



# No Reason To **Hide** Our **Faces**

The Rohingya Rape Victims of the Burmese Military

[www.BurmaTaskForce.org](http://www.BurmaTaskForce.org)

**BURMA**  
**TASK FORCE USA**

Assalamu Alaikum

Our world has become a painful place for Rohingya women.

The Rohingya rape victims often suffer in silence and isolation, as their pain is very personal, especially for the pious religious teenagers who observe hijab.

And the Burmese military knows it. So they take scores of Hijabis to a village masjid and gang rape them, including girls as young as 11, while their mothers, sisters, and other women are forced to listen to their anguish and cries.

This is their calculated method of forcing Rohingya women out of their homes in Burma. An estimated 80% of all Rohingyas in Burma have fled their country.

To add to the trauma, their men are either killed or imprisoned.

I have met many of these brave sisters featured in this booklet who declared that they don't want to hide their faces and remain silent. They want the world to know what has happened and what is being done to them.

It is only because of their bravery, we found the courage to share their photos and their stories.

May God bless them in this world and the world to come.

May the world hear their cries for justice.

About 20 years ago, when 50,000 Muslim women were raped in Bosnia, Muslims in America came together to form the Bosnia Task Force USA. Thanks to our campaign, in partnership with the National Organizations of Women, we were able to get rape declared a war crime through the United Nations. It was the first such declaration in the international law, thanks to our efforts.

I am asking you to read this document and then volunteer to help these survivors of rape and genocide. I look forward to hearing from you.

I am requesting your help in creating a movement for Rohingya women.


Abdul Malik Mujahid

Chair, Burma Task Force USA

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*“Four soldiers attacked and suddenly entered the house. One grabbed the children, two of them grabbed each of my arms.... They were armed with rifles, pistols, small and long knives, and some were wearing ammunition belts”*

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**T**he United Nations recently found that more than half of the refugee women fleeing Burma whom they interviewed were raped. <sup>[1]</sup> These women and children are part of a vulnerable and voiceless Muslim minority called the Rohingya. They are indigenous people of Burma living in their ancestral lands. Since 1982, they have been subjected to a slow genocide, after the Burmese military regime stripped them of their citizenship, although they were always citizens.

Burma's military is using mass rape and sexual violence as an official strategy to further terrorize an ALREADY dehumanized population.

And they have succeeded. About 700,000 Rohingyas have been forced into becoming refugees in Bangladesh in recent months. Adding to the trauma and stigma of rape is the loss of the income-earning men, as majority of these new arrivals are women and children. 144,000 women are single mothers; 43,000 parents are missing; 129,000 are in Burmese concentration camps and about 100,000 men have been killed or are unaccounted for.

The UN Investigators noted that the actual number of rape victims is likely higher than their report suggests.

## **Rape in the mosque to create trauma**

Burmese soldiers have unleashed this sexual violence to create lasting trauma. The sexual violence does not appear to be random or opportunistic, but is part of a coordinated and systematic attack against Rohingya because of their ethnicity and religion. UN investigator Ilona Alexander stated:

“They wanted to terrorize the population, so they took some women into ... mosques and gang raped them while other women were outside and listening. They wanted the women outside to know what was happening so they were terrorized. They would have around eight women and 20 men from the military in the mosque, and the men would take a turn with each woman.” <sup>[2]</sup>

The UN reports one mother's account of how her five-year-old daughter was trying to protect her from rape when a soldier slit her throat. In another example, an eight month-old baby was killed while his mother was being gang-raped by five soldiers.

## Testimony of an 11-year-old rape victim

While the majority of rape victims interviewed were 20 to 30 years old, the UN team met with several young rape victims, the youngest one was 11 years old.

Here is how the UN investigator noted the trauma of an 11-year-old rape victim:

... the military came to her house and badly beat her parents. After this incident, her father went into hiding from the military and took her two older sisters with him so that they would be safe. He left the girl at home with her mother and two little brothers because he thought the military wouldn't hurt children.

