



DEBATE PACK

CDP-0212 (2019) | 9 September 2019

Rohingya refugee crisis

Westminster Hall

Wednesday 11 September 2019

9.30am to 11.00am

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The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

1. Background

Since August 2017 about 750,000 Muslim Rohingya refugees have fled violence in Rakhine State, Burma, into Bangladesh. Over 900,000 are now living in highly congested conditions around Cox's Bazaar. The UN makes this assessment of the situation:

Basic assistance has been provided, living conditions in the camps have improved somewhat and disaster risk mitigation measures have been largely successful. However, despite progress, the Rohingya remain in an extremely precarious situation. The root causes of their plight in Myanmar have not been addressed and their future is yet uncertain. Refugees have access to the basics, such as food and health care, but they are still extremely vulnerable, living in highly challenging circumstances, exposed to the monsoon elements and dependent on aid.

A new [Joint Response Plan](#) was launched in February 2019, requesting US\$920.5 million to provide life-saving assistance to 1.2 million people, including Rohingya refugees who fled Myanmar to Bangladesh and local host communities. As of 4 September, the [appeal](#) was 37.6% funded. The refugees were hit hard by monsoon rains earlier this summer.

The international community has praised Bangladesh's willingness to take in the refugees, but it is anxious they return home as soon as possible. However, international actors have insisted that there should be no forcible returns.

Humanitarian agencies are also [concerned](#) that the Bangladeshi authorities been building facilities on an unsuitable, remote, cyclone-prone island, Bhasan Char, for 100,000 of the refugees. All the indications are that refugees do not want to be sent there but Bangladeshi government officials, worried about rising tensions between locals and refugees, have suggested that they may be compelled to do so.

The UK Government supports the UN position that a full assessment should be conducted of Bhasan Char before any relocation is considered. It has [said](#): "We have made clear to the Government of Bangladesh that any relocation of refugees must be safe, dignified and meet international principles and standards." The UK has [provided](#) £129 million in funding since August 2017 for food security, nutrition, shelter, health, protection, water, hygiene promotion and sanitation.

2. News and media

The following is a selection of news and media articles relevant to this debate.

Please note: the Library is not responsible for either the views or the accuracy of external content.

[Support Rohingya island relocation or leave the country: Bangladesh to UN](#)

Daily Star (Bangladesh)
5 September 2019

[Bangladesh bans two aid agencies from Rohingya refugee camps](#)

Arab News
5 September 2019

[What Happens if Rohingya Stay in Bangladesh Forever?](#)

Council on Foreign relations
Joshua Kurlantzick
4 September 2019

[Bangladesh bans mobile phone access in Rohingya camps](#)

Al Jazeera
2 September 2019

[Rohingya refugees turn down second Myanmar repatriation effort](#)

The Guardian
Hannah Ellis-Petersen and Shaikh Azizur Rahman
22 August 2019

[Massacred at Home, in Misery Abroad, 730,000 Rohingya Are Mired in Hopelessness](#)

The New York Times
22 August 2019
Saw Nang and Michael Schwartz

[UN official likens Rohingya living conditions to Nazi concentration camps](#)

The Guardian
Karen McVeigh and Hannah Ellis-Petersen
4 July 2019

[Human rights groups slam draft UN plans to send Rohingya to barren island](#)

Daily Telegraph
Nicola Smith
25 March 2019

[One million Rohingya refugees 'must not be forgotten'](#)

Open Access Government
20 February 2019

The Rohingya Crisis

Council on Foreign Relations
Eleanor Albert and Andrew Chatzky
5 December 2018

The Rohingya refugee crisis speaks to the worst acts of humanity

The Guardian
Michael Sheen
22 August 2018

Hidden: The Rohingya girls who seldom see the light of day

Daily Telegraph
Helen Nianias
16 August 2018

3. Department for International Development

[Penny Mordaunt: the Rohingya crisis must not be forgotten](#)

Department for International Development

19 February 2019

The plight of the Rohingya refugees must not be forgotten, International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said during her second visit to Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh.

The UK is providing vital humanitarian aid to many of the one million Rohingya refugees and vulnerable local communities in Cox's Bazar.

Ms Mordaunt, the first UK cabinet minister to visit Bangladesh since the country's elections, met Rohingya refugees living in Kutupalong camp at a food distribution centre, spoke with women being protected from violence, and saw how children with disabilities were getting the therapy and treatment they need, all supported by UK aid.

Since 25 August 2017, UK aid from British taxpayers has provided £129 million in funding to the refugee crisis and Ms Mordaunt's visit focused on exploring longer term solutions by supporting education, developing skills and improving access to training opportunities.

