Introduction

The United Nations (UN) defines the term refugees as someone who is forced to leave their home country due to violence or mass conflict. The refugee crisis around the world has been the cause of a variety of internal conflicts and civil wars particularly in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, that have caused refugees to flee their countries and make treacherous journeys across international bodies of water and borders, in search of a better life. Due to the vast influx of number of refugees around the world, neighbouring countries where refugees tend to flee to, are facing a variety of socio-economic problems.

The Syrian Civil War began on March 15, 2011 is an ongoing civil war, and has been ranked as the most inferior migration crisis of all time which began in 2015. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Syrian nationals were the most recognised nationality involved in the migration crisis at a high figure of 46.7 percent. According to the UN as of 2016, the migration crisis hit its highest peak of all time with more than 13.5 million Syrians affected by the civil war. 6 million are internally displaced within Syria, and more than 5 million refugees have fled the country to neighbouring countries in the Middle East and Europe. This is due to a violent long lasting civil war between President Bashar Al Assad’s government forces and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

On another side of the issue, the Rohingya Muslims are a Muslim minority group that reside in the Rakhine State in Myanmar. The UN classifies the Rohingya problem as a “textbook example of ethnic cleansing” due to the violent history and a recount of the lives of the Rohingya. The 1962 military coup of Myanmar, resulted in the Rohingya not being able to obtain citizenship and are not recognised as one of the 135 ethnic groups in Myanmar. The crisis of the Rohingya is a losing battle due the strength and expansion of the military in the Rakhine State. A majority of the population have fled to neighbouring Bangladesh which has proved to be a challenge for the country, due to the lack of necessities and shelter Bangladesh can provide.
**Definition of Key Terms**

**Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)**

The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, commonly known as ISIS, is an international terrorist organization that started gaining international media coverage in 2014. ISIS has committed a variety of crimes against humanity and violated human rights specifically within Syria and Iraq, due to their aim to establish an Islamic caliphate in the Middle East and their role in the Syrian Civil War. Due to the violence, Syrians live in fear and escape their homes and flee to neighbouring countries.

**Open Border Policy**

An open border policy is commonly referred to a country's borders where citizens, refugees and even goods can freely enter and exit the country without being faced with any challenges from local authorities. This is pertinent to the Syrian refugee crisis and this is due to the fact that certain European countries, as well as Turkey have maintained an open border policy for the refugees, to seek asylum and to gain protection.

**Rakhine State**

The Rakhine State is a region of Myanmar located on the Northern West Coast which sits on the Bay of Bengal. The Rakhine State is mainly composed of Indo Aryan speaking people such as the
Rohingya. The region is a primary ground for the violence in Myanmar which has resulted in thousands of Rohingya Muslims to flee to Bangladesh.

Refugees

The UN defines the term ‘refugees’ as someone who has been forced to flee their country due to violence, abuse or war. A refugee also faces fear of their religion and race not being accepted in another country. This applies to the Syrian refugees due to the country having the highest number of refugees since the crisis began. The Rohingya muslims as well have been suffering from violence in the Rakhine State which has also caused them to flee to neighbouring Bangladesh.

Rohingya Muslims

The Rohingya Muslims are classified as Indo Aryan speaking people and a stateless minority in the Rakhine State of Myanmar. The Rohingya have faced both communal and domestic violence, which has resulted in a majority of the population to flee to Bangladesh.

Terrorism

There is no international UN term for terrorism. However it is referred to as the unloyal use and stretch of violence against the citizens of one country. Specifically terrorism is also the main cause of the refugee crisis, and this is due to the uprising tensions between terrorists in the Middle East and in Syria. This has caused refugees to flee their country in order to seek asylum elsewhere. The Syrian Refugee crisis and the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, have also been considered acts of terrorism due to many refugees attempting to smuggle themselves across borders in order to expand their presence and territory.

Background Information

The refugee crisis around the world has proven to be a challenge specifically for neighbouring countries that accept them, and the number has skyrocketed to an even greater extent every year. Due to the two most notable refugee crisis being the Syrian refugees and the Rohingya Muslims. Both issues have taken a beating toll both in the Middle East for the Syrian migrants and in Bangladesh for the Rohingya Muslims that flee the Rakhine State.