The military came back to their house twice. The first time, the military came and removed her clothing and kicked her. After the clothing was removed and the girl was beaten, the military suddenly left. The next day they returned with seven soldiers and removed the mother from the house. The soldiers locked themselves in a room with the girl and gang raped her. The girl told me that she doesn't even know how many of them raped her because she fell unconscious at times and awoke bleeding and injured after.<sup>[3]</sup>

## Here is what happened to Sister Fatimah

Fatima, a Rohingya woman in her 20s, described an assault by soldiers against her and her young children in Kyet Yoe Pyin village in mid-November in Burma. She said:

Four soldiers attacked and suddenly entered the house. One grabbed the children, two of them grabbed each of my arms.... They were armed with rifles, pistols, small and long knives, and some were wearing ammunition belts.

My eldest [5-year-old] daughter screamed and said, "Please leave us." ... So they killed her ... with a machete. They slaughtered her in front of me.

When they killed her, I became very upset. [The soldiers] said many things to me that I could not understand and put a gun to my head.... They kicked me in my hip and back, and beat me on the head with a wooden stick.

[Then] one of the soldiers tore off my clothes. Two soldiers raped me, one by one. They were about 30 to 35 years old. They touched too many

“ I started bleeding. When I started severely bleeding from my genital area and leg, they left me. I became senseless. When I came to, I found my clothes torn around me. I found my skirt and wrapped my body in that. ”

places in a very painful way – they touched my chest, they touched my vaginal area. They did it quickly, they only opened their zippers – they didn't take their pants off. When another soldier tried to rape me, I resisted. Then they burned my leg with plastic, they put it out on my leg.<sup>[4]</sup>

### **The gang rape of 15 women as told by 20-year-old Ayesha:**

Ayesha, a woman in her 20s, told the following to Human Rights Watch after fleeing to Bangladesh from her ancestral home in Pyaung Pyit village, Burma:

They gathered all the women and started beating us with bamboo sticks and kicking us with their boots. In total they beat about 100 to 150 women, young boys, and girls. After beating us, the military took me and 15 women about my age and separated us [from the group].

They took us to a nearby school, kept us in the burning sun, standing in the field in front. They made us turn to face the sun. Then three soldiers took me to a nearby pond.

When they prepared to rape me, they opened their pants. All I could notice was their underwear. When...I resisted with my leg, one of them punched me in the eye.... One of them kicked my knee and I got hurt. They also bit my face and scratched me with their nails.

I started bleeding. When I started severely bleeding from my genital area and leg, they left me. I became senseless. When I came to, I found my clothes torn around me. I found my skirt and wrapped my body in that.<sup>[5]</sup>

## Stand with the Victims of Rape

Rape committed during genocide is systematic and intended to terrorize the population, break up families, destroy communities, and, in some instances, change the ethnic make-up of the next generation. 48,000 children of rape will be born.

Burma Task Force believes that the rapists should be held accountable and assist the victims in their quest for justice.

We record and preserve the testimonies of Rohingya rape victims.

The Burma Task Force legal team is preparing their cases for the International Criminal Court (ICC). The rapists must be arrested, tried and the victims compensated, provided security and restoration of citizenship.

## Sustain The Rape Support Network in Rohingya Camps

The Burma Task Force Rape Support Network gives survivors a safe place to share their trauma.

To deter human trafficking, we have a few training centers in the refugee camps where survivors learn to sew and are equipped with a sewing machine after training. We need to expand this network.

## Here is What Volunteers can do

Media rarely covers the Rohingya genocide. Raise the profile of this issue and activism by gaining media attention through letters to the editor, op-eds and blogs.

- Write about the genocide
- Blog about the genocide
- Vlog, Facebook LIVE, Insta-Live, Periscope, Snap Chat about the genocide- use #SaveRohingyaNow
- Invite interfaith allies to join FaithCoalition.org to stop this genocide.
- Distribute our flyers and action alerts online and in print.

## Volunteer to #SaveRohingyaNow

- Give the gift of your time to the Rohingya, the most persecuted minority in the world today.

## Write A Cinci Campaign

Cinci means letter in Rohingya language. Write letters of support to survivors of rape and genocide and we will have them translated and sent to Rohingya sisters.

Email your letters to [cinci@burmataskforce.org](mailto:cinci@burmataskforce.org) (Do note there are teenagers, as well as mothers who are raped).





# is that you can do about it

## **Women volunteers needed**

Please engage other women and women's groups, especially those organizations focused on sexual violence against women and girls that can help to raise awareness and mobilize change.

