

900,000 ROHINGYA REFUGEES: THE MOMENT WHEN HUMANITARIAN SPIRIT FAILED

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In the face of the historical disasters experienced by humanity, a majority of the world has developed some sort of reflex to 'close their eyes' and 'play ostrich'. Many leaders, administrators, and representatives around the world, prefer to remain indifferent and unresponsive to these catastrophes. When asked about what the EU should do regarding the situation in Myanmar, High Representative, Federica Mogherini, gave a marked answer: "[I tend to avoid answering questions that are not related to the agenda we had.](#)"

The answer also revealed an important truth: Today, the world agenda is shaped only by the interests and problems of the powerful. Those who are oppressed are often left alone with their own problems if they are not rich, have no oil or natural resources, or do not have any relevance to serving the interests of the powerful.

Ignoring, or underestimating, the inhumane practices Muslims are subjected to has become an ugly tradition, particularly in certain circles. Problems that could easily be solved with simple interventions, with little cost and effort, continue to grow exponentially behind a collective wall of nonchalance. The disastrous events taking place in Rakhine, Syria, Africa or Southeast Asia, continue to find a place in world news reports every day, as a shame on humanity.

Most of the international institutions that could solve the problems of humanity are far from fulfilling their functions. For instance, the UN content themselves with simply condemning the incidents in Rakhine with a Security Council Resolution. They do not produce any concrete or constructive solution to the massacres and persecution the Rohingya Muslims—which the UN itself defines as "the most persecuted minority" —are subjected to.

As is known, the Rohingya Muslims living in Myanmar's Rakhine state have been subjected to severe oppression and persecution for nearly 40 years. They are continuously forced out of their homes by the Myanmar government and the army. The oppression, persecution, massacres and policies of exile are being systematically escalated by the Myanmar government since 2012, and have reached an unprecedented form of outright ethnic cleansing in the last two years.

Despite this tragedy, there hasn't been a concrete solution, or a form of intervention, offered by the international community, except for condemnations and calls for calm. The deplorable situation of 900,000 Rohingya refugees, who are fighting for survival in inhumane conditions in Bangladesh, is still being ignored.

In today's world, the money spent on areas such as luxury consumption, entertainment, sports, etc., reaches hundreds of billions of dollars each and every year. For example, US consumers alone spent 30.4 billion Dollars on video games in [2016](#). Football clubs in the UK Premier League spent 1.47 billion Pounds on player transfers in the summer of [2017 alone](#). If these numbers are extended

across the globe, and over a longer period of time, it's hard to imagine the astronomical numbers that would emerge.

Indeed, what is meant here is not that sports, entertainment or luxury spending are wrong. However, the importance and sensitivity that should be conferred to the human life, and to the right to live with dignity, must at least be at this magnitude.

To view this with a few more striking figures... Every year, ONE THIRD of the total amount of food produced for human consumption all over the world—roughly 1.3 BILLION tons per year—is wasted. The cost of wasted food is around \$680 billion per year in industrial societies and \$310 billion in developing [societies](#). The money the world spent on weapons in 2016 alone was \$1.57 [TRILLION](#).

However, with even a very small fraction of this money, it would be possible, easily, to ensure the survival of hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims, enabling them to maintain their lives in humane conditions. Likewise, the starvation of millions of children in Africa could be easily prevented. Furthermore, Africa could be made a self-sufficient continent in a very short time.

The Islamic world is also exhibiting the same indifference, and negligence, towards humanitarian issues today. Muslims, who have been tortured and forced to leave their homelands, for decades in Rakhine, are not being protected sufficiently by Islamic countries. However, it is unthinkable for a Muslim to remain as a mere spectator, or to look after his own interests, while his brothers are suffering, being persecuted, and fighting for survival in hunger and poverty. That is why Turkey's bringing the issue to the agenda (in contact with other world leaders), searching for solutions for the persecution in Rakhine in the UN meeting, and launching of humanitarian campaigns, are of crucial importance.

For now, the situation might seem a bit pessimistic. But a new generation, sensitive towards and troubled with the problems of the world, and most importantly determined to fight to correct them, is being raised and this is very promising. This generation, who successfully uses technology and social media to make their voices heard, is becoming a great force that improves and becomes more organized day by day. Pointing this major force in the right direction is very important. It would not be possible for governments to maintain their indifference, as long as the masses raise their voices.

The Rakhine crisis is only one of the ongoing human tragedies in the world. People in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, Libya, East Turkestan, Palestine, Somalia, Asia and Africa, try to survive among similar kind of tragedies every day, living in pain and suffering. Seas, rivers, mountains, forests and deserts continue to be the final resting place of refugees. It seems impossible to talk about justice and humanity in the world unless people start acting in line with their good conscience, not personal interests. The suffering in the Islamic world will not end unless Muslims put an end to sectarian divisions and conflicts, and unite as a single force.

Therefore, it is imperative that people with morals, good conscience, and noble spirit, people who derive joy from the happiness, comfort and peace of others rather than their own, start to have a voice. The salvation of the oppressed can

only be 'on the agenda' of the world if such beautiful, intelligent, loving and compassionate people become the leaders of countries and administrators of international institutions. Only then, can problems such as what the world is now seeing be tackled and peace and prosperity be brought to the downtrodden.

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<https://web.archive.org/web/20180315204245/http://gidss.com/content/900000-rohingya-refugees-moment-when-humanitarian-spirit-failed>

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