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UN Report on Myanmar Rohingya Crisis

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The UN secretary-general has accepted an independent report on how the UN System operated in Myanmar, leading up to the mass exodus of the Rohingyas following serious human rights abuses.

- The report concluded that there were “**systemic and structural failures**” that prevented a unified strategy from being implemented.
- It covers the period 2010-2018, encompassing the UN's response to the systematic and brutal abuse of hundreds-of-thousands of mainly – **Muslim Rohingya in Rakhine state**, by the national army and security forces, which began in August 2017.
- It was described by the UN human rights chief at the time as a textbook example of ethnic cleansing.

Findings of Report

- **Fragmented strategy:** The report has expressed displeasure over the functioning of the UN agency in handling the violence against the Rohingya. It observes that serious errors were committed and opportunities were lost in the UN system following a **fragmented strategy** rather than a common plan of action.
- **Improper reporting:** There appear to have been instances of **deliberately de-dramatizing events** in reports prepared by the Resident Coordinator, as well as instances of various UN entities, including the Office **for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)**, of not sharing their analysis with other entities of the UN System.

The report also emphasises the impact of competing strategies between some UN agencies and individuals while dealing with the Rohingya crisis.

- **Polarisation:** It appears that the increasing polarisation among officials and staff was fuelled, at least in part, by the emotional reactions to the horrific events taking place on the ground.
- The foundations of **systemic and structural shortcomings** in the UN's presence in Myanmar.

- Insufficient inter-governmental support.
- The absence of a clear and unifying strategy.
- The weakness of a clear nodal point for coordination.
- Dysfunctional actions