In Dhaka, Ms Mordaunt told Bangladeshi ministers she would push for the changes needed in Burma to help the Rohingya return to their homes. But she said now was the time to look beyond short-term live-saving assistance support, to give them the skills they need to create sustainable lives both for themselves and their families.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

This major man-made humanitarian crisis has been ethnic cleansing on an industrial scale and I urge the Government of Burma to create the necessary conditions that would allow those Rohingya currently living in Bangladesh to return.

UK aid and donations from the generous British public, are providing life-sustaining humanitarian assistance to many of the almost one million Rohingya refugees and vulnerable host communities in Cox's Bazar.

The Government and people of Bangladesh have shown great generosity and humanity in hosting the Rohingya. But we recognise that Bangladesh can't shoulder this responsibility alone and I'm proud of the UK's leading.

The plight of the Rohingya refugees to return home must not fall off the international agenda and they must be given justice.

In Dhaka Ms Mordaunt also visited the icddr, b, a world-renowned medical research centre which also houses a hospital specialising in cholera and other water-borne diseases.

UK aid supports the hospital's research and the development of simple life-saving innovations such as breathing apparatus for small babies that was created using an empty shampoo bottle.

Experts at the hospital have also advised humanitarian workers in Yemen on how to treat deadly outbreaks of cholera.

Ms Mordaunt's visit builds on the 2017 refugee crisis when the British public donated incredibly generously towards the crisis through the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) Appeal, raising £30 million, including £5 million matched pound-for-pound by the UK government.

This funding provided:

- 351,500 people receive life-saving food
- 34,000 families receive household essentials, such as sleeping mats, blankets, clothes, and pots and pans
- 124,400 people have safe drinking water and toilets
- 19,500 families receive materials to build a shelter
- 42,300 people receive medical care and some form of health assistance
- 28,200 vulnerable people receive some form of protection, such as safe spaces for women, children and older people

4. PQs

[Bangladesh: Rohingya](#)

03 Sep 2019 | 280905

Asked by: Mr Jim Cunningham

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Bangladeshi counterpart on the safety of Bhasan Char for Rohingya refugees.

Answering member: Mrs Heather Wheeler | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The former Minister for Asia and the Pacific stressed to the Government of Bangladesh, most recently during his visit to Bangladesh in April 2019, that any relocation of refugees to Bhasan Char Island must be safe, dignified and in accordance with international humanitarian principles and standards.

The UK fully supports the UN's position that full and detailed technical and protection assessments should be conducted of Bhasan Char before any relocation of Rohingya refugees are considered. We welcome the Government of Bangladesh's commitment to ensure any relocation is voluntary and are conducted in coordination with UN agencies.

[Bangladesh: Rohingya](#)

05 Aug 2019 | 280273

Asked by: Liz McInnes

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment he has made of the decision to move Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh to the island of Bhasan Charan, which is at risk of severe flooding and cyclones.

Answering member: Andrew Stephenson | Department for International Development

We have made clear to the Government of Bangladesh that any relocation of refugees must be safe, dignified and meet international humanitarian principles and standards.

The UK fully supports the UN's position that full and detailed technical and protection assessments should be conducted of Bhasan Char before any relocations of Rohingya are considered. We welcome the Government of Bangladesh's commitment to ensure any relocations are voluntary and are conducted in coordination with UN agencies.

[Burma: Rohingya](#)

3 Sept 2019 | 282238

Asked by: Paul Farrelly

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to (a) the Burmese Ambassador in London and (b) his counterpart in Myanmar on steps

that the Government has taken to allow for the return of Rohingya refugees to safe and dignified conditions.

Answering member: Mrs Heather Wheeler | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Since August 2017, Ministers and senior officials have repeatedly made clear to the Government of Myanmar in Naypyidaw and its Ambassador in London that any relocation of refugees must be safe, voluntary, dignified and meet international humanitarian principles and standards. We agree with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees that the current conditions for such repatriation do not yet exist in Rakhine. There is ongoing fighting between the Myanmar military and ethnic Rakhine separatists, the Arakan Army. The UK is the second largest bilateral donor of aid in Myanmar, and the largest in Rakhine State where 600,000 Rohingya remain.

[Burma: Rohingya](#)

3 Sept 2019 | 281685

Asked by: Lyn Brown

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the claims in the July 2019 report by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute entitled Mapping Conditions in Rakhine State that (a) minimal preparations have been made for any return of Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh, (b) 320 of the settlements damaged or destroyed during the genocide of 2017 show no signs of reconstruction, (c) 58 remaining settlements were damaged or destroyed after the crisis during 2018 and (d) six suspected military facilities have been built on the sites of destroyed settlements.

