Minorities in Burma:
A Case Study of Rohingya

One thousand Rohingya refugees fleeing violence in Burma turned away
-Photo Courtesy of AsiaNews

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Introduction

On November 3, 2013, the Washington Post reported a single headline: "Aid worker says boat with 70 Muslim Rohingya capsizes off Myanmar; 8 survivors found so far" (Associated Press, 2013). The Rohingya are a group of 800,000 Muslims living predominantly in the Arakan region in western Myanmar, or Burma. Over the last century due to systemic persecution, they have fled the area seeking shelter in any neighboring country that will take them. There are an estimated 1.4 externally displaced refugees, and 180, 000 internally displaced refugees--103,000 of which are children (Our Walls, 2013). The United Nations has stated that Rohingya are one of the most persecuted peoples in the world, and Benjamin Zawacki, a researcher for Amnesty International, has said, "it's part of Myanmar's legal and social system to discriminate against the Rohingya on the basis of their ethnicity…all the facets of life are affected by a system that codifies and makes lawful their persecution and discrimination" (The Rohingya, 2012).

In 2011, Burma's political environment transitioned from military rule to a civilian government; however, despite this transition to a "peoples' democracy," life for Muslims living in Burma has not changed, and the Arakan region, renamed by the Government as Rakhine, is the most dangerous place to be a Muslim, especially if you are a Rohingya. Optimism for a just solution fades as more Rohingya are fleeing the region due to violence, and neighboring countries are tiring from "hosting" thousands of externally displaced refugees, are decreasing aid, and are even turning away groups of desperate and stateless refugees. The situation within Burma is bleaker yet, as president Thein Sein's ultimate solution calls for more refugee camps and official deportation (Mass Graves, 2012; Bahar, 2010). The Rohingya are in dire need of basic services (e.g. healthcare and sanitation), but most of all, they need to be recognized.

Past to Present—The Rohingya Perspective

Burmese history can be broken down into three periods, namely, classical (2500 BC-1886), colonial (1886-1948), and post-colonial (1948-present day). While there have been various ethnic groups striving to ascertain their early existence in Burma, there is evidence of Rohingya existence during each period. Throughout the first three centuries, the Pyu, whom modern Burmese claim as their ancestors, the Mon, and the Arakanese people established influential communities across Burma. The first significant and powerful Burmese kingdom rose in the twelfth century (The Curriculum Project, 2008, p. 7), however, due to geographical divides, many ethnic minorities did not have contact with any of the kingdoms. In 1784, the Burmese Kingdom set out to conquest the mountain communities (Chan, 2005, p. 396); one of which was the Arakan region, and home to Arakanese Buddhists and Muslim Rohingya populations. The Rohingya and other minority ethnic groups living in the region rebelled against the Burmese Empire in long and violent struggles.

The Muslim Rohingya of Arakan state have been present since the eighth century, due to trade and commerce, and currently inhabit the isolated north-western portion of the State, separated from Bangladesh by the Naaf River (Chan, 2005, p. 396). Violent conflicts over the centuries have caused the Rohingya to be further isolated and to flee from their homes: a 957 Mongoloid invasion that divided Arakan state and forced the Rohingya to stay in the North, a 1538 movement of anti-Rohingya sentiment in Arakan that caused many Rohingya to flee into Chittagong (Bangladesh) to save their lives, the 1784 Burmese conquest of Arakan that led to a similar mass migration of Rohingya to Chittagong again (Bahar, 2010). Although the Empire fell to the British in 1886, minority sentiments have never been settled.

Scholars have argued that only after contact with the British did minorities in Burma become a concern (Thomson, 1995, p. 271). During this period there was extensive ethnic mapping of diverse groups under linguistic labels, prompting a greater awareness of distinct identities. The British also divided the country into two primary regions including *Ministerial Burma*, which was located along the central river valley and had Burmese in majority, and *Frontier Burma*, the hilly areas that were home to the majority of tribal minorities.