## **Organize Save Rohingya Now Events in Your Community**

Start a Burma Task Force Support Group in your city. Contact [hena@justiceforall.org](mailto:hena@justiceforall.org) and our Department of National Outreach can help you start a group.

Organize programs in your school, college, house of worship, or community. Burma Task Force can help with speakers, information or publicity. We can help connect you to Rohingya leaders or to other experts.

Host a Film Screening: Film screenings are a great way to educate your community and provide the perfect opportunity for you and your community to get more involved.

Plan a Fundraiser: Fundraisers are great ways to raise awareness about the Rohingya genocide and support our work.

## **Join our 10 Minutes a Day Campaign.**

- Sign up at [BurmaTaskForce.org](http://BurmaTaskForce.org) and receive our weekly newsletter and action alerts with the most important strategies and actions of the week.
- Call your elected officials. Don't just call; engage them by following up multiple times. Schedule a meeting with your elected representative to discuss your concerns.
- Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Youtube and Twitter and share our content.

## **Spiritual Activism**

- Make sincere supplication to God for the relief of our persecuted brothers and sisters in Burma.
- Encourage your khateeb to remind the congregation of the plight of Rohingya. Talking points can be found on the Burma Task Force website resources page.

## **Help End Genocide**

We are focused on stopping this genocide.

We are determined to hold the culprits accountable.

Rohingya must return with safety and citizenship to their own ancestral lands.

We are one people. Please support this united effort recognizing our common humanity.

Burma Task Force is a united effort of about 40 Muslim organizations.

Saving lives is a Zakat eligible category. Donate today!

“ Four soldiers attacked and suddenly entered the house. They instantly shot my younger sister in the head. While [another sister was] running away, they shot [her too]. ”

## The Story of Sister Amina

Amina, a woman in her 20s from Hpar Wut Chaung village, Burma, said that soldiers raped and killed her 13-year-old sister during a raid on their home in early December, as well as killing five other siblings. She said:

When they entered [our house], our brothers were sleeping on the veranda, and we [five sisters] were in the bed. They shot and killed my [brothers] and held the girls so they couldn't move.

They took my other [13-year-old] sister to another room and raped her there. We heard [her screaming]. She screamed, "Someone save me! He's trying to take my clothes off!" What I saw from outside is that 10 more people entered that room with my sister.

Amina and her father managed to escape and fled to a neighboring village. There, her next-door neighbor who also fled told her that she had found Amina's sister dead, without any clothes on.

## The Story of a 40 Year Old Sister

Noor, in her 40s, said that about 20 soldiers stormed her home in the border town of Shein Kar Li in early December, and grabbed her and her husband:

Two of them held my arms tightly. I couldn't move. They took me in the yard of the home. Another two put a rifle to my head, tore off my clothes, and raped me.... While they held me, my husband was also held. They slaughtered him in front of me with a machete. Then three more men raped me. I began bleeding severely. After some time, I didn't know what was happening, I fell unconscious.... I regained consciousness the next morning.

They instantly shot my younger sister in the head. While [another sister was] running away, they shot [her too].<sup>[6]</sup>

Terrorizing through rape is a part of normal Burmese military operations. The Women's League of Burma has documented more than 100 cases of rape against Kachin and Shan people. A good number of Kachin and Shan people are Baptist Christians while others are Buddhists. Some involved children as young as eight. Nearly half of the cases were gang rapes.<sup>[7]</sup>

## Psychological Torture

In several situations, psychological torture was also inflicted on Rohingyas. The army forced victims, including small children, to watch their family members suffer. In many cases, individuals were beaten, sexually abused, raped or killed in front of their relatives, with the intention of inflicting severe mental torture, humiliation, and instilling fear.

A 22-year-old resident of Myaw Taung informed the UN that “after entering our home, the army raped my two sisters, 14 and 17 years old, before the eyes of my elderly parents. They were raped collectively by at least eight army men. They had severely beaten my parents prior to raping my sisters.”


Many victims also described being taunted while they were being beaten, raped or rounded up, such as being told:

- “You are black Bangladeshis and you should go back”
- “What can your Allah do for you? See what we can do!”
- One victim said “I only understood one word ‘kular’ that they were repeating.” (Kular is the equivalent of the n-word in the Burmese language. It is used for darker-skinned Rohingya people)
- “you Muslim bitch”

## No Help for Rohingya Rape Victims

Rape causes severe trauma. It can include unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. In Bangladesh, these challenges are further exacerbated by the scarce medical services available to Rohingya women. Since the men of the family are lost or missing, and there are hardly any services for refugees living in plastic and bamboo huts, many have already become victims of human trafficking.

