

# What if you didn't have even an inch of land to live on in this world?

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## What if you didn't have even an inch of land to live on in this world?

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A humanitarian drama is being acted out before the eyes of the whole world in the recent weeks. It again involves refugees, Rakhine and thousands of innocent, defenseless people abandoned to die. More than 8,000 people, including Rakhine Muslims, fleeing Myanmar and Bangladesh are being kept on the high seas of Southeast Asia in order to prevent them from entering Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia. Some of these people, who have spent many, many days in hunger and thirst, are being held in temporary camps in Indonesia and sports halls in Malaysia. The thousands of refugees being kept on the high seas are facing the threat of hunger and disease.

Put yourself in these people's place for one moment. Imagine you have no right of citizenship in the country you call home; you have refugee status in the lands you were born and you have to live in concentration camps; you cannot send your children to school; your wife or daughters may be raped at any moment yet you are unable to protect them; you have to pay a usurious tax to get married or for every

child you have; you cannot be treated when you are ill; and that you are oppressed, imprisoned or killed simply for the sake of your religion. What would you do then? You would of course seek refuge in some other country and would look there for conditions in which you and your family can live in humane conditions.

Or what would you do if you had given all the money you had managed to save up in your state of poverty to human traffickers in order to escape that misery and mistreatment but had been abandoned in the middle of the sea? What would you do if you were surrounded by water but could not drink a drop, if you had no food, if you had to fight the ocean waves by night and the burning sun by day, and you were cast adrift for days in a boat so packed full of others you would have to keep motionless to stop it sinking? Then what would you do if just as you were at death's door you saw land in the distance and rapturously thought that you are saved, but then were told "We will not accept you in our land"? That is just what is happening to Rakhine Muslims.

There are vast tracts of empty land in the world, yet the whole world fails to find a piece of land to accommodate this handful of people. What is even more tragic – and outrageous – is that while food and humanitarian aid is thrown to these people from helicopters, as if they were animals in a zoo, these people who have gone hungry and thirsty for days on end have to jump into the cold seas to get hold of it. Those migrants who were rescued just as their boats were about to sink and were allowed to stay in warehouses in the Indonesian port of Langsa still have to fight one another to grab even a mouthful of food: One hundred people died in that inhuman competition. No matter how you look at it, the situation is gut-wrenching. Is it not now the time for the world to say 'Enough!' and find a solution? Would sending the Rakhine Muslims back where they came from, as proposed by Malaysia and Thailand, be a solution? Of course, not. On the contrary, it means sending them back to their deaths. Nobody with even a shred of human dignity would allow themselves to be an accessory to such murder. If these people were given a piece of empty land, instead of being sent back, with soil to grow things in and animals to raise, they can fend for themselves, as they have for centuries, without being a burden on anyone.

Many Western countries react very strongly when there are restrictions on human rights and freedoms in a country. However we see no noteworthy efforts on behalf of the Rakhine Muslims, whose plight is truly dreadful.

Western public opinion, which moves heaven and earth when nature is exposed to any harm – which musters prodigious technical facilities to save a beached dolphin and is so scrupulous when it comes to maintaining areas of greenery – needs to exhibit a great deal more sensitivity and good conscience when it comes to the lives of the people in question. If petty tyrants in countries such as Burma are not subjected to political or social pressure from the international community, they will persist in, and even step up, their oppression and persecution. The first stage in putting a stop to this consists of making everyone aware of what is going on. Activities that prick the conscience of the global public and that describe the persecution taking place in an objective and appropriate manner will clearly spur Western public opinion into action, and that would no doubt be exceedingly alarming for regimes such as that in Burma (Myanmar).

The Islamic world must also act in a resolute spirit of unity to find a solution to the problem of Rakhine. No Muslim can tolerate his brothers dying before his very eyes. Islamic countries must be punctilious on this subject and put pressure on the Burmese government to put an immediate end to this human drama. To that end, countries such as Iran, Turkey, Pakistan and Egypt can put together a joint fleet and set out for the waters of Southeast Asia as a deterrent to the Burmese government.

Indeed, when a bomb dropped from a Burmese warplane not long ago led to the deaths of four Chinese citizens, China issued a stern statement saying that Myanmar would face serious repercussions if this were repeated; that has acted as a major deterrent. As a matter of fact, this is the very reason for the Burmese government to treat the Rakhine Muslims harshly. Nobody says that the persecution has to stop and nobody stands up for the Muslims of Rakhine. The government has no qualms about oppressing these innocent people, because no deterrent reaction is forthcoming from Muslims. At this point, it would be highly effective for Muslim countries to stand up for their brothers in Rakhine and to put political, economic and social pressure on the Burmese government.

Under the leadership of Muslim countries, it is essential to convey humanitarian aid to refugees, to evacuate the sick from these conditions and to take them to hospitals where they can be properly looked after. Otherwise new fatalities will surely occur and the death toll will rise.

It is also of the greatest importance for Western countries to use all the means at their disposal to create pressure on the Burmese government and to take initiatives that will help rescue these innocent people.

The problem of Rakhine cannot in fact be regarded as a mere regional issue. No person of good conscience can accept innocent people being left without food, water and medicine and being deprived of even a small plot of land to live on. Whenever there is an earthquake or a flood anywhere in the world, all countries do whatever they can to assist those disaster-stricken people. We have seen many instances of this in the past; even countries with otherwise frosty relations extend a helping hand to one another under such circumstances. That means when people and countries so desire, they are perfectly capable of exhibiting such behavior. Now is just the time for another example of such solidarity and aid.

If people, organizations and countries start raising their voices in unison, the Burmese government will immediately pull back and cease their unjust and senseless persecution of the Muslims of Rakhine. It will either acknowledge their citizenship rights, or ease its pressure on them. We all have a humanitarian obligation to assume responsibility and display the requisite sensitivity so that such awareness can be raised.

Adnan Oktar's piece on Burma Times:

<http://burmatimes.net/what-if-you-didnt-have-even-an-inch-of-land-to-live-on-in-this-world/>

<https://www.harunyahya.info/en/articles/what-if-you-didnt-have-even-an-inch-of-land-to-live-on-in-this-world>