Syrian refugees
The Syrian Civil War began on March 15, 2011 and was due to President Bashar Al Assad’s crimes against humanity, as he detained and murdered hundreds of innocent people which resulted in the spark of the conflict. Due to the uprising tensions and distrust between rebel groups and the government, this then resulted in the creation of the Free Syrian Army, and the involvement of the Islamic State. In the year of 2015, as the civil war was ongoing, it resulted in the beginning of the world’s worst migration crisis in history. According to the UNHCR there are more than 5 million refugees that have fled to neighbouring Middle Eastern countries such as Turkey which has accepted the most refugees at a high figure of 3.4 million. It is known that between the years of 2015 - 2016, Europe had received more than a million migrants from war torn Iraq and Syria. However, there are also Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) in Syria, and these are the refugees that have been denied from seeking asylum in Europe or a neighbouring country in the Middle East, and have been forced to return back. Because of this the UNHCR estimates that there are more than 6.5 million IDP within Syria. Adding on, due to the increased number and growth of the number of IDPs in Syria, the number of fatalities and those affected has increased as the fighting has continued. These specifically are also the refugees who lack basic necessities and have been severely affected by the conflict, as a whole. However, more than a million migrants have made the journey across the Mediterranean Sea into Europe, and this has clearly proven to be a challenge for the European Union and for the migrants themselves. This is because specific countries in the European Union have physically shut down their borders in order to prevent the entry of refugees, which have caused riots and refugees to be sent back to Syria which then causes them to be IDPs within a civil war in their home country. Syrian refugees started making their way to Europe and to neighbouring countries in order to gain the opportunity to seek asylum for a better life. There is also simply not enough international aid within the Middle East to help those affected, which results in a higher trend in poverty. However, instead of Europe many of the Syrian refugees flee to neighbouring countries within the Middle East.

Adding on, certain countries (specifically in Europe) have been hesitant towards accepting Syrian Refugees into their country. These include countries such as Hungary, the Russian Federation and Poland. The main reason behind this is that it is known that due to the vast majority and number of refugees, there have been quite a number of terrorists that have attempted to smuggle themselves across international borders. This has resulted to a vast number of terrorist attacks within Europe such as the Paris and Brussels attacks, which is one of the main reasons as to why countries within Europe especially refuse to accept refugees from the Middle East.

Rohingya Muslims
However, opposed to the Syrian refugees, there is also the issue of the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, who flee their homes in the Rakhine State and cross the border into Bangladesh, in order to seek asylum, protection and humanitarian aid. The government of Myanmar along with the military, aim’s to get rid of the country’s Muslim population, and the specific target for this operation is the Rakhine State as a majority of the Muslim population resides there. Thousands have been displaced and killed within Myanmar, and this has forced the Rohingya refugees to flee to neighbouring Bangladesh. The violence against the Rohingyas began in the 1970s, and has been a losing battle for them all together. It is also known that since the year of 1982, over 1.1 million Rohingya refugees live in the Rakhine state and have no authority to leave the country without permission from the Burmese government.

On August 25, 2017 a new fresh wave of violence erupted in the Rakhine state which was due to an accusation by the military that the Rohingya militant group had burnt down military posts in the Rakhine state. Ever since the violence broke out, it has resulted in the death of 48,000 Rohingya Muslims, and over 665,000 to flee to neighbouring Bangladesh. A vast influx of Rohingya Muslims have fled to Bangladesh, as the government somewhat has maintained an open border policy for the Rohingya refugees. This then resulted in a variety of both positive and negative benefits for the refugees and the government of Bangladesh. The refugees have received a variety of positive benefits from the government and international aid agencies, such as temporary shelters within camps, proper infrastructure and are granted other opportunities from the Bangladeshi government. Adding on, the government within Bangladesh has received international criticism, due to not granting the Rohingyas permanent residency, and due to the lack of border police as many militants from the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) were freely crossing the border as well along with the refugees.

