

# 2017 STRUGGLE TO STOP GENOCIDE

**BURMA**  
TASK FORCE CANADA

## THANKS TO YOUR SUPPORT

We would like to express our deep appreciation for everyone who took the time to read our Action Alerts, volunteer at our events and donate to our cause. 2017 was our busiest year yet. Thanks to your efforts, we were able to raise awareness of the Rohingya genocide across Canada, and engage Canadian government officials.

As a result of your dedication, the Canadian government:

- Matched \$12.5 million in donations and has dedicated \$50 million to the Rohingya cause.
- The Prime Minister and Global Affairs have strongly condemned Aung San Suu Kyi and the violence perpetrated by the military.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also imposed sanctions on Major General Maung Maung Soe of the Burmese military.

We hope to build on this momentum that you have created for us in 2018 and ensure that the Canadian government and public remain engaged.

## OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

Transport emergency aid for Rohingya in Bangladesh

Establish an UN defended safe zone in Burma

Recognition of the situation as genocide

Stop Rohingya repatriation without security and citizenship

Place full sanctions against the Burmese government

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO STOP THE ROHINGYA GENOCIDE?



## OUR WORK



Put pressure on Canadian government to stop genocide



Awareness Campaigns



On the ground documentation of atrocities

# GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT TO STOP GENOCIDE

Burma Task Force (BTF) ensured that the Rohingya crisis remained on the Canadian government's radar. We testified at a number of parliamentary committees on human rights, met with government officials on the federal provincial, and municipal levels. These initiatives included:

- **April 4th:** BTF Executive Director Ahmed Ramadan testified at the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development (SDIR)
- **August 31st:** More than 30 organizations, including **Al Falah Islamic Centre, Al Nadwa Institute, Anatolia Islamic Centre, Canadian Association of Muslim Women in Law, CSRDN, Dar al-Tawheed, Rohingya Association of Canada, Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies, Noor Cultural Centre** and a number of other organizations. Shortly afterwards, the Government issued several statements highlighting their concern about what was happening.
- **September 1st:** Meeting with Global Affairs representatives to discuss what the Canadian government can do to address the crisis
- **September 21st:** Invited to appear before the SDIR committee to testify again
- **September 27th:** Testified before Canada's Standing Committee on Human Rights
- **October 13th:** Townhall meeting with Iqra Khalid, MP for Mississauga Erin Mills. Executive Director Ahmed Ramadan gave a presentation on what Canadians and what the Government can do to address the crisis.
- **October 19th:** Met with Toronto City Councillors to discuss local initiatives to raise awareness of the Rohingya crisis.
- **October 22nd:** Met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs to discuss the Rohingya crisis.
- **October 23rd:** Meeting with Bob Rae, Special Envoy to Myanmar to outline our expectations of the Canadian Government.
- **November 22nd:** BTF testified before the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development (FAAE).

Through these initiatives, we highlighted the rampant human rights abuses being committed by the Burmese government and military. We also emphasized the importance of recognizing the current situation should be referred to as genocide, because doing so would prompt the international community to take meaningful action.



Executive Director Ahmed Ramadan meeting with Foreign Affairs.

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

BTF organized a number of initiatives to raise awareness among the interfaith community and the general public. Community outreach events included:

- **January 28th:** Presentation at the Ron Kolbus Lakeside Centre organized by the Bangladesh Muslim Funeral & Welfare Organization and HCI.
- **February 19th:** Muslim Family Day Booth + Discussion
- **May 5th:** "Horror and Hate: Persecution of the Rohingya" Photo Exhibit and Lecture. BTF hosted an information session and photo exhibit titled "Horror and Hate: Persecution of the Rohingya" at Mississauga Central Library's Noel Ryan Auditorium. As part a collaborative effort with Canadians in Support of Refugees in Dire Need (CSRDN),
- **May 8th - May 14th:** Photo Exhibit, Kensington Market, Downtown Toronto
- **August 4th - August 6th:** MuslimFest Booth and discussion
- **October 9th:** "Beyond the Talk: What will it take to End Rohingya Genocide" at Maple Banquet Hall in Mississauga, Ontario. We highlighted the importance of advocacy, education, and building strategic relationships are vital for stopping the Rohingya genocide.
- **October 29th:** Jaffari Community Centre presentation
- **November 5th:** Panel discussion at the Noor Cultural Centre
- **November 10th:** Presentation at the Morris Winchevsky Centre to the United Jewish People's Order (WJPO) about how the Rohingya crisis constitutes genocide.
- **November 18th:** Presentation at the Halton Islamic Association in Burlington
- **December 22nd - December 24th:** RIS Booth. BTF distributed flyers and anti-rape booklets that publicize the stories of Rohingya women and girls who were subjected to sexual violence by the Burmese military. We also engaged in a number of meaningful discussions with RIS attendees about the importance of advocacy and what the Muslim community can do to get involved.



Photo Exhibit and Conference with Special Guests from UNHCR and World Renowned Photographers Andrew Day and Liz MYS, May 5th, 2017



We were joined by a number of talented artists from MY Voice at RIS. They will be auctioning off their artwork to support BTF's work.

# AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

We participated in a number of discussion panels across Ontario in a bid to raise awareness of the Rohingya genocide and encourage university students to engage in meaningful action to stop the genocide.

In November 2017, Burma Task Force invited the esteemed Dr. Maung Zarni on the “Rohingya in Peril” tour across Canada. A long time genocide scholar and human rights activist, Dr. Zarni embarked on a four-day tour in which he discussed the ongoing persecution the Rohingya have endured.

Dr. Zarni spoke passionately about the Rohingya crisis with the unique perspective of a Burmese and Buddhist. He explained how the Burmese government constructed a racist narrative which classified the Rohingya people as a “fake ethnicity” and stripped them of their identity. He discussed how these inhumane crimes against the Rohingya have been committed systematically over four decades and how they clearly amount to genocide.



Dr. Zarni at Toronto City Hall.

- **November 21st:** Concordia University - Montréal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies, (Montréal)
- **November 21st:** Carleton University (Ottawa)
- **November 23rd:** Toronto City Hall (Toronto)
- **November 24th:** University of Toronto (Mississauga)

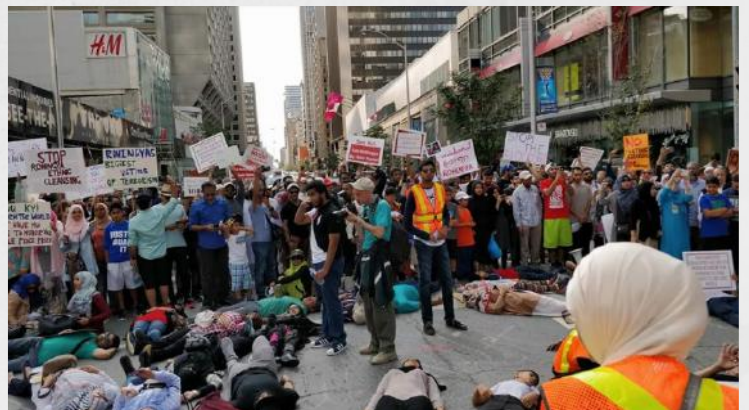
We would like to express our deepest appreciation for Dr. Zarni and the institutions that hosted this tour.

# DEMONSTRATIONS

- We held demonstrations on **June 5th** in Toronto in protest of Aung San Suu Kyi's visit to the city.
- On **September 16th**, BTF held a rally in Toronto to demand an end to the violence against the Rohingya. Present at the rally was Canadian Foreign Minister, Chrystia Freeland. Minister Freeland acknowledged for the first time that what has been happening to the Rohingya people "looks a lot like ethnic cleansing", which echoed the earlier words of Zeid Ra'ad al-Husseini, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Toronto City Councillors Kristyn Wong-Tam and Neethan Shan was also present at the rally. Both Councillors said that the crisis deeply resonated with them and called on Canadian politicians to act.



Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chrystia Freeland attends the BTF rally on September 16th and condemns the crisis.



Dedicated protestors participated in a lie in at the rally.

# MEDIA COVERAGE

- **March 4th**: Interview with Muslim Perspectives Radio Show
- **June 22nd**: CBC interview in French
- **July 16th**: TAYO Collective podcast discussion of the Rohingya crisis
- **September 13th**: Feature on Toronto 360 TV
- **September 16th**: CBC, "Violence against Rohingya 'looks a lot like ethnic cleansing,' Freeland says"
- **September 16th**: CTV, "Hundreds in Toronto protest Rohingya persecution in Myanmar"
- **September 16th**: CTV, "Canada to speak up for Rohingya at UN: Freeland"
- **September 16th**: Sympatico, "Les violences contre les Rohingyas ressemblent à un « nettoyage ethnique » dit la ministre Freeland"
- **September 18th**: Ahmed Ramadan published an Op-Ed piece in the Toronto Star titled "What Canada Must Do about the Human Rights Crisis in Myanmar"
- **September 20th**: CBC Metro Morning Interview

# WHAT TO EXPECT IN 2018

We are planning on expanding our coalition of organizations and expanding our government outreach program. Through advocacy work, we will be spearheading several campaigns to encourage the Canadian Government to take an active stance in the international community and oppose the repatriation agreement signed between Bangladesh and Burma.

We have also been working on expanding our coalition membership to create a stronger base of support for the Rohingya cause among Canadian organizations. We are excited to announce that the following organizations have joined the coalition:

- Studio.89
- Jafari Islamic Centre
- Pickering Islamic Centre
- Sayeda Khadija Centre
- University of Québec MSA
- Concordia University MSA
- York University MSA

We look forward to working with them throughout the year to stop the Rohingya genocide. Keep a look out for our expanded coalition throughout the year!

## VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME & TALENT WITH BURMA TASK FORCE

Burma Task Force is the only organization with a dedicated staff working exclusively to save Rohingya lives by stopping the genocide.

This critical work of education and advocacy would not be possible without volunteers like you.

[>> Sign Up Today To Volunteer](#)

## DONATE TO HELP STOP THE ROHINGYA GENOCIDE

Your donations are helping to educate Canadians, change public policy, keep media in check and most of all, helping to end the genocide of the Rohingya.

[>> Donate Today](#)

