their rights stripped. This is well documented by the United Nations and international human rights groups. Since August 2017, Over 350 Rohingya villages have been burned by the military, and 650,000 Rohingya have been forced to flee to Bangladesh seeking refuge.

The United States needs to use all resources available to place pressure on the Myanmar government to take a stand against the genocide and on-going persecution. We ask you to **support** <choose Senate Bill 2060 if connecting with your Senators or HR. 4223 if writing to your Representative) and to encourage your state's delegation to strongly support these bills. An earlier Congressional Resolution that passed targeted sanctions against the military, needs to be strengthened further, to elicit action from the government of Aung San Suu Kyi, to correct the wrongs against the Rohingya.

We ask the US government to renew comprehensive sanctions on the Myanmar military and all its business affiliates. The US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley has urged the international community to implement a full arms embargo on the military. Any safe repatriation of the Rohingya refugees requires the establishment of safe zones, and UN peace-keepers. We request your support for timely action on this matter along with the leaders of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

The current Bangladesh-Myanmar plan for Rohingya repatriation is extremely dangerous. Rohingya leaders have not been allowed to be part of these negotiations and are opposed to this plan. The Rohingya voice must be heard and they should be equal partners in any repatriation plan.

The following points should be considered before any repatriation of refugees is planned.

1) Rohingya minorities in Myanmar have been subjected to incalculable suffering, torture, persecution, rape, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, and even genocide as per the UN definition of the term.

2) Since 1982, the Rohingya have been systematically dehumanized and denied citizenship in their own ancestral land. In Myanmar/Burma they are denied basic human rights and freedom including the rights to education, association, health-care, movement and religion, and are traumatized by periodic violent attacks against them.

3) The Myanmar government has denied access to human rights agencies including the United Nations Commission of Human Rights & Human Rights Watch. It has also stopped and denied all relief and humanitarian agencies access to Burmese displacement camps and to Rakhine State in general.

4) The Burmese military cannot be trusted in facilitating the repatriation. These are the same military personnel who burned Rohingya homes and raped Rohingya women.

5) The Myanmar government has not disclosed any plans to resettle the Rohingya in their original homes nor any compensations for their destroyed property. Instead the plan is to send returning Rohingya to concentration camps being set up to be run by the military. This will only instill fear in the hearts and minds of the Rohingya. No plans have been disclosed to bring back stability or peace to the Rohingya.

6) There is no plan disclosed to restore human and civil rights to the Rohingya.

7) We cannot trust a government that expelled 650,000+ people in less than a month, which denies that any Rohingya has been forced to flee and absolves the army of any crimes committed against the Rohingya. We know from many victim interviews that army personnel have raped women and killed men and children.

Speeding the repatriation process may well be sending the Rohingya back to face death at the hands of their original persecutors. This repatriation process should be stopped immediately and the root cause of the crisis resolved, so all parties can live peacefully. If the Rohingya are forced back to Myanmar without security, full human rights, dignity, and citizenship that every person deserves, this ethnic group will become extinct. That is a risk that neither you, I, nor any person of conscience can take!

Thank you for your attention to this very urgent crisis.

Sincerely,

<insert contact name>

<Insert names of the organizations>

<Insert contact information>

Sample Letter 2
on behalf of organizations
Must customize!

January XX, 2018

The Honorable

Member of the U.S. (Senate or House of Representatives)
The Congress of the United States of America
Washington, D.C.

Subject: US Response to Burmese Military Assault on Rohingya

Dear Congressman (or Senator) _____:

We are constituents in your District, who are alarmed by a human rights emergency in Burma/Myanmar. As you know, in that nation the Rohingya minority have been severely persecuted over the last several decades, and all their rights taken away. All of this has been well documented by the United Nations and by international human rights organizations. Now Burma's policy of genocide is clearly speeding up, with over 350 Rohingya villages burned by the military, and 650,000 Rohingya fleeing into Bangladesh since the end of August 2017.

To place pressure on the Myanmar government to stop this, we ask you to support the sanctions in the House (HR 4223) and the Senate (S. 2060) and encourage your state's Congressional delegation to unanimously support these bills. Following the earlier Congressional Resolution (HR-90) that passed overwhelmingly in 2017, these targeted sanctions need to be strengthened further to spark the critical effective action by the government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

A Buddhist supremacist movement (Ma Ba Tha) has allied with the Burmese military to spread anti-Muslim views around the whole country, affecting both Rohingya Muslims and other Muslims as well. These monks and their supporters see all Muslims as a threat, even though the total number is less than 5% in a country of over 50 million and have been prominent supporters of and participants in the violence perpetrated against this religious minority.

While there is a humanitarian crisis with so many refugees in Bangladesh, the current Bangladesh-Myanmar plan for Rohingya repatriation is extremely dangerous. It appears the same Burmese military that has burned Rohingya homes and raped Rohingya women will be facilitating this repatriation. The Myanmar government has not promised to send Rohingya back to their original homes and villages but has instead suggested it will confiscate these Rohingya properties and will resettle Rohingya in camps that continue their persecution.

Therefore, we urge the U.S. Government to renew full sanctions on the Myanmar military and all its business affiliates. U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley has already urged the

Burma Task Force

international community to implement a full arms embargo on the military. In addition, the secure repatriation of Rohingya refugees will require safe zones and UN peacekeepers there. We therefore ask you to contact the leadership and members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee (or Senate Foreign Relations Committee) to express your support for strong and more timely action.