Answering member: Mrs Heather Wheeler | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

We are aware of the findings of the report published in July 2019 by Australian Strategic Policy Institute. To the best of our knowledge, we agree that destroyed settlements have not been rebuilt. While there may have been some minimal reconstruction, it is not on the original sites. We are also aware of the Myanmar military's use of land previously occupied by the Rohingya. We support the view that conditions on the ground are not yet in place to support repatriation of refugees in Rakhine. We are clear that safe and sustainable returns will not be possible until conditions in Rakhine are significantly improved. It is essential that the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is given unfettered access to assess conditions.

[Bangladesh: Rohingya](#)

08 Jul 2019 | HL16654

Asked by: The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to improve the situation of Rohingya refugees in camps in Bangladesh who have little prospect of returning to Myanmar in the immediate future; what representations they have made to the government of Bangladesh

about its ban on formal education in those camps; and what funding they have provided, and intend to provide, to assist with the costs of such education.

Answering member: Baroness Sugg | Department for International Development

The UK government is committed to improving the situation of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, so that they can lead more fulfilling and meaningful lives, both now and in the future. We have provided £129m in funding since August 2017 to all essential sectors: food security and nutrition, shelter, health, protection, water, hygiene promotion and sanitation.

It has also included support to education. This has primarily been as part of our contribution to UNICEF, which has so far totalled £13.43m; and indirectly through our contributions to Education Cannot Wait and the Global Partnership for Education. Together these have provided funding of \$26m of which the UK has contributed nearly £3m. Education will remain a priority for future UK funding.

The Development Secretary discussed the Rohingya crisis with the Bangladesh Government in Dhaka in February, including the need to improve refugees' access to education, skills and livelihoods. The FCO Minister for Asia and the Pacific held similar discussions with the Government during his visit in April. My officials also regularly discuss the issue with their counterparts in government.

**[Bangladesh: Rohingya](#)
25 Jun 2019 | 267159**

Asked by: Stephen Twigg

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps his Department is taking with the Government of Bangladesh to establish a medium-term development plan for Cox's Bazar.

Answering member: Harriett Baldwin | Department for International Development

The UK government is committed to supporting the Government of Bangladesh's generosity in hosting the Rohingya refugees. Although the aim is the voluntary return of the refugees to Myanmar, the current conditions and continued conflict in Rakhine State preclude this.

As the crisis moves into a protracted phase, we will remain a leading donor to the humanitarian operation and increase our support to the development needs of affected communities in Cox's Bazar. This requires working with the UN, World Bank and others to help the Government develop and finance medium-term plans for the district. It also requires continuous consultation with the refugees to make sure that their needs and aspirations are, as far as possible, met. A group of partners, led by BBC Media Action, is helping to facilitate this.

[Bangladesh: Rohingya](#)
25 Jun 2019 | 267158

Asked by: Stephen Twigg

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent steps his Department has taken is taking to ensure adequate access to (a) educational and (b) livelihood opportunities for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.

Answering member: Harriett Baldwin | Department for International Development

We are in regular dialogue with the Government of Bangladesh, and international and local partners on how to improve the opportunities for Rohingya refugees to lead more fulfilling and meaningful lives, now and in the future. Education and livelihoods are an important part of this. The International Development Secretary discussed the Rohingya crisis with the Bangladesh Government in Dhaka in February, including the need to improve refugees' access to education, skills and livelihoods. The Minister for Asia and the Pacific held similar discussions with the Government during his visit in April.

We are funding UNICEF, both directly and through Education Cannot Wait, to increase the learning opportunities for refugee children and adolescents. We are also assisting centres that provide training in skills and entrepreneurship, particularly for women.

[Bangladesh: Rohingya](#)
25 Jun 2019 | 267156

Asked by: Stephen Twigg

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps his Department is taking to ensure refugees are consulted on the development of the medium-term response plan for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.

Answering member: Harriett Baldwin | Department for International Development

The UK government is committed to supporting the Government of Bangladesh's generosity in hosting the Rohingya refugees. Although the aim is the voluntary return of the refugees to Myanmar, the current conditions and continued conflict in Rakhine State preclude this.

As the crisis moves into a protracted phase, we will remain a leading donor to the humanitarian operation and increase our support to the development needs of affected communities in Cox's Bazar. This requires working with the UN, World Bank and others to help the Government develop and finance medium-term plans for the district. It also requires continuous consultation with the refugees to make sure that their needs and aspirations are, as far as possible, met. A group of partners, led by BBC Media Action, is helping to facilitate this.