While the British directly administered *Ministerial Burma*, *Frontier Burma* came under the control of indirect administration. This delineation added to the identity divide, where the ethnic communities in the hilly region (i.e. Arakanese regions) never felt a strong sense of national identity. The divisions were also exacerbated by the British military recruitment policies, which excluded the Burmese and gave preference to the various ethnic minorities. Meanwhile, in Arakan, where the Rohingya population has been predominant, the British started encouraging the flow of agricultural labor from the neighboring Chittagong district in Bengal (present day Bangladesh). The British regarded Bengalis to be more amenable subjects, and local Arakanese Buddhist as defiant. Resentment amongst Buddhists and riots against Indians and Muslims in 1926 and 1938 led to ethnic violence between the Arakanese Buddhists and Muslims during World War II and again in 1948 when British colonization ended. In effect, these policies would not bode well for post-Burma independence, in which the Burmese would hold tight to anti-minority, particularly anti-Rohingya, positions.

Ethnic tensions between Buddhist and Muslim minorities were not the only setbacks in 1948, as the Muslim Rohingya entered the independence era unfavorably with the fledgling government. As reported by Human Rights Watch (HRW, 1996), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) suggests the Rohingya had remained loyal to the British

in exchange for the establishment of a Muslim state in northern Arakan and, therefore, "were on the opposite side of the pro-independence [Arakanese]" (p. 36). In the months prior to independence, the northern Arakan region of Rohingya expressed interest in being annexed by East Pakistan, present day Bangladesh, consequently shaping future Burmese governments' position towards the Rohingya minority: "they had threatened Burma's territorial integrity in the eve of independence and could never be trusted again" (HRW, 1996, p. 37).

In the years following, the Burmese state often shifted between a nonmilitary and military-centered government. The Rohingya have continually been barred from participation in national level political and community spheres. Their properties have repeatedly been confiscated and they have been dismissed from government positions (Bahar, 2010). Since the coup d'état in 1962, in which General Ne Win initiated *The Burmese Way to Socialism,* and through the 1970s, ethnic-minority protests have continuously been crushed, and the Rohingya have been denied citizenship and forced out of Burma as "illegal immigrants." Continued tensions with regional Buddhist Arakanese in the late 1970's, coupled with ongoing government organized campaigns that "combined the destruction of the Rohingya's mosques with the blunter methods of murder and rape" (Omi, 2011, p. 58), fueled the first modern wave of external refugees. The second wave began in the early 1990s, supported by policy rhetoric that the "military leadership does not intend to foster a form of unity in diversity that builds common bonds while acknowledging ethnic differences and claims" (Holliday, 2012, p. 389).

While Rohingya have continued to struggle with numerous issues both in and outside Burma, two long-running themes are brought to the forefront: (1) conflict between Rohingya and Arakanese Buddhists, (2) conflict between Rohingya and the Burmese government. A third theme will need addressing should the Rohingya have the manpower and resources to rebel,

consequently, (3) conflict between rebel Rohingya groups (potentially linked to terrorist organizations) and Burma.

Rohingya and Arakanese:

While Rohingya are generally recognized as a minority in Burma, they have held a majority status in most of the Arakan townships. For instance, in 1977, Maungdaw was 90% Rohingya and Buthidaug was 80% (Kipgen, 2013). It is in such townships where more damage, injuries, and deaths due to ethnic violence against Rohingya have been evident. In June 2012, the tension between Arakanese (Buddhists) and Rohingya (Muslims) in the region rose, as seen in a series of personal and individual-level attacks (e.g. Muslim men raped and killed an Arakanese Buddhist woman leading an Arakanese group to kill ten Rohingya bus passengers) and widespread and systemic-level violent outbreaks (e.g. destruction of Rohingya homes, mosques, buildings, and schools in which numerous victims were injured, killed or displaced). Again in October 2012, a second violent outbreak in the region reported at least eighty causalities with more than 110, 000 displaced (Holliday, 2012; Kigpen, 2013).

Furthermore, some Buddhists monks have taken an active, often violent, and symbolic role in protests against the Rohingya in Burma. Most recently, they have been known for protesting the arrival of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), which intended to initiate Rohingya-inclusion programs. In October 2013, President Thein Sein reneged his agreement to allow OIC to open office in Burma, setting the tone for a deeper and lengthened anti-Rohingya sentiment.

Rohingya and the Burmese Government:

Institutionalized discrimination and physical harassment signal the Government's one-sided violence against Rohingya, and therefore, aids in fueling the Arakanese Buddhists' violent

temperament towards them. Since 1962, the government has banned the building of new mosques, destroyed religious buildings to open a road, closed numerous madrassahs, and discriminated against job applications. The Rohingya are required to obtain special permission to travel across township boundaries, get married, build a home, etc. Furthermore, children are restricted from going beyond primary education and families are not allowed to conceive more than two children (Selth, 2004; BBC, 2013).