**Major Countries and Organizations Involved**

**Republic of Turkey**

Out of every country in the world, Turkey in the Middle East currently holds the highest number of Syrian refugees, at 3.4 million. Ever since the refugee crisis started, Turkey has maintained an open border policy, which means that people of any kind as well as goods can freely enter and exit the country, without proving to be a challenge. Many refugees have chosen to flee to Turkey and this is mainly due to the open border policy especially for immigrants, and the benefits that the country provides such as basic necessities and temporary protection under the government as well as housing. It is also beneficial for the refugees, and this is due to the fact that the Turkish government has promised citizenship as well as permanent residency to thousands of asylum seekers and immigrants. However, as there is a vast influx of migrants than enter Turkey, it has placed a lot of international pressure on
Turkey and the government. This is mainly due to the European Union’s heavy reliance on Turkey to take in as many refugees as possible, in order to limit and cut down the number of refugees entering Europe. Also, the open border policy of Turkey and the amount of refugees in the country has clearly proven to be a challenge, as due to the vast influx of refugees entering Turkey every single day, there is known to be terrorists and smugglers attempting to enter neighbouring countries in the Middle East which has proven to be a problem for the citizens of Turkey and the government itself, due to the lack of identity from immigrants. Adding on to this, as of 2018 the Turkish people and members of the government want the refugees out of Turkey. This is because the demand for jobs has become higher in the country and it puts local citizens in a lower level for them to work. Also, Turkey wants them gone due to the increased terrorist threats within the Middle East as well as the amount of distrust and uprising tensions between countries and local governments.

**Kingdom of Jordan**

Other than Turkey, Jordan is another one of the neighbouring countries in the Middle East that has accepted Syrian refugees. Unlike Turkey, Jordan does not have an open border policy for the migrants and instead only holds 655,624 Syrian refugees and this is mainly due to the strict restrictions of the country. This figure has remained at a constant rate, and instead of growing it has actually dropped. According to the UNHCR, it is estimated that 80 percent of the Syrian refugees live in rural camps in the Northern areas of the country. However, there are known to be more disadvantages than advantages in Jordan for the Syrian refugees, and one of them being the problem of smuggling and water scarcity as Jordan is one of the hottest countries in the world which results in the lack of necessities for the refugees and the mass restrictions on who can enter the country, and a higher demand for humanitarian assistance.

**The Lebanese Republic**

After Turkey, the Lebanese Republic holds the second highest number of Syrian refugees at over one million. The government of the Lebanon, like Turkey has tried it’s best in order to maintain an open door “border” policy for the Syrian refugees fleeing Syria, however this does clearly prove to be a challenge for the government and the country. Overall the Syrian refugees have proven to be more of a problem than a benefit within the country, due to a variety of culminated reasons. Due to the vast amount of migrants within Lebanon, this has resulted to economic, political as well as social religious tensions within the country which has caused uprisings between different minorities and groups of people. Curfews have actually been placed in order to ensure attacks between extremists and the police force does not occur. Furthermore, another one of the many disadvantages for the refugees as a whole, is that in order to obtain a job, there is high competition with the local Lebanese population and the Syrians are
provided with the lowest paying jobs with the lowest salary which has also proved to damage to the economy.

**United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**

The UNHCR is an international refugee organization that is greatly involved with the issue of both the Syrian refugees and the Rohingyas in Myanmar. In regards to the Syrian refugee crisis, the UNHCR has been involved in a variety of different ways and providing aid and protection towards the Syrian refugees. Within Syria, the UNHCR has constantly been providing life saving equipment for the disabled refugees, such as insulation tents, medicine, food, and shelter kits. As the Syrian Civil War entered 2017, the UNHCR worked together with other humanitarian agencies of the UN, and funded a total of 8 billion United States Dollar (USD) towards the refugees in order to provide them with life saving humanitarian equipment.

However, the UNHCR is also helping the Rohingya refugees in Myanmar and Bangladesh by providing similar equipment as they provide in Syria. In addition, they have also worked closely with the government in order to fund 7.8 billion USD to 250,000 Rohingya refugees. This amount of money was mainly used for providing basic necessities such as clean drinking water, and providing medical care and aid towards the refugees especially the children.