Burma: Rohingya**20 Jun 2019 | HL16184****Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Emergency Response and Assessment Team has predicted that the repatriation of the Rohingya would be an easy process; what assessment they have made of the (1) dangers faced by, and (2) rights to full citizenship of, the Rohingya during their repatriation; and what steps are being taken to bring justice to those responsible for crimes against the Rohingya.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

We welcome ASEAN's engagement on this issue through their Humanitarian Assistance Centre. However, we remain deeply concerned that the conditions for safe, voluntary and dignified returns in line with UNHCR principles are not in place. The UK has been clear, as has the UN Security Council, that before repatriations start, Myanmar must create the conditions in Rakhine to allow the Rohingya to return safely, voluntarily and with dignity. Refugees must have full access and independent information about conditions in areas of return and arrangements for repatriation.

We have publicly called for the removal of restrictions that withhold citizenship from individuals who are not from a community recognised by the Myanmar authorities as a 'national race', such as the Rohingya. The UK has supported the recommendations of the Rakhine Advisory Commission's to reform the 1982 Citizenship Law and urges the Myanmar government to fully implement them.

The UK co-sponsored the resolution at the UN Human Rights Council which set up the Fact Finding Mission in March 2017. This has since found that there may be sufficient grounds for prosecuting senior Myanmar military officials for crimes against humanity. The UK also to secure a resolution which established a mechanism to collect and preserve evidence of atrocities for future prosecutions. We continue to press the Myanmar authorities to ensure its domestic accountability process is independent, credible and results in prosecutions.

Bangladesh: Rohingya**11 Jun 2019 | 259380****Asked by: Preet Kaur Gill**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what estimate he has made of the number of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh his Department has supported to date.

Answering member: Harriett Baldwin | Department for International Development

The UK is a leading donor to the Rohingya refugee response in Bangladesh. We estimate that UK-funded assistance provided since August 2017 has reached most of the 1.3 million refugees and vulnerable host community members targeted by the international

humanitarian Joint Response Plan. Our aid is making a significant difference to the lives of the refugees and we are providing assistance in all major sectors, including food security and nutrition, shelter, health, protection (including gender-based violence), site management, water, hygiene promotion and sanitation.

[Burma: Rohingya](#)

09 May 2019 | 250433

Asked by: Mr Jim Cunningham

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Myanmar counterpart on the Rohingya people.

Answering member: Mark Field | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The Foreign Secretary visited Myanmar on 19 and 20 September 2018 to visit northern Rakhine and to press Myanmar's leaders to take action. He also discussed the Fact-Finding Mission report with Aung San Suu Kyi. Minister Field spoke with the Myanmar Minister for International Cooperation Kyaw Tin on 1 November 2018 to stress the UK's serious concern at Myanmar's announcement, with Bangladesh, that refugee repatriation would begin despite suitable conditions not yet being in place in northern Rakhine.

In November 2018, the Foreign Secretary wrote a joint letter with the French Foreign Minister making clear to the Myanmar authorities that its Commission of Inquiry needs to be an independent and credible mechanism that will lead to a judicial process in order to deliver accountability for the atrocities committed. The British Ambassador continues to have regular discussions with senior Myanmar officials about the Rohingya people.

On 18 March I met with U Thaung Tun, the Myanmar Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations and National Security Advisor and again raised the issue of conditions in Rakhine and the importance of long term social and economic development in Rakhine to improve prospects for all, including the Rohingya.

[Burma: Rohingya](#)

02 May 2019 | 247087

Asked by: Imran Hussain

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that Rohingya refugees are not repatriated to Burma against their will.

Answering member: Mark Field | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The UK has been clear, as has the UN Security Council, that Burma must create the conditions in Rakhine to allow the Rohingya to return safely, voluntarily and with dignity. We agree with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees that these conditions do not yet exist. UN agencies also do

not have the access they need to provide independent monitoring of any returns. The UK was deeply concerned when Bangladesh and Burma announced that the repatriation of refugees to Burma would begin in November 2018. We raised our concerns at the highest levels with both Governments, stressing that returns should not commence while conditions in northern Rakhine remain as they are. We welcome Bangladesh's commitment to the principle of "voluntariness" and were pleased that repatriations did not commence in November 2018. We will continue to make representations to the Governments of both Bangladesh and Burma not to commence returns until suitable conditions exist in northern Rakhine.

Burma: Rohingya

02 May 2019 | 247086

Asked by: Imran Hussain

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his Department has received a copy of the repatriation agreement between Burma and Bangladesh for Rohingya refugees.

Answering member: Mark Field | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The repatriation agreement between Burma and Bangladesh was signed on 23 November 2018. It has not been published, but the contents were widely reported in the media. We have previously raised our concerns in the House about the reported contents.

Bangladesh: Sexual Offences

01 May 2019 | 247083

Asked by: Imran Hussain

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking with the Department for International Development to protect vulnerable people in refugee camps in Bangladesh from sexual violence.