If their rights aren't already restricted within their *homeland*, Rohingya are required by law to hold Foreign Registration Cards (provided by UNHCR) instead of *national* identification cards. This policy speaks to the government's official disregard for Rohingya existence in Burma, highlighted by the Citizenship Act of 1982, which lists 135 distinct ethnic groups, none of which are the Rohingya. Most often, Burmese nationalists refer to the Rohingya as illegal Bengali immigrants. A research report finds at least thirteen brutal military operations, including looting, rape, arson, and murder, have been carried out against Rohingya residents; 15,000 fled to Bangladesh in 1975, 200,000 fled in 1978, and today nearly 1.4 million people have been displaced (Selth, 2004), while the Rohingya population within Burma stands at about 800,000. These systemic, direct, and violent acts on behalf of the Burmese government have created deep and strong Rohingya grievances.

Rebellion and Terrorism

Today, the Rohingya desire recognition from the Burmese government and conversely the creation of an independent state, separate from Burma. In pursuance, a number of rebel factions have formed (e.g. Rohingya Independence Force, Rohingya Patriotic Front, Arakan Rohingya Islamic Front, Rohingya Solidarity Organization, etc.). Recently, there has been increasing concern that Rohingya rebel groups are being supported by terrorist organizations

based on Islamic extremism. However, while several rebel organizations have declared jihad against the government, only a small number of these organizations have engaged in armed struggle against the Burmese government, and few have sought international assistance to pursue this tactic. In dealing with rebel groups, analysis practitioners, policymakers, and researchers must be mindful that the rebel groups most often do not represent the Rohingya majority needs.

Rohingya Conflict Analysis—Azar and Gurr Applied

Edward E. Azar (1990) states that, "protracted social conflict occurs when communities are deprived of satisfaction of their basic needs on the basis of communal identity" (p. 12). He further lays out the genesis of protracted social conflict (PSC), which is rooted in the following: (1) colonial legacy, (2) deprivation of human needs, (3) weak role of states, and (4) international linkages. Similarly, looking at the grievance model of conflict proposed by Tedd R. Gurr (1993), he describes four predisposing traits that shape the disadvantaged group's sense of grievance and their potential for acting on it. They are (1) collective disadvantage, (2) group identity, (3) mobilization, and (4) a dominant repressive group. Collectively, these traits lay the foundation for *minority* rebellion. In analyzing the Rohingya conflict in Burma, Azar and Gurr's models have been adopted to explain the crisis (see appendix A).

While the Rohingya conflict meets all preconditions of protracted social conflict as listed by Azar, the only weak link for rebellion is the mobilization of Rohingya and cohesion of their Rohingya identity. If the current evidence of potential Rohingya mobilization is further strengthened, along with a consistent international support system, then there is a greater likelihood of a Rohingya rebellion against the Arakanese Buddhists in their regions, as well as Burma as a whole. Hence, immediate intervention at structural level is suggested to avoid

further escalation into a "war-like" situation (see appendix B). The main characteristics for PSC and potential escalation are discussed below.

Communal Content

As per Azar, protracted social conflict is most likely to arise in a society, which is characterized by a multi-ethnic composition established as a result of colonialism. Ethnic tensions in Burma reflect the divides that were deepened during the British colonial times (Thomson, 1995, p. 270). The communal makeup was also responsible for creating a distinct Rohingya group identity, which highlighted their differences with respect to other non-Rohingya ethnic identities (Gurr, 1993, p. 126). The British divide and rule policy (Ministerial and Frontier Burma) led to differences between the directly administered "core" and the indirectly administered "periphery." The Rohingya, who were in Arakan State (Frontier Burma), were never seen or accepted as a part of the Burmese State, or as a nationalist and pro-independence group (Thomson, 1995, p. 272).

Additionally, the British colonists are also responsible for bringing the first immigrants in from the neighboring Chittagong area (British Bengal) to the sparsely populated Arakan region, for use as agricultural laborers. They regarded the Bengalis as willing laborers, as compared to the indigenous Burmese, who had already revolted against the British twice. In a British report titled, "Report of the Settlement Operation in the Akyab District, Bengalis are referred to as a, "frugal race, who can pay without difficulty a tax that would press very heavily on the Arakanese" (Chan, 2005, p. 401). Between 1871 and 1911, the flow of labor to the Akyab district, which was comprised of the Arakan region, increased by 206%. The Burmese resented the unhindered flow of immigrants into Arakan, which also led to violent riots against

immigrants and Muslims, both in the region, as well as throughout other parts of Burma, specifically Central Burma.

