

# Facebook Discussion Hour about the Rohingya Muslim people and their plight, with Dr. Nazreen Nawaz, Director of the Women's Section of the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir

June 1, 2015

**Q1. Assalaamoalikum my question to Dr Nazreen is having seen the persecution of the Rohingya we feel a bit helpless...if the surrounding governments don't do anything what can we as individuals do to help?**

Wa'alaikum salaam, Yes, the plight of the Rohingya Muslims is absolutely disastrous but we should not feel helpless rather we need to focus our attention towards the correct solution to the crisis. The crisis shows more than ever the disastrous impact that dividing our Muslim lands into various nation states and the Western-imposed national borders had on the Ummah. The solution therefore lies in working towards the removal of these divisive borders and uniting under a state that truly represents Islam and Muslims which is the Khilafah. It is clear more than ever than just giving charity will not solve this problem. It is a political problem and requires a political solution Insha Allah – which is the leadership of a state built on Islam – the Khilafah.

**Q2. Shabana Malik: AsalamAlikum my question, what has been the response of neighbouring Muslim contrives? Also what led to such attacks in the first place?**

Sister Shabana, this is a problem that has been going on for decades, if not longer. It is not something new. Muslims for decades have been living under repressive discriminative policies of the brutal Burmese regime and faced violence and had their land and property confiscated. In 1982, the Burmese government passed the Citizenship Law which stripped the Rohingya of citizenship and made them stateless. But in recent times the persecution has intensified with homes, schools and mosques burnt down and rampant sexual abuse against our sisters, abductions, arrests and slaughter. There are restrictions on marriages and even limits on the number of children that Rohingya can have. This explains the flood of migrants that have been leaving the Myanmar. In fact they say that this is one of the largest exodus of boat people in Asia since the Vietnam War.

The response of the neighbouring states such as Malaysia, Indonesia, and Bangladesh has been absolutely atrocious. For weeks, Indonesia and Malaysia were pushing away boatloads of starving sick Rohingya men, women and children back to sea sometimes at gun point, refusing to give them refuge, essentially leaving them to die on the seas. Even a boat that had run out of fuel was pushed away. Indonesia military spokesman, Fuad Basya even advised Aceh fishermen not to actively look for and rescue these boats of Rohingya. Bangladesh's government has placed the Rohingya who reached its shores in atrocious camps, not worthy for animals to live in and recently closed a camp without warning. Food is scarce and many are suffering from malnutrition. Lack of water means that they are drinking polluted sea or river water. And they are classified as illegal migrants in these countries so they cannot access jobs, education, or healthcare.

All this is due to the cruel, nationalistic system of the Muslim states which has eroded the conscience of humanity and is blind to human suffering. It has torn the bond of belief between the believers and sown conflicts between their lands. And as seen with this tragedy, it has caused Muslims to abandon their starving and sick brothers and sisters when they are in dire need of their help.

**Q3. Simsim Sim: slm. Jzk for this much needed discussion. My questions:**

- 1) What would the Khilafah's response be to the plight of the Rohingya Muslims?**
- 2) Why are they being persecuted? Is it due to nationalism or Islamaphobia, or both?**

Sister Simsim Sim, because the Khilafah is based upon the laws of Allah it is blind to nationality, ethnicity, and race, for Allah (swt) says, ﴿إِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُون﴾ **“Truly, this, your Ummah is one Ummah, and I am your Lord, therefore worship Me.”** [Al-Anbiya: 92].

It is therefore obliged by Allah (swt) to unite our lands, resources and army, and to open up its borders to all persecuted Muslims, providing them protection, rights, and a home as equal citizens of the state and to mobilise its army without hesitation to defend and rescue those oppressed believers

no matter where they reside. And this was the legacy of the glorious Khilafah of the past, such as under the Uthmani Khilafah in the 16th century when Khalifah Suleyman I sent an armada of 36 ships to Spain to rescue 70,000 Muslims of Al-Andalus who were being persecuted by its Christians rulers, and settling them in Algeria.