Answering member: Mark Field | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The UK remains committed to protecting vulnerable people, including the over one million forcibly displaced Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. Up to 18 per cent of the Department for International Development's latest £70 million funding to the Rohingya crisis response in Bangladesh is devoted to the protection of rights for refugees, including prevention and monitoring of sexual exploitation and abuse.

The UK Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative continues to work with the Government of Bangladesh, UN agencies and other stakeholders to strengthen justice and accountability for Rohingya survivors of sexual violence. UK funding includes support for family planning, clinical support to survivors of sexual violence and the creation of safe spaces for women.

[Burma: Rohingya](#)

23 Apr 2019 | 244009

Asked by: Stephen Twigg

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to tackle sexual exploitation and trafficking of Rohingya refugee women and girls.

Answering member: Harriett Baldwin | Department for International Development

DFID is addressing the prevention of trafficking of Rohingya refugees as a cross-border issue between Myanmar and Bangladesh. Up to 18% of DFID's latest £70 million funding to the Rohingya crisis response in Bangladesh is devoted to the protection of rights for refugees, including prevention and monitoring of sexual exploitation and abuse. DFID funding includes support for family planning and clinical support to survivors of sexual violence, and women's centres that offer a safe space, psychosocial support and activities for women and girls. In addition, we have tripled our funding to deal with modern day slavery in Myanmar.

The Secretary of State for International Development raised her concerns about the risk of trafficking of Rohingya refugee women and girls in February with the Bangladesh Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Minister for Education and Minister for Disaster Management and Relief.

[Bangladesh: Rohingya](#)

01 Apr 2019 | 236467

Asked by: Emily Thornberry

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the United Nations plans to relocate Rohingya refugees from the Cox's Bazar camps in Bangladesh to the island of Bhasan Char.

Answering member: Mark Field | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

I do not believe that the United Nations plans to relocate Rohingya refugees to Bhasan Char Island. In a press release on 25 March UN Bangladesh stated that "The UN's position is to engage constructively with the Government [of Bangladesh] on Bhasan Char. We are discussing with the Government the critical protection and operational issues that should be considered before any relocations take place, in order to ensure that refugees would be able to live in safe and sustainable living conditions on Bhasan Char.

I and other Ministers have made clear to the Government of Bangladesh, most recently in my meeting with State Minister Shahriar Alam on 27 March, that any relocation of refugees to Bhasan Char Island must be safe, dignified and in accordance with international humanitarian principles. We fully support the UN's position on relocations to Bhasan Char, which includes asking the Government of Bangladesh to allow full and detailed technical and protection

assessments to be conducted of the island. The UN are examining the potential requirements, time frames and costs involved in setting up a humanitarian response on Bhasan Char.

[Bangladesh](#)

20 Mar 2019 | 656 cc1025-1026

Asked by: Will Quince

What discussions she had with her counterpart in Bangladesh on her recent visit to that country.

Answering Member: Penny Mordaunt | Department for International Development

During my time in Bangladesh, I met Ministers to discuss the impact of UK aid across the country and reinforced the UK's commitment to assisting Bangladesh's efforts to support both the Rohingya and host communities in Cox's Bazar.

Asked by: Will Quince

I have visited Bangladesh and saw not only Rohingya refugee camps, but wider UK aid projects. Does the Secretary of State agree that we have a huge role to play, that this is a good use of UK taxpayers' money and that we should continue to support people in Bangladesh?

Answering Member: Penny Mordaunt | Department for International Development

I thank my hon. Friend for visiting Bangladesh. It is incredibly helpful for us to get as many reports as possible about the difference that UK aid is making and about the situation on the ground. He is right that we should be proud of helping 1.6 million children to gain a decent education and providing nearly 900,000 people with sustainable access to clean water and sanitation and 3.7 million children, women and adolescent girls with nutritional interventions.

Asked by: Stephen Twigg

It is clear that the conditions are not in place for the safe voluntary return of Rohingya refugees to Burma. Did the Secretary of State have an opportunity to discuss with the Bangladeshis the possibility of something akin to the Jordan jobs compact that could benefit not only the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar but, importantly, the local Bangladeshi community?

Answering Member: Penny Mordaunt | Department for International Development

Although all the people understandably want to return home, it is important to recognise that they can do so only when the conditions are met, which means that we are in a protracted situation. We have to start thinking about better shelter, jobs and livelihoods for both the Rohingya and the host communities.

Asked by: Bob Blackman

Did my right hon. Friend discuss with the Bangladeshi Government what was going to happen to the Rohingya refugees who are being moved

from their existing camps to some potentially unsafe places in Bangladesh?