Further cause for ethnic violence was the *Zamindary System* introduced by the British, which granted these Bengali laborers thousands of acres of arable land on ninety-year lease, a move which was resented by the local Burmese (Chan, 2005, p. 403). The legacy of discontent amongst Rohingya minority can also be traced to the Panglong Conference held in 1947, which was held to lay out the future role of ethnic minorities in Independent Burma; the Arakanese (although Buddhists) and the Rohingya were not invited to the conference. This symbolic move by the government set the stage for independent Burma's continued denial of Rohingya existence, as well as their overall disregard for the citizens in the region. The Arakan region's interests were never accommodated in the drafting of the constitution of Burma (Thomson, 1995, p. 902), nor have they been addressed today.

Deprivation of Human Needs

As Azar (1990) argues, deprivation of human needs appears to be a pre-condition of protracted social conflict. The needs are identified as physical survival and overall well-being of individuals and communities. The lack of access to social institutions (e.g. political authority and economic markets) derives challenges for survival and for security needs. In addition, access to political and economic power, which are essential needs, are largely influenced by the degree of acceptance, or recognition, of communities, as defined by their collective identity. Based on this model, the formation of the Rohingya grievances can be explained as rooted in the three main categories of human needs: (1) economic access; (2) political access; (3) identity recognition.

On economic access, numerous restrictions against the Rohingya population have limited their access to economic opportunities. For instance, a harsh discrimination policy against Rohingya job applications has distorted their economic participation in the region. Other restrictions on educational participation (i.e. Rohingya children don't go beyond primary education) have blocked their economic advancement and development. In other words, their opportunity for economic activities and employment is limited to unskilled labor. In addition to limited access to economic power, several Rohingya-specific taxation policies enacted by the government are severely affecting an already poor and underserved population, whom are not even regarded as citizens of Burma.

Rohingya access to political authority and basic participation has been blocked as well. This is exemplified by a ban on the Rohingya right to vote, as well as the right to perform as an acting member in a political party. Article 10 of the Political Parties Regulation Law regulates political participation of non-Burmese citizens (Nai, 2013), however, in May 2013, the Burmese electoral commission expelled six members of a newly formed political party because the commission found the ethnicity listed as "Rohingya" in their official biography.

Deprivation of both economic and political needs is heavily related to the denial of recognition of any Rohingya identity (i.e. lack of identity recognition). Burma as it is, is already ethnically diverse, and while the Rohingya do not come from any single racial or ethnic stock, they have been bound together most by a shared historical pattern of persecution. Furthermore, they are Muslims living in a country which is 90% Buddhist. The Rohingya know who they are, however, they are not recognized as such. As previously mentioned, the official list of ethnic groups that constitute Burma does not include the term, "Rohingya," and the Government regards them as foreigners and/or illegal Bengalis living in Burma. Burmese citizens

countrywide generally take the same stance (Kigpen, 2013). The only instance in which the Rohingya are "recognized" as a collective group is when they are targeted for violent attacks due to their ethnic/religious identity. Additionally, Rohingya are generally ethnically darker than most Burmese, making it easier to target them as victims of violent attacks.

State's Role and Lack of Governance

Azar (1990) states that "deprivation of human needs is a result of the state's failure to protect the minorities" (p. 10), and adds that the "domination of the state is achieved through the distortion of modes of governance" (p. 10). Gurr (1993) reinforces these concepts as he describes how repressive control by a dominant group is a factor that can trigger minority rebellion. In context of the Rohingya, the Burmese State has enforced specific policies to alienate the minority, and ensure they are not recognized as citizens of Burma.