International action has been too slow and cautious. To prevent suffering, as well as further destabilization in the region, it is crucial to quickly de-escalate this situation, address root causes and restore Rohingya rights. Rohingya rights have always been a bipartisan humanitarian issue and action is urgently needed.

Thank you for your attention to this very urgent crisis.

Sincerely,

<insert contact name>

<Insert names of the organizations>

<Insert contact information>

**Sample Letter 3
Must be Customized**

January XX, 2018

The Honorable

Member of the U.S. (Senate or House of Representatives)
The Congress of the United States of America
Washington, D.C.

Subject: US Response to Burmese Military Assault on Rohingya

Dear ___:

As you know, in Burma/Myanmar the Rohingya minority have been increasingly persecuted over the last several decades and their citizenship rights taken away. The Myanmar government has consistently promoted apartheid, exclusion, vilification as well as state orchestrated attacks against the Rohingya. All of this has been well documented by the United Nations and international human rights organizations. Now, with over 650,000 more Rohingya fleeing into Bangladesh in the last several weeks alone, this policy of genocide is clearly speeding up.

With scorched earth policies by the Burmese military, beginning on August 25, 2017, even the Foreign Minister of neighboring Bangladesh now calls it genocide. The only hope for peace

Burma Task Force

seems to be return to the Rakhine Commission recommendations issued in late August 2017 by former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. This is a roadmap to inter-ethnic coexistence, if the Myanmar authorities implement it in good faith and without delay. However, it is the Burmese military that opposes this agreement and not the Rohingya people.

A Buddhist supremacist movement (Ma Ba Tha) has been allied with the military to spread anti-Muslim views around the whole country, affecting both Rohingya Muslims and other Muslims as well. These monks and their supporters see all Muslims as a threat, even though the total number is less than 5% in a country of over 50 million. At the same time a Burmese coalition of 20 political parties led by the former governing military party (USDP) have called on their government to declare to the international community that there is “no Rohingya ethnicity” in the country. A government spokesman has stated that all burned or abandoned villages will be confiscated by the State.

Therefore, in addition to supporting the Senate Resolution we ask that you support stronger US government efforts to stop military and vigilante violence against this religious and ethnic minority. We urge the US government to renew sanctions on the Myanmar military and its business affiliates. US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley has urged the international community to implement a full arms embargo on the military and given the seriousness of the situation we urge your office to support such action by State Department, Treasury and other agencies. In addition, repatriation of Rohingya refugees may require safe zones and UN peacekeepers. You may wish to contact the leaders of the House Foreign Affairs Committee to express your support for strong and more timely action.

There is now over a million Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. To prevent further destabilization in the region, it is crucial to quickly de-escalate this situation and reaffirm commitment to rule of law as well as moral leadership in its relationship with Burma and the region. Rohingya rights have always been a bipartisan issue. Thank you for your attention to this very urgent crisis.

Sign a Resolution

If you're a part of an organization, whether it's a human rights, women's rights, or a religious organization, show your support by signing a resolution. Here's a template you can use to get started. You can then send a copy to your elected representatives and to local media.

Resolution to Support U.S. Sanctions on Myanmar

We, the undersigned, Directors of this organization consent and agree that the following resolution was made on

_____ (date), at _____ (time)
at _____ (location).

We do hereby consent to the adoption of the following: in accordance with State law and the bylaws of this corporation, by unanimous consent, the Board of Directors has decided that:

Whereas it is the responsibility of this board to recognize ([women's rights violations/human dignity and well being/social justice concerns](#)) locally, nationally, and internationally and contribute in spreading awareness to help demote the escalation.

Whereas world leaders and influencers including French President Macron, Bangladesh Foreign Minister Masood, seven Nobel Peace Prize Laureates, the UN High Commissioner of Human Rights, and scholars from Yale University and the US Holocaust Museum have labeled the violence taking place against the Rohingya as an emerging Genocide;

Whereas more than half of the Rohingya women fleeing the Rakhine State of Myanmar have reported being raped;

Whereas Bangladesh and Myanmar have drawn up a Repatriation Plan without consulting Rohingya refugees themselves, and have also excluded the UN agencies tasked with refugee rights and services;

And Whereas similar plans in past years have failed to address the root causes of displacement, especially the need to restore Rohingya rights in Myanmar;

We resolve that it is imperative that all actions be taken to ensure such rights be returned to all Rohingya, whether in Bangladesh or in Burma or other country, with no one left behind as stateless; that US Congress implement the most effective and comprehensive sanctions on the Government of Myanmar; that all nations cease to sell arms to the Myanmar military; and that effective safe zones, peacekeepers, airlifts of food and medicine to isolated Rohingya populations be implemented under United Nations direction and supervision.

We further resolved that genocide cannot be an internal matter, and that such crimes against humanity require an immediate response through the international community to stop all suffering and injustice. We therefore call on all our elected representatives to act accordingly.

Meet with Your Representatives

As stated previously the most important thing you can do is meet with your representatives. If you've written to them and called them, they'll finally be able to put a face to the name. Meeting with your representative underlines how seriously you take this issue and it makes it that much more important for them. Below are more talking points for when you meet with your representative.

If you think you'll need a presentation for when you meet, check out this one we've made:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1UI_XjfkZ_AQCA-LubDH377mGxJK-SN5TKP3NFhPi7E/edit#slide=id.g298e662f65_0_539