Answering Member: Penny Mordaunt | Department for International Development

I did discuss those things, as my hon. Friend would expect, and we are sceptical about some of the Bangladeshi Government's ideas. We watched presentations about the island and the investment made there, but that will only take 100,000 people, and there are many more at Cox's Bazar. We therefore need to consider other options for how to support Bangladesh in managing the protracted crisis.

Asked by: Carol Monaghan

The United Nations convention on the rights of the child states that every child has the right to an education, but that is simply not the case for many thousands of Rohingya children in camps in Bangladesh. What conversations has the Secretary of State had with her counterparts to ensure that adequate educational facilities and opportunities are available to Rohingya children?

Answering member: Penny Mordaunt | Department for International Development.

I did raise the specifics. Both Bangladesh and the UK are doing a tremendous amount, but we need other donors to lean in and support such initiatives. However, we are pleased that UK aid is making a profound difference, particularly for children with disabilities.

**[Bangladesh: Rohingya](#)
20 Mar 2019 | 909926**

Asked by: Rushanara Ali

What steps her Department is taking to provide long-term support for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.

Answering member: Penny Mordaunt | Department for International Development

The challenges for the Rohingya are becoming more protracted. We will ensure that our support reflects this by looking beyond short term, life-saving assistance. Priorities include access to education, skills and livelihood opportunities. We must give the Rohingya the skills they need to create sustainable lives for themselves wherever they are.

**[Bangladesh: Rohingya](#)
19 Mar 2019 | 232526**

Asked by: Helen Jones

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Bangladeshi counterpart on the plight of Rohingya refugees; and if he will make a statement.

Answering member: Mark Field | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The Foreign Secretary wrote to Foreign Minister Momen on 22 January, when he re-emphasised the importance he places on the Government of Bangladesh's stated commitment to voluntary, safe and dignified return for the Rohingya to their homeland in Burma. He also emphasised the importance of planning for a longer term and more sustainable response to the Rohingya crisis. I wrote to my counterpart Shahriar Alam on 10 January to pass on the same messages.

We agree with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees that the conditions for safe and dignified returns do not yet exist. The access in Burma required for independent monitoring by UN agencies is also not in place. We will continue to make representations to the governments of both Bangladesh and Burma not to commence returns while conditions in northern Rakhine remain as they are.

I welcome the great generosity Bangladesh has shown in providing refuge for Rohingya who have fled terrible violence in Burma's Rakhine State. The UK is one of the largest donors to the refugee crisis in Bangladesh, providing £129 million in funding since August 2017. We have led the international response, including using our role as pen holder at the UN Security Council.

We are committed to supporting Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, and expect to remain a leading donor to the humanitarian Joint Response Plan. We are actively engaged in conversations with the international community to ensure that the future response meets the needs of the refugees.

[Burma: Rohingya](#)**14 Mar 2019 | 229122****Asked by: Emily Thornberry**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his Bangladeshi counterparts since the recent elections in that country to ensure that the Bangladeshi Government remains committed to repatriations of Rohingya refugees to Myanmar on a voluntary basis.

Answering member: Mark Field | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

I wrote to State Minister Alam on 10 January and the Foreign Secretary corresponded with Foreign Minister Momen on 22 January. We re-emphasised the importance we place on the Government of Bangladesh's stated commitment to voluntary, safe and dignified return for the Rohingya to their homeland in Burma. We also emphasised the importance of planning for a longer term and more sustainable response to the Rohingya crisis.

The Prime Minister also wrote to Prime Minister Hasina on 29 January, welcoming the Government of Bangladesh's restated commitment to voluntary, safe and dignified return for the Rohingya.

[Refugees](#)

30 Jan 2019 | 212630

Asked by: Chris Law

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to consult with refugee communities on the effectiveness of UK aid programmes.

Answering member: Alistair Burt | Department for International Development

We are clear that refugees and host communities must have the opportunity to engage meaningfully with the decisions that affect them. DFID works with partners to consult beneficiaries and engage directly with affected communities. This includes community outreach to Rohingya in Bangladesh, a new inter-agency mechanism to better manage refugee feedback and complaints in Uganda, and through refugees sitting on utility boards in Ethiopia to make decisions about water supply and treatment. We also pushed to ensure refugees were part of the consultations on the new Global Compact on Refugees. We welcome the “strong partnership and participatory approach” with refugees that the final Compact emphasises.

[India: Rohingya](#)

23 Jan 2019 | 210017

Asked by: Richard Burden

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to the government of India on non-refoulement of Rohingya refugees.

Answering member: Mark Field | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The former Foreign Secretary raised the plight of Rohingya refugees with his Indian counterpart, the Minister for External Affairs in February 2018. Senior officials at the British High Commission in New Delhi continue to raise the Rohingya with the Indian Ministry for External Affairs, most recently in November 2018. We will continue to raise the issue of the Rohingya and call on India to support safe, voluntary and dignified returns, which respect the rights of Rohingya refugees.