In 1982, the state adopted the Citizenship Law of Burma, which excluded Rohingya from obtaining citizenship or any citizenship rights (HRW, 2013, p. 110). In 2005, the state enforced a discriminatory reproduction policy, which restricts the number of children a Rohingya family can have up to two. In July and October 2012, when the Buddhist monks and local Arakanese nationalists led mass violence against the Rohingya, the state failed to provide any protection despite an advance notice. A report published by Human Rights Watch (2013) states that, "security forces acted more typically as their jailers, preventing access to markets, livelihoods and humanitarian assistance (p. 6). The UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burma, Tomas Ojea Quintana, has received reports of state involvement in some of the violence, adding, "this may indicate direct involvement by some sections of the State or implicit collusion" (HRW, 2013, p. 143). Despite high incidents of violence, the State has failed to set up a credible investigation committee to look into the incidences.

Mobilization

Gurr (1993) explained the salience of group cohesion as one of the most important sources of group mobilization (based on grievance). Due to harsh repression against the Rohingya population, strong grievances have served as a platform for future escalation to intensified violence. Numerous rebel groups have been formed as a manifestation of these grievances, such as previously mentioned, the Rohingya Independence Force or the Rohingya Patriotic Front. These groups have repeatedly reformed, split, and merged, and continue to do so today. This complicated mode of mobilization represents the lack of group cohesion amongst Rohingya. Additionally, there are multiple groups claiming the same name, Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO), and claiming to be one rebel group, (Selth, 2004), however, each groups' objectives vary from separation from Burma to obtaining legal recognition inside Burma (Thomson, 1995).

Another significant aspect of Rohingya mobilization is their displacement population outside Burma (1.4 million). There are considerable numbers of Rohingya refugees in neighboring countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, and Australia; however, their status is almost always very low even in the country to which they fled. Thus, it is not hopeful for Rohingya in Burma to receive substantial support from their diasporas. Likewise, the issue of mass displacement complements the lack of leadership, which the Rohingya experience as a whole identity group. In other words, their mere displacement hinders any chance for a viable and legitimate Rohingya spokesman, therefore, making their challenge for equality all the more difficult to achieve.

Although hope for substantial support from the Rohingya diasporas outside Burma is grim, there is an increasing concern that Rohingya rebels are receiving outside assistance from

Islamic terrorist organizations (Selth, 2004). Quite a limited number of Rohingya Muslim organizations have claimed to armed struggle in Burma, though some radical jihadists have stated active support for Burmese Muslims. Very few Rohingya actually favor linkage with any extremist pan-Islamic group. In spite of this, RSO is reported to have developed relationships with Islamic extremist organizations. While there are several factions claiming the name of RSO, the actual group is formed by Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. Their aim is to establish the autonomous state in Burma and Bangladesh. Their primary funding for operations comes from smuggling guns and drugs between Bangladesh and the Arakan State border. They have also reportedly received assistance from groups in Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. Additionally, some Rohingya in Pakistan are reported to have engaged Taliban activities during the 1990s. While no significance movement by the RSO has been observed inside Burmese borders, this potential connection between Rohingya rebels and global terrorist networks is cause for concern. The rebel groups' connections are a source fostering further mobilization of Rohingya to seek armed struggle.

Conflict Resolution Strategies—Intervention for Rohingya

While a multi-pronged strategy that builds from both the bottom-up as well as the top-down will be needed to address the pervasive and protracted nature of the Rohingya conflict, conflict resolution practitioners (CRP) should focus on human and identity needs. These foundational needs are deep-rooted and underlie the long history of Rohingya oppression. The Rohingya need for political recognition is an important step of identity realization as well, but it can only follow once human and identity needs have been legitimized and addressed. For this reason, CRPs can begin by working to deconstruct the alienation of the Rohingya by their peers

at the same socioeconomic level, such as fellow ethnic minorities (especially Arakan Buddhists) and ordinary Burmese. The spirit of the democratization that Burma has recently undergone may provide the changing atmosphere needed to challenge historical attitudes of Rohingya inferiority, allowing cultural spaces where ideas introduced by CRPs through workshops and dialogues can have the opportunity to permeate society and bring significant change.

To this effect, an intervention approach has been designed that is particularly targeted towards transforming relationships at the grassroots level, drawing upon the strength of conflict resolution practitioners' ability to recognize, legitimize, and address human needs and identity needs in a way that politicians and policy makers may overlook. The first step is two-pronged: (1) to engage with both the Burmese and Arakan Buddhists' perceptions of the Rohingya by partnering with or offering incentives to local media sources to promote campaigns for ethnic harmony (in the strategy as detailed below) and (2) to address the Rohingya memory of oppression by empowering them through technical skills trainings and designing similar ad campaigns to promote hope for future ethnic harmony. The second step, once the perspectives on both sides have been humanized enough to participate in problem solving workshops, is to run these workshops at local levels with the help of local NGOs. The extensive execution of these two steps would provide a sustainable solution to the hostilities, and will pragmatically deconstruct Rohingya alienation. Ideally, as the mentality towards the Rohingya changes, it will spread from the bottom to the top of the power hierarchy, encouraging government and policy makers to pay heed to civilian public opinion for Rohingya equality.