**Republic of the Union of Myanmar**

Myanmar has the biggest influence and involvement with the situation of the Rohingya refugees. When the nation gained independence in 1948, an act was produced called the “Union Citizenship Act”. This allowed for families who have lived in Myanmar for two generations to apply for identity cards. The Rohingya Muslims were given citizenship by the law, and also had seats in the Parliament. However, due to the political unrest of Myanmar, this then resulted in the Military Coup of 1962, the laws and regulations of Myanmar greatly changed which affected the Rohingya Muslims. Eventually, all Burmese citizens were to hold a registration card, however the Rohingya muslims were only given foreign identity cards officially marking them as stateless people. Due to this, the local military in Myanmar has been killing and abusing all the refugees, and is known to be battling against the ARSA rebel group. As this is the case within this situation, the military in Myanmar has been burning down the villages and homes of the Rohingyas causing them to flee. Adding on, the Myanmar State Chancellor Aung San Suu Kyi has refused countless times to speak about the Rohingya, and simply does not comment on the actions of the military in the Rakhine State. Due to the problem and tensions within the Rakhine State, it has caused uprising political tensions between parties, militants and the government forces.
People's Republic of Bangladesh

It is known that more than a million Rohingya refugees have fled Myanmar and crossed the border into Bangladesh. Bangladesh has mainly done everything it can in order to maintain an open border policy for the Rohingya refugees, and has accepted the most refugees. The Bangladeshi government has expanded land and build new refugee camps and shelters, as well as vaccinated children and built proper infrastructure for the Rohingyas. Bangladesh, being the most popular destination for the Rohingya Muslims is because of the various opportunities provided by the government such as obtaining local citizenship and the benefits the government provides. Even though Bangladesh is a developing country, in the present day they can continue supporting the Rohingya. However due to the fluctuating economy, this does not seem to be something they can hold onto for long.

Timeline of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description of event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>The Military coup in Myanmar occurs in order to overthrow the national government. This military coup then resulted in heavily armed government and military forces, which led towards more than 200,000 Rohingya Muslims to be moved across the border.</td>
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<td>1982</td>
<td>In Myanmar, a new citizenship law is imposed and passed, which states that there are 135 ethnic groups in Myanmar, and the Rohingya Muslims are not counted, thus regarding them as stateless people.</td>
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<td>March 2011</td>
<td>The Syrian Civil War begins, and this is due to President Bashar Al Assad's crimes against humanity and the detainment and murder of hundreds of innocent people, which resulted in political unrest and violence.</td>
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<td>May 2011</td>
<td>The first set of refugee camps open in the Republic of Turkey for the Syrians who have fled their country, and Turkey retains their open border policy.</td>
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<td>July 29, 2011</td>
<td>The Free Syrian Army is formed which is composed of military personnel that have defected from the local military due to Assad's crimes against humanity.</td>
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<td>June 2012</td>
<td>Violence in the Rakhine State uprises yet again with more religious violence, and results in the death of more than 150,000 Rohingyas.</td>
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<td>July 2012</td>
<td>The UNHCR in Jordan establish a refugee camp for the Syrian refugees, which is expected to hold an estimated 120,000 refugees.</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2012</td>
<td>Due to the vast influx of refugees, the figure of refugees seeking asylum in neighbouring countries reaches 500,000 refugees.</td>
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The UNHCR alerts neighbouring countries for extra funds due to the high figure of the Syrian refugees, and also warns neighbouring countries such as Jordan and Lebanon to allow Syrians to seek safety.

Myanmar finally takes initiative by counting and recording the population of the country, which includes all 135 ethnic groups, however the Rohingya are excluded.

A growing number of the Syrian refugees are putting their lives at risk by crossing into neighbouring countries and making journeys to Europe.

The UNHCR continues to provide humanitarian and local aid towards the Syrian refugees, especially in neighbouring countries since the number of IDPs has risen to an even higher level.

It is approximated that more than 300 Rohingya militants (a part of ARSA) attack military posts in the Rakhine State, which promotes a new wave of violence. This resulted in a crackdown of the local military in Myanmar and forced more than 87,000 Rohingya militants to flee.

The UNHCR now partners together with Jordan and specifically partners with the refugee camp called Za’atari, and allows Syrian refugees to apply for specific jobs in specific divisions in the working industry in Jordan.

The local media within Myanmar confirms that more than 12 military soldiers were killed by ARSA militants in the Rakhine State, and military posts were attacked.