Simsim Sim, the Rohingya Muslims are being persecuted by extremist ethnic Buddhists and the Myanmar regime simply because they are Muslims. And Allah (swt) says, **﴿وَأِنْ اسْتَنْصَرُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ فَعَلَيْكُمْ النَّصْرُ﴾** **“but if they seek your aid in religion, it is your duty to help them”** [TMQ 8:72]

So it is an absolute duty upon us as Muslims to respond by raising awareness about this issue, demanding that the governments of the Muslim world immediately do all they can to rescue those Rohingya fleeing persecution, and provide them sanctuary and proper rights of citizenship, and break all ties with the Myanmar government. However, we know that these heartless regimes of today who are affected by the rotten concept of nationalism and govern according to the capitalist system and who care only about their national interests and pockets will not do such a thing. So it is vital that we work with all our efforts and urgency to establish the Khilafah state which will save and protect our Rohingya brothers and sisters.

#### **Q4. Iman Awed: How does the Khilafah seek to change the affairs of the Rohingya people?**

Sister Iman Awed, it is the absence of the Khilafah that makes regimes and those who harbour anti-Islam sentiments and thoughts such as we see in Myanmar, China, Central Asia, Central Africa brave, such that they feel they can attack Muslims without any repercussions from any state. They know that no regime in the Muslim world today will move to defend the oppressed Muslims so they are given an open hand to do with the Muslims what they wish to do. But upon the establishment of the Khilafah that is the shield of the Muslims, such states and individuals will quiver at the mere thought of attacking a single Muslim under their rule. A beautiful example of this was Qutayba, the great Commander of the army of Khalifah Mu'tasim. At one time, he captured a vile Greek commander who had a reputation of torturing Muslim women. He was offered a large amount of ransom in order to release him, so large that some of Qutayba's assistants suggested they should release the Greek commander, thinking that the funds would provide for the needs of the Muslims. However, Qutayba answered, "I swear by Allah! No! This one will never again scare a single Muslim woman..." We will have such commanders again Insha Allah upon the re-establishment of the Khilafah.

#### **Q5. Sundas Bint Shoab: Assalamu aleikum. I have two questions.**

**1. What can we do as individuals to help the Rohingya Muslims if the governments around them are refusing?**

**2. I don't understand why the neighboring countries don't want to help the Rohingya Muslims?**

Wa'alaikum salaam Sister Sundas, how we can help the Rohingya is as follows:

- Raise awareness of their plight to all we know and explain to them that the cause of them being abandoned by the Muslim regimes is because of the inhumane nationalistic systems that govern our countries and the artificial colonial – imposed borders that divided our Muslim lands. Make them aware that we need to remove these borders, systems and regimes and unite as an Ummah under 1 system and 1 state, the Khilafah which will move without hesitation to protect and save the Rohingya and other oppressed Muslims.

- We need to convince all we know not to put their trust in international law or the international community which has consistently failed to protect the blood and dignity of Muslims.

- We need to expose the shameful actions of the Muslim governments who have abandoned the Rohingya and demand that they do all they can immediately to rescue those Rohingya who are drowning at sea, or being slaughtered in the killing field of Myanmar, and give them proper sanctuary – not classifying them as illegal immigrants but giving them citizenship in their lands with all the rights that come with this.

- But importantly we need to accelerate and intensify our efforts to establish the Khilafah upon the method of the Prophethood which is the ultimate and only real solution to this tragedy.

**Q6. Ririn Dyah Wijayanti: Sister, there are few people that said Rohingya problems is not about religion but it's all about humanity. What do you think?**

**Besides that, also they said it's all about illegal immigrants to ASEAN, because Rohingya is not wanted in Indonesia, but another developed country such as Australia. What do you think?**

Sister Ririn, Western governments such as Australia and even Muslim countries such as Bangladesh and others are trying to pass this problem off as a problem of economic migrants or a problem related to trafficking. This is in order to distract world attention away from the fact that they are turning their back on a genocide that is happening in Myanmar against the Rohingya and to excuse their scandalous actions of turning their back on a people that have been brutalised. The fact that these are people who are fleeing persecution due to their belief is indisputable – the slaughter, torture, and repression that they have been facing for decades has been documented by numerous human rights organisations, the media, and NGO's. Just last year for example more than a dozen Rohingya women and children were killed in the village of Du Char Yar Tan in the western Rakhine state. According to reports, the Muslim women and children were hacked to death by a Buddhist mob. This incident is only the tip of the iceberg of the unspeakable brutality and slaughter that Rohingya Muslim women and children have been subject to at the hands of Rakhine Buddhists and Myanmar security forces as part of their organized mass ethnic cleansing of Muslims from the region. This includes the notorious Yan Thei massacre where over 70 Rohingya were murdered in cold blood, including 28 children.