Step 1: Engaging with Perspective

Since the unfavorable Arakan Buddhist and Burmese perspective of the Rohingya is deeply rooted, sustainable transformation will take persistent efforts, which are possible through

locally based NGOs and media sources. At the same time, the Rohingya experience of victimization will also need to be addressed with the same persistence.

To address the Arakan Buddhist and Burmese perspective of Rohingya inferiority, a national advertisement campaign that urges consideration of Rohingya in a human, relatable way will be needed. This advertisement will be adapted for various media forms, such as television, radio, newspapers, public art, and endorsement by famous figures like Aung San Suu Kyi, in order to reach the widest audience possible. Translations in a number of different languages, such as in Burmese, the Arakan dialect, and in various ethnic minority languages, will also be needed. In order to provide incentive for local media sources and local actors to stand behind this advertisement campaign, international media and human rights groups could offer financial incentives and training workshops for running humanizing campaigns. It is important that the campaign portray Rohingya as human beings with families, talents, and dreams in order to elicit compassion among those viewing them. Visions of a united ethnic harmony should also be heavily incorporated into the advertising so that the viewers can envision it. While Arakan Buddhist and Burmese perceptions may not be immediately or drastically altered, the constant presence of this advertising campaign will come to be a part of cultural and social consciousness. In this way, Arakan Buddhists and Burmese men and women can begin to accept the idea of meeting and working alongside Rohingya in problem-solving workshops.

The second prong of this step is to prepare the Rohingya population at the grassroots level for problem-solving workshops as well. The Rohingya needs must be acknowledged – namely, a lack of identity due to their enforced statelessness, and unmet human needs such as the freedom to travel, to pursue an education, and to marry. While lifting these restrictions is beyond the scope of this intervention, similar ad campaigns in the Rohingya language would incorporate

similar scenes of ethnic harmony and cooperation, but would also be tailored to empower the Rohingya. This will be achieved by including advertisements for technical training workshops held by local NGOs. The trainings will teach Rohingya the Burmese language as well as other technical skills, such as owning a business and managing finances. Specific trainings targeted for rebel group members would be held in order to give them alternate avenues to empowerment and expression, such as training them in employable skills while educating them in non-violent methods of resistance. Empowering the Rohingya in this way will give them a greater sense of identity as a people who are able to be successful and proud of their accomplishments. Presenting the goal of ethnic harmony is also meant to normalize the idea of interacting peacefully with the Burmese and Arakan Buddhists so that they may participate in problem-solving workshops as equals.

Once a climate is achieved in which the non-Rohingya and Rohingya parties feel that they can benefit from problem-solving workshops together, as can be assessed by surveys or local NGOs working amongst them, the intervention can proceed to the second step.

Step 2: Problem-Solving Workshops

The introduction of problem-solving workshops must be done by local NGOs so that they can be sustained locally. At first, workshops should be held among Rohingya peers of equal levels – that is, without the presence of higher representatives or politicians. While maintaining an equal level by inviting everyday Rohingya to participate, a representative portion of Rohingya society should be selected as well, including men and women of various ages and of different occupations and experiences. The goal of these workshops will be to agree upon Rohingya goals for future workshops with the Arakan Buddhists and the Burmese, and to find ways to constructively express their grievances. They are to build important skills that will be critical in

future workshops, such as listening to other participants, constructively adding their individual feedback, and working towards a common goal. These smaller workshops are to be repeated among the Arakan Buddhists and the Burmese. Once these three workshops have been completed to satisfaction (whereupon the participants feel emotionally and mentally prepared to participate in a workshop with the other ethnicities), a larger problem-solving workshop can be organized between the three or between the Rohingya and one other ethnic group at a time.

