



## Genocide Emergency: Myanmar October 2022

Myanmar (formerly Burma) has persecuted the Rohingya minority since it gained independence from Britain in 1948. Burma stripped the Rohingya of their citizenship in 1982. In 2016 and 2017, the Burmese army (the Tatmadaw) launched a genocidal military operation against the Rohingya in Rakhine State, forcing almost one million Rohingya to flee their homes and seek refuge in Bangladesh. In February 2021, the military [seized control](#) of Myanmar's government, triggering mass protests which the military responded to with violent and deadly force. Since the coup, armed resistance forces have formed to fight against military rule, and the military continues to use its genocidal tactics to retain control.

During the Rohingya genocide in 2017, the Tatmadaw attacked and burned hundreds of Rohingya villages, and brutally murdered over ten thousand people. The Tatmadaw also opened fire on fleeing Rohingya and placed landmines near border crossings, where nearly one million forcibly displaced Rohingya were fleeing to Bangladesh. Evidence released in [August 2022](#) revealed how the Tatmadaw planned its genocidal attacks against the Rohingya. The military intentionally destroyed a substantial part of the Rohingya religious and ethnic group. In 2019, The Gambia charged Myanmar with violating the Genocide Convention in the International Court of Justice (ICJ). In 2020, the ICJ issued a provisional order for Myanmar to protect the Rohingya from genocide. In July 2022, the ICJ [rejected](#) Myanmar's objections to the case and will continue to investigate the genocide. The United States formally recognized the genocide in [March 2022](#).

Nearly one million Rohingya refugees now reside at Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.. Refugees in this camp face harsh conditions, and Bangladeshi authorities have [intensified restrictions](#) on Rohingya refugees' livelihoods, movement, and education. The international community has failed to provide adequate humanitarian aid for the Rohingya living in Cox's Bazar. Bangladeshi authorities have relocated 19,000 Rohingya to [Bhasan Char](#) island, despite concerns about its inhospitable and dangerous conditions. Many of these refugees received little information prior to relocation, and some felt coerced to move. The Bangladeshi authorities have also [pressured](#) Rohingya to return to Myanmar. There are over [135,000 Rohingya detained](#) arbitrarily and indefinitely in camps in Myanmar. The estimated 600,000 Rohingya still in Myanmar are subject to persecution and are deprived of adequate food, education, health care, livelihoods, and freedom of movement. If Rohingya refugees are forced to return to Myanmar, they will be subjected to such persecution.

In [February 2021](#), the Tatmadaw overthrew the government and detained Aung San Suu Kyi, Myanmar's democratically elected leader, and other officials. It also declared a one-year state of emergency, which it has since [extended](#) by six months. The Tatmadaw claims, without evidence, that widespread fraud tampered with the results of the November 2020 elections. Commander-in-chief Min Aung Hlaing, a key perpetrator of the Rohingya genocide, is now in power. Suu Kyi and other detained officials are being tried for several crimes, and the court has already convicted Suu Kyi of many of them. The military recently carried out [politically motivated executions](#) of four pro-democracy activists in Myanmar's first use of the death penalty in decades.

In response to the coup, peaceful pro-democracy protestors took to the streets. The military responded with violence and has killed at least 2,300 people and arrested over 15,000 [since the coup](#). After the coup, the military shot [live ammunition](#) at protestors. The army has laid [landmines](#) on a massive scale, including in and around places of worship and [schools](#). The military has [systematically](#) committed rape and other forms of sexual violence, as well as violence against children. Former members of the ousted NLD party established the National Unity Government (NUG) in opposition to the military. The NUG has formed an [armed division](#), the People's Defence Force (PDF), which has clashed with the military across the country. PDF members have allied with ethnic armies that have fought the military for decades.

Myanmar officially recognizes [135 ethnic groups](#), many of which are socially, politically, and economically marginalized. Many of these groups have [fought](#) the Tatmadaw for decades to gain more self-determination, more political representation, or full independence. The Tatmadaw has continually committed grave [human rights violations](#) against these groups. The February coup has intensified ethnic conflicts in Myanmar.

Due to Myanmar's marginalization of ethnic minorities and denial of Rohingya citizenship, and the military's ongoing genocidal campaign against the Rohingya and targeting of pro-democracy activists, Myanmar is at **Stage 3: Discrimination, Stage 8: Persecution, and Stage 9: Extermination. Genocide Watch recommends that:**

- ASEAN should scrap its failed 5-Point Consensus, stop legitimizing the Tatmadaw's rule by allowing them to attend meetings, and formally recognize the NUG instead.
- Bangladesh should allow the Rohingya living in Cox's Bazar access to education and freedom of movement, and the Bangladeshi authorities must stop pressuring Rohingya to return to Myanmar.
- The United States should join The Gambia's case against Myanmar in the ICJ and devote more resources towards helping both the Rohingya refugees and the PDF in its struggle against the Tatmadaw.
- The Tatmadaw must release Aung San Suu Kyi and other detained officials, end its state of emergency, and return power to the democratically elected government, which should recognize the Rohingya's citizenship.