The military burnt down villages, which then resulted in the Rohingya Muslims to flee to Bangladesh.

More than 600,000 Rohingya refugees have fled to neighbouring Bangladesh in order to escape the violence.

It is estimated that more than 60 percent of the Syrian refugees that reside in Lebanon within the houses provided, are living in extreme poverty and are paid less than 2.87 USD which is forcing Syrian families to make hard choices for their lifestyles.

**Relevant UN Treaties and Events**

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

Regarding the Syrian refugees, the UNHCR and the UN have encouraged neighbouring countries to maintain an open border policy for the refugees. This previous solution was successful, because, due to the vast influx of the Syrian refugees entering neighbouring countries in the Middle East, maintaining an open border policy encouraged by the UN strongly helped the Syrian refugees in seeking asylum within neighbouring countries, rather than risking lives travelling to Europe by boat. This is because specific European countries such as Hungary have sent refugees back to Syria, which then makes it more of a risk as if caught, they face harsh punishments. This is a reason as to why a majority of the refugees choose to flee to neighbouring countries instead. As stated before, neighbouring countries such as Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan have played a major role in the refugee crisis and Lebanon and Turkey have accepted the most Syrian refugees, however Jordan has accepted only a limited amount at 655,624 refugees. This is mainly due to the number of militants and illegal smuggler that attempt to cross into international borders, which has prompted Jordan to take in only a selected amount of refugees, while Turkey and Lebanon maintain a completely open border policy within the country. The open border policy has proven to be the most beneficial, and this is mainly because due to the rejection of refugees seeking asylum in many European Union countries, they are forced to go back to their home country and instead, flee to neighbouring Middle Eastern countries on their return in order to seek asylum and international humanitarian aid and protection.

Adding on, just recently in the year of 2017 a hope for the Rohingya refugees was in sight, for both Myanmar and Bangladesh as a neighbouring country accepting the most Rohingya refugees. As of 2017, both Myanmar and Bangladesh agreed to build on a memorandum together and agreed on the repatriation for the Rohingya Muslims in Bangladesh to return to Myanmar. This solution was mainly set in place, due to the fact that Bangladesh temporarily agreed to allow the Rohingya Muslims to settle in refugee camps for the meantime and if necessary then implement identity cards. Furthermore, even though this agreement was made between the two countries, there is no guarantee that it will follow through in the years to come, and this is mainly because the Rohingyas in Myanmar are considered stateless, and are not recognised as one of the 135 ethnic groups. Also this solution, according to international organizations has a high chance of not being a success, and this is mainly due to the fact that the State Chancellor of Myanmar Aung San Suu Kyi simply does not want the Rohingya minority to reside in Myanmar, which is the backbone reason behind the entire conflict.

Possible Solutions
Syrian Refugees

Regarding the Syrian refugees fleeing to neighbouring countries in the Middle East, a treaty is by far one of the most beneficial ways in order to solve the issue of the vast influx of refugees and the open border policy of neighbouring countries such as Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon. Neighbouring countries such as Turkey and Lebanon have taken in the most Syrian refugees due to their open border policy, and Jordan has imposed strict limitations on how many refugees they take annually. Due to Turkey taking in the most Syrian refugees, a treaty regarding a formal signing of the three countries can ensure that each country takes in a fair amount of refugees annually. This then ensures that no added international pressure is placed on one of the three countries which can result in disagreements and uprisng tensions which then follows up with the treaty not being followed.

Rohingya Muslims

In terms of the Rohingya Muslims, as Bangladesh has taken in the most refugees, another one of the many solutions that can be implemented is for other nations especially the UNSC’s P5 nations which consist of China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States, to fund the UNHCR and the Bangladeshi government. This is so it can assist them both in supporting the Rohingya Muslims. As the UNHCR and the government of Bangladesh, have a limited amount of funds therefore not being able to fully provide the Rohingyas with basic necessities. However, funding and donations from the P5 countries proves to be beneficial, and this is due to the fact that the Rohingya Muslims can slowly start to gain opportunity and benefits from nations and international organizations, which then can result in the government of Bangladesh being able to support all the refugees and having to face minimal challenges during the entire process.

Bibliography


Appendix or Appendices


https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2017-04/expected_council_action_in_april_1.php?print=true