**Q7. Tahsin Tahera: Assalamualaikum sister, My question is can't we just elect a good ruler who will build a self dependent economy which will provide its people a healthy life so people won't have to migrate from these areas...**

Wa'alaikum salaam Sister Tahsin,

The problem of the Rohingya is not a problem of economic migration. It's a problem of Muslims being persecuted and killed and made stateless because of their belief and having no state to intervene to stop all this. Therefore the solution is to establish a state that will move to protect their blood and give them a dignified life and a home as equal citizens of the state. This will only happen with a state built purely upon the Islamic belief and laws. And this is the Khilafah. The Prophet (saw) said,

«إِنَّمَا الْإِمَامُ جُنَّةٌ يُقَاتِلُ مِنْ وَرَائِهِ وَيَنْقَى بِهِ»

**“Indeed the Imam (Khaleefah) is a shield from behind whom (one) would fight and one would protect oneself.”**

**Q8. Ririn Dyah Wijayanti: And how Khilafah help Rohingya from [an administrative] perspective in Khilafah? From one region to others.**

Sister Ririn, it is important to understand that the Khilafah has a unique view of citizenship. Citizenship is not given to individuals based upon their nationality, ethnicity, race, or religion, or even on how long they have lived in the state. It is given to those who wish to live in the state, and wish to be citizens and agree to live according to the laws of the land. Also, the Khilafah does not only represent Muslims, it actually is a state that represents the protection of humanity. So we see that when the Jews in Spain were being persecuted by the Christians during the Spanish inquisition, the Jews knew that they could seek sanctuary in the Khilafah so they fled there and received protection and rights as citizens of the state.

**Q9. Mehresh Ahmad: Salaams sister, my question is really about the deafening silence of the global community in the face of what can only be described as a genocide. Can you please shed some light on the lack of reaction from the governments across the globe both Muslim and non-Muslim, why have they not responded and can their silence be interpreted as condoning the racist, bigoted and horrific actions of the Burmese government?**

Sister Mehresh, you're absolutely right. There has been an almost deafening silence of Western and Muslim governments towards this genocide. But this is not surprising. For Western governments such as the US and the EU they have strengthened their ties with the Myanmar dictatorship, even praising it for its democratic reforms, giving millions of dollars of financial aid to the state, and investing hugely

in Myanmar throughout the regime's campaign of terror against the Rohingya Muslims. Obama has even made two visits to the country over the last three years, describing it as a 'success story.' And this is because democratic, capitalist states only understand the language of money; their moral compass is defined by the dollar; and their inaction and continued engagement with the Myanmar government despite its continuing repression of the Rohingya illustrates yet again that the priorities of such states lie in securing their financial interests over protecting human life and dignity. It illustrates clearly that no hope or trust can be placed in such states to resolve this crisis or protect the Rohingya.

With regards to the way that Muslim regimes have responded, this is also not surprising – these are Western-installed or backed governments whose rulers only act to protect their seats of power and own selfish financial interests and to fulfil the orders of their Western masters. They have shown repeatedly to care nothing for the blood of the Ummah and they need to be removed and replaced by the Islamic leadership of the Khilafah, ruled by a ruler of taqwa who is a true guardian of his people.

The actions of such heartless and spineless regimes however is in total contrast to the actions of ordinary Muslims in their states. For example, we saw how the poor fishermen of Aceh saved over a 1000 Rohingya with their simple boats and simple means without hesitation – driven by their Iman and their love for their Muslim brothers. If a few poor fishermen can do this, then what do think of the potential of a state that has all means at its disposal to protect the oppressed believers.

#### **Q10. Shabana Malik: What would relief efforts be like today, how difficult is it like to get aid to the area? As many in the local community are doing fundraising etc?**

#### **Question refined 'is fundraising the action that we should be calling for at this moment in time from the Muslim world?**

Sister Shabana, the Rohingya do not just need humanitarian aid – they need a home and a dignified life – and no state today is willing to give them that. They left Myanmar because they were being treated as illegal immigrants and they entered host countries where they are also being treated as illegal immigrants – where they cannot get good jobs, access public education and healthcare. Even with the asylum that Indonesia and Malaysia said they would give to the 7000 Rohingya stranded at Sea, they have defined this as temporary and conditional on the international community resettling them in a third country after a year. So these refugees face the prospect of even being returned to their homes in Myanmar after a year. Additionally, these governments have also said that they will not take any more refugees than these 7000. So where are our Rohingya brothers and sisters to turn? Where can they call home? Where can they have a decent life? There is nowhere at the moment. So we need to really focus our efforts that will solve this crisis which is the urgent establishment of the Khilafah upon the method of the Prophethood. This is of course in addition to constantly demanding of the governments of the Muslim world to rescue and give refuge to the Rohingya.