In addition to normalizing civil interaction and building relationships through discussions of Rohingya grievances, non-Rohingya viewpoints, and the possibility of living peacefully together, these workshops are of critical importance in creating an atmosphere of acceptance for the Rohingya. Once this can be achieved at the grassroots level, there is a greater possibility for impactful change to occur at a higher level.

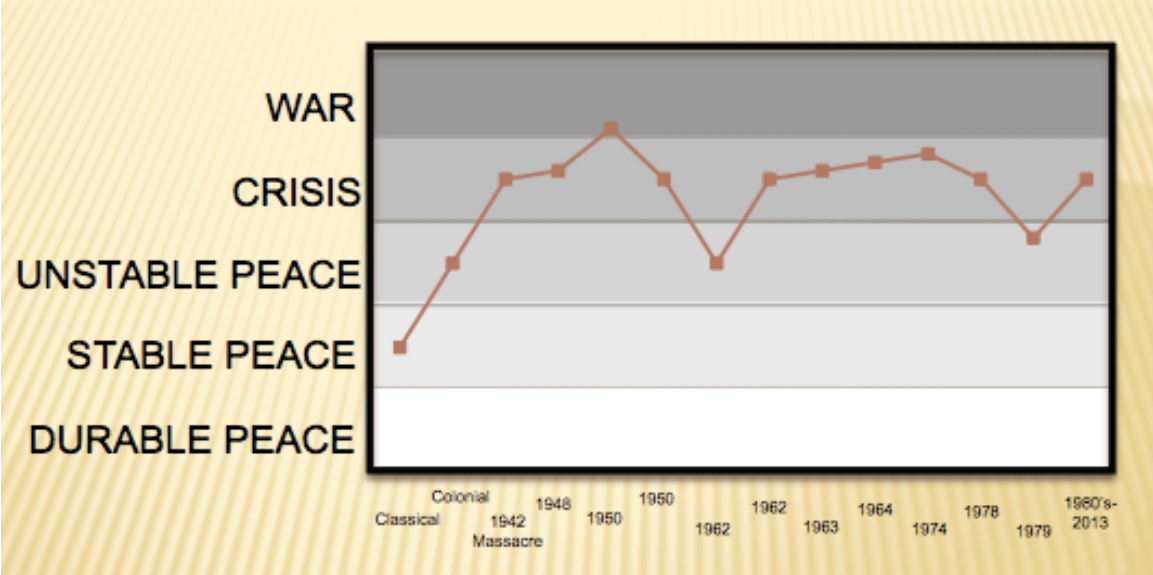
Conclusion

In a panel discussion and photo release entitled "Our Walls Bear Witness: The Plight of Burma's Rohingya," on November 4, 2013, Maung Tun Khin, born and raised in Arakan State, and current president of the Burmese Rohingya Organization UK (BROUK), simply proclaimed "aid is not enough." Attempting to deconstruct the alienation of Rohingya is no easy feat, and there are multiple challenges to be anticipated for a smoother implementation of the suggested intervention. While some of are beyond the scope of this intervention to address – such as Burmese government resistance to third-party interference in the Rohingya conflict – a challenge that can be anticipated and prepared for is the current lack of international media focus on the Rohingya. Without financial, technical, or moral support from international media sources, it would be difficult to create

the incentive and skills training that local Burmese media would need to give the advertisement campaign a strong and sustainable start.

These challenges are being partially met through a growing number of awareness-raising events, such as the one mentioned above, and news coverage overseas, indicating an increasing concern for the Rohingya conflict. However, the challenge of committing resources and efforts to partner with local Burmese media sources remains. A second panelist, Dr. Holly Atkinson, offered a small glimmer of hope as she described the most recent violent outbreak against the Rohingya Muslim population in Burma. Through the detailed violent story, she described how some Buddhist neighbors in the area pulled Rohingya women and children into their own homes for safety. While currently it appears there is no room for Rohingya in the social, economic, or political spheres, stories like these can give conflict resolution practitioners continued optimism for successful intervention and behavioral change in the Rohingya conflict.