[Rohingya](#)

09 Jan 2019 | 908420

Asked by: Paul Scully

What steps she is taking to provide long-term support for the Rohingya people.

Answering member: Penny Mordaunt | Department for International Development

The UK is pushing for accountability and longer-term support for the Rohingya. We are supporting the refugees in Bangladesh and pressing for improved conditions in Rakhine State. We have been one of the

main donors to the international humanitarian response plan and we expect to remain a leading donor.

5. Other Parliamentary material

5.1 Debates

[Rohingya Refugee Crisis](#)

20 Dec 2018 | 651 cc1026-1073

[Burma: Humanitarian Situation](#)

13 Sep 2018 | 646 cc965-976

[Myanmar](#)

10 May 2018 | 791 cc77-92GC

[Rohingya: Monsoon Season](#)

08 May 2018 | 640 cc243-260WH

[Myanmar: Rohingya Minority](#)

16 Apr 2018 | 639 cc1-32WH

5.2 Statements

[Rohingya Crisis: Flood and Cyclone Preparedness](#)

29 March 2018 | HCWS608

We have all been appalled by the terrible violence and ethnic cleansing that have taken place in Burma's Rakhine State. Nearly a million Rohingya have now fled to Bangladesh from Burma. I visited the camps where most of them are living last year and witnessed for myself the precarious conditions there.

The annual monsoon and cyclone season begins imminently, and heavy rainfall is expected over the coming months. The Rohingya refugee camps are extremely vulnerable; the latest humanitarian response plan estimates that up to 200,000 Rohingya are living in areas at risk of flooding and collapse with the rainy season. I would like to assure the House that the UK Government is doing everything it can to press for and support preparedness.

We have been struck by the magnitude of the Government of Bangladesh's generosity in providing refuge for so many people in desperate need. It has an excellent track record in disaster preparedness and protecting the vulnerable from the impacts of floods and cyclones. It is important that such preparedness is extended to Rohingya people currently hosted in Bangladesh. We are encouraging Bangladesh to take as many measures to save lives as possible: such as allocating additional land that is at lower risk of flooding and landslides, reducing density in the existing camps and having evacuation plans in place including to safe places such as cyclone shelters.

We and Bangladesh's other friends are committed to supporting them with this. UK Government Ministers and officials have been in close contact with their Government of Bangladesh counterparts on this

issue. Most recently, the Foreign Secretary and I wrote jointly to Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on 20 March, urging the government of Bangladesh to fully harness their expertise in this area and reaffirming our strong support.

I am proud of the role the UK is playing in response to the Rohingya crisis. The UK is a leading donor to the humanitarian effort in Bangladesh. We have committed an additional £59m since last August, including matching £5m of public donations to the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) appeal. We will remain a leading donor going forward. As part of our response we are taking a wide range of measures to improve flood and cyclone preparedness, including:

Water, sanitation and hygiene - DFID is working with a range of agencies to ensure that up to 250,000 people continue to have access to safe drinking water throughout the rainy season; and that latrines are constructed, maintained and relocated if necessary. More than 5,000 new latrines are being constructed and will be strategically placed throughout the camps on safe ground, and more than 6,700 unsafe latrines will be decommissioned.

Health - UK-supported cholera, measles and diphtheria vaccination campaigns will provide protection against some of the most common diseases in the camps; and healthcare workers are being trained and provided with technical support to ensure better coverage is in place ahead of the rainy season. Some 791,000 children under the age of seven will have been vaccinated by the end of March.

Infrastructure and access - UN agencies, with UK support, have started mitigation works including site improvements. Given the topography and recent deforestation of the land, this will not be sufficient to guard against all landslide risk or prevent flooding everywhere in the camps. The focus is on ensuring sustained access for the delivery of aid throughout the rainy season by improving drainage, maintaining access roads, and reinforcing embankments and walkways.

Shelter improvements - the UK is working with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to ensure that the most at risk households - more than 158,000 people - are provided with reinforced shelter materials and sandbags, to protect from high winds and flood water.

Pre-positioning of relief supplies – DFID made use of contingency stockpiles in the early stages of this humanitarian response. DFID has successfully supported previous cyclone responses in Bangladesh using prepositioned supplies and maintains humanitarian stockpiles with ready access to Bangladesh in both India and Dubai.