But the other point Shabana, is that this Rohingya crisis shows more than ever the limitations of giving charity – for example – the Myanmar government has not even let international aid agencies into its camps that hold tens of thousands of Rohingya to help them. In Bangladesh, the government has also blocked NGO's from helping the Rohingya in the camps there. And with regards to the stranded Rohingya on the boats – how will the charity reach them? This is not to belittle the action of giving charity – its an important action in Islam but if we really want to bring an end to the misery and suffering of the Rohingya, we need to keep in mind that this is a problem that this is a political problem from every level – the persecution of the Rohingya + the refusal of the neighbouring regimes to act and give them sanctuary + the inaction of the international community. As such it requires a political solution which is the establishment of a state which will represent the Muslims and move to defend their blood and ensure they are guaranteed the God given rights that Islam affords them of protection, care, and welfare. As Allah (swt) has said,

﴿وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْقَاسِفُونَ﴾

**“Allah has promised, to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds, that He will, of a surety, grant them in the land, inheritance (of power), as He granted it to those before them; that He will establish in authority their religion, the one which He has chosen for them; and that He will change (their state), after the fear in which they (lived), to one of security and**

peace: `They will worship Me (alone) and not associate aught with Me.' If any do reject Faith after this, they are rebellious and wicked." [TMQ Nur (24): 55]

**Q11. Fazara Kaleel: Assalamu alaikum sister, we clearly know that the absence of a Khilafah is the reason for all these! But what are the immediate solutions for our brothers and sisters who are suffering now?**

Wa'alaikum salaam Sister Fazara, naturally as Muslims, we want an immediate solution to this problem, we want to do actions which will bring immediate relief to our brothers and sisters but as seen with the blood-bath in Syria, the Central African Republic, and in Myanmar, there really is no immediate action other than working to establish the Khilafah upon the method of the Prophethood that we can do to end their nightmare. There are some who say that more pressure needs to be put on the Myanmar government to change its policies and ways. But the Western governments are not willing to put their economic interests at risk in Myanmar by doing this. And the Muslim governments are unwilling to even criticize the Myanmar government. For example, the Indonesian Foreign Minister was asked whether more pressure should be put on the Myanmar government. She replied that there should be 'constructive engagement' with Myanmar.

But what we can do immediately is intensify our efforts to discuss with all who we know, especially those in the Muslim armies about the need to urgently establish the Khilafah state. And what we can also immediately do is call on all those we know in the Muslim armies to move to defend and rescue their Ummah in Myanmar Insha Allah, for the Prophet (saw) says,

«الْمُسْلِمُ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ، لَا يَظْلِمُهُ، وَلَا يُسْلِمُهُ، وَمَنْ كَانَ فِي حَاجَةِ أَخِيهِ، كَانَ اللَّهُ فِي حَاجَتِهِ»

**"A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim. So he should neither oppress him nor hand him over to an oppressor. And whoever fulfilled the needs of his brother, Allah will fulfill his needs."**

**Q12. Tahsin Tahera: Another question sister, after Nepal's tremor many countries helped them but when it's about the Rohingya issue why has every country turned their face? Is it because they are Muslims or do they have some benefit issue behind it?**

Sister Tahsin, there is definitely a benefit that Western governments and the international community have in turning their backs on the Rohingya – it is to protect their financial investments and interests in Myanmar. They do not want to risk these. Protection of the blood and dignity of the Rohingya in their eyes is not worth jeopardizing this. All these Western governments could muster are weak statements of disapproval of the Myanmar regime's actions. It illustrates yet again that such capitalist governments have no genuine regard for the sanctity of human life or dignity, only concern for the sanctity of the dollar. It further confirms that Muslims can never rely on the international community to solve its problems, as Allah (swt) reminds us,

﴿مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ كَمَثَلِ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ اتَّخَذَتْ بَيْتًا وَإِنَّ أَوْهَنَ الْبُيُوتِ لَبَيْتُ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

**"The likeness of those who take as Auliya (protectors or helpers) other than Allah is the likeness of a spider who builds (for itself) a house; but verily, the frailest of houses is the spider's house – if they but knew." [TMQ Al-Ankabut: 41]**