Appendix A



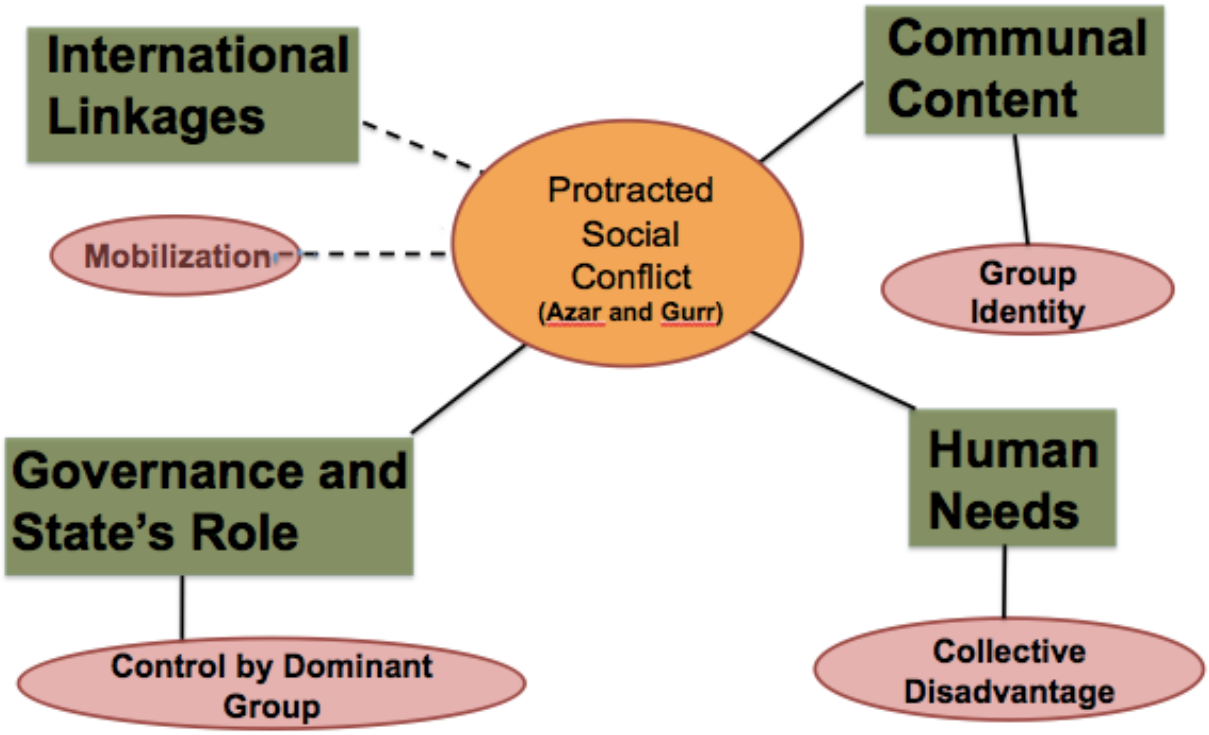
Lund's Conflict Curve
Applied to the Rohingya Conflict

<u>Events plotted:</u>
Classical Burma (Anti-Rohingya sentiment**--**pushed north west region in Arakan)
Colonial Burma (Ethnic mapping**,** military recruitment process, etc.)
1942 (Massacre 100,000 Rohingya)
1948 (British leave**--**continued ethnic violence)
1950a (Rohingya armed resistance against tyranny of Burmese Buddhists)
1950b (Rohingya appeased with some governmental positions)
1962a (Bill for Arakan Muslim statehood)
1962b (No Arakan statehood—military coup)
1963 (Economic/political crackdown--nationalized banks and businesses)
1964 (Rohingya movement restricted)
1974 (Continued eviction campaigns heightened)
1978 (More rape, killings, mass immigration over border--300,000)
1979 (Bilateral agreement, 200,000 returned)
1980's-2013

- Anti-Muslim propaganda
- Marriage ban between Rohingya
- 2 child policy
- Waves of violence
- Refugees increase
- etc.

Note: Appendix A figure shows a protracted social conflict which has reached the brink of war various times. The curve has fluctuated since the classical period; however, it has only reached potential for war in the last century. If the Rohingya were mobilized it would become full-fledge war. The events plotted are not exhaustive.

Appendix B



Adapted from Gurr and Azar's Frameworks
Applied to the Rohingya Conflict

*Note: Appendix B figure shows the adapted version of Azar & Gurr, where the majority of the preconditions for a protracted social conflict and minority rebellion are present in the Rohingya conflict. The dotted lines represent the weak links of mobilization and international linkages. An analysis of the conflict suggests that if the remaining two conditions are strengthened, the conflict has the possibility escalate to a war-like situation, with a potential Rohingya rebellion.

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