Rohingya women and children are also vulnerable to gender based violence and sexual exploitation. The UK is leading the way in supporting a range of organisations providing specialised help to survivors of sexual violence in Bangladesh. This includes 19 women's centres offering a safe space, psychosocial support and activities to women and girls, 30 Child Friendly Spaces supporting children with protective services and psychological support, case management for

nearly 2,200 survivors of sexual violence and 13 sexual and reproductive health clinics.

Burma

Statement on the plight of Burma's Rohingya.

15 Mar 2018 | 637 cc1029-1044

Bangladesh and Burma: Rohingya Crisis

Statement on the second report of the International Development Committee, Bangladesh and Burma: the Rohingya Crisis (HC 504)

18 Jan 2018 | 634 cc1074-1081

5.3 Early Day Motions

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN MYANMAR

EDM 1897 (session 2017-19)

Mr George Howarth

3 December 2018

That this House notes that the UN's Independent International fact-finding mission on Myanmar (Burma) alleges that crime against humanity and war crimes have been committed in the Kachin and Shan states of northern Burma; condemns the alleged human rights abuses by the Burmese military in northern Burma, which include torture, extrajudicial killings, rape, forced labour, forced location, use of civilians as human shields, arbitrary arrests, arson and artillery and aerial bombing of civilian targets; urges the Government actively to pursue accountability for crimes against humanity and war crimes in northern Burma, as well as genocide against the Rohingya people, through the international justice mechanism; calls for unhindered and unrestricted access for international humanitarian aid organisations and human rights monitors to all parts of northern Burma; and further calls for increased humanitarian aid to the internally displaced people in northern Burma and for funding to go direct to local civil society and aid organisations operating on the borders of Burma.

REFERRAL OF BURMA TO THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

EDM 1219 (session 2017-19)

1 May 2018

Rushanara Ali

That this House expresses concern that Min Aung Hlaing, Commander in Chief of the Burmese military, has paid no real price for the military offensive against the Rohingya which began in August 2017; notes that around 700,000 Rohingya have been forced to flee to Bangladesh, joining the more than 300,000 already there; agrees with assessments by the UN that what has happened constitutes ethnic cleansing and elements of genocide; believes that continuing impunity for violations of international law is emboldening Min Aung Hlaing to commit further human rights violations against the Rohingya and other ethnic groups in Burma; calls on the Government to publicly support in principle the UN Security Council referring Burma to the International Criminal Court; and further calls on the Government to work to build global consensus

for a referral to the International Criminal Court from all members of the UN.

ROHINGYA MUSLIMS

EDM 346 (session 2017-19)

Chris Law

9 October 2017

That this House expresses deep concern at the ongoing widespread horrific violence against the minority Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, which has resulted in more than 500,000 Rohingya fleeing to Bangladesh since August 2017, making it the world's fastest-developing refugee emergency; notes that survivors in Bangladesh have recounted horrific stories of rape, mass murder and infanticide; further notes that the attacks on the Rohingya, at the hands of the Myanmar police and military, have been systematic and widespread, leading to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, to describe them as a textbook example of ethnic cleansing; notes that the Rohingya people have faced years of mistreatment at the hands of the Burmese Government and need urgent action; notes that most are living in refugee camps, denied citizenship, basic health care and employment; calls on Myanmar's state counsellor, Aung San Suu Kyi, to speak out against these shocking human rights violations and allow access into the region immediately; and urges the Government to put sustained pressure on the Myanmar Government to end the violence and to allow unhindered access for humanitarian aid to all of the Rakhine State.

FLIGHT OF ROHINGYA REFUGEES FROM BURMA

EDM 255 (session 2017-19)

Ann Clwyd

05 September 2017

That this House notes with concern the increasing number of Rohingya refugees crossing from Burma into Bangladesh, with over 100,000 having fled violence, allegedly triggered by an attack by Rohingya militants on police posts, since the end of August; is very concerned about reports from many of those who have fled describing troops and Rakhine Buddhist mobs razing their villages and attacking and killing civilians in a campaign to drive them out; notes that a million Muslim Rohingya people in Burma have faced years of mistreatment at the hands of the Burmese Government, which does not recognise them as citizens; calls on the de facto Burmese leader Aung San Sui Kyi to condemn the military campaign and allow independent observers access into the region immediately; and calls on the Government to continue urging the Burmese Government to end the violence and take robust action against hate speech, discrimination and incitement, as well as to continue assisting with the humanitarian response to displaced populations.

6. Further reading

[Bangladesh and Burma: the Rohingya crisis](#), Second Report of Session 2017–19, International Development Committee, HC 504, 15 January 2018

[Bangladesh: November 2018 update](#), Commons Library, CBP-8448, 29 November 2018

[Burma: November 2018 update](#), Commons Library, CBP-8443, 21 November 2018

[Burma: January 2018 update](#), Commons Library, CBP-7901, 9 January 2018

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