Donate online at [BurmaTaskForce.org/donation](https://BurmaTaskForce.org/donation)



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*“ [Then] one of the soldiers tore off my clothes. Two soldiers raped me, one by one. They were about 30 to 35 years old. They touched too many places in a very painful way. When I resisted. Then they burned my leg with plastic, they put it out on my leg. ”*

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# Donate Today To Stop Genocide of Rohingyas

## ZAKAT / DONATION FORM

Total Cash on Hand and in Bank Accounts	Value
Current Value of Gold and Silver (jewelry is not subject to Zakat unless its amount is excessive or it was purchased for business)	\$
Expected Receivables (such as loans to others, refundable deposits, tax refunds, etc.)	\$
Current Value of Stocks and Shares	\$
Retirement Accounts and Pension Plans (total amount you can withdraw minus penalty and taxes)	\$
Business Cash on Hand and in Bank Accounts	\$
Business Inventory (wholesale value of inventory)	\$
Total Zakatable Wealth	\$
Total Zakat Due = 2.5% of Zakatable wealth (if your total zakatable wealth is less than \$3,960, no zakat is due)	\$

My enclosed check is made payable to Burma Task Force.

It is zakat

Please charge my credit card:

### I Would Like To Support To Stop Rohingya Genocide

**I would like to make a one-time gift of:**

\$10,000  \$5,000  \$2,500  \$1000  \$500 OTHER \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**I would like to make a monthly gift of:**

\$500  \$250  \$100  \$50  \$25  \$10 OTHER \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*I would like to submit my payment as follows:*

- CHECK ENCLOSED - payable to (company name)  
 MONTHLY CREDIT CARD PAYMENT - complete section below  
 CREDIT CARD - complete section below

CREDIT CARD #: \_\_\_\_\_ C.V. CODE: \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

### PERSONAL INFORMATION (a donation receipt will be sent to this address)

FIRST NAME		LAST NAME	
EMAIL			
CELL PHONE		WORK PHONE/HOME PHONE	
STREET ADDRESS		APT OR SUITE#	
CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE	

Justice For All (Burma Task Force) is an IRS approved 501c3 non-profit organization.

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“Rape is used in my country as a weapon against those who only want to live in peace, who only want to assert their basic human rights. Especially in the areas of the ethnic nationalities, rape is rife. It is used as a weapon.”  
(Suu Kyi before she came into power).<sup>[8]</sup>

Now as leader of the government, she is silent about the rape of Rohingya women. Meanwhile, her government officers say that the reports of rape are incorrect since Rohingya women are too ugly to be raped.

## About Burma Task Force

Burma Task Force is a coalition of 38 American and Canadian national, regional, and professional organizations working to stop the genocide of the Rohingya people.

Burma Task Force is housed in Sound Vision, whose president, Imam Abdul Malik Mujahid, chairs the Task Force. Justice For All, a member of the coalition and a 501 (C) 3 organization, is the legal and fiscal agent of the Burma Task Force.

### Notes and references.

#### No reason to hide our faces:

The photos used in this brochure are those of actual Rohingya rape victims. We are printing them with extra ordinary reluctance but with respect to their insistent desire for the world to know what happened to them. They said that “we have no reason to hide our faces.”

Quotes are from victims as reported by the Human Right Watch and the United Nations. However, these quotations are

not attributed to the rape victims images used in this brochure.

- 1 <https://tinyurl.com/UNrapeReport>
- 2 <https://tinyurl.com/RapeTrauma>
- 3 ibid
- 4 <http://tinyurl.com/Rohingya2>
- 5 ibid
- 6 ibid
- 7 <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-25730758>
- 8 <https://youtu.be/SOHEosj-M5U>

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*“Rohingyas are indigenous people of Burma living in their ancestral lands. However, the Burmese government cancelled their citizenship in 1982 and have since launched many ethnic cleansing campaigns which seven Nobel peace laureates have declared amount to a “textbook case of genocide.”*”

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# **BURMA**

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Burma Task Force is hosted by Sound Vision.  
The fiscal agent of Burma Task Force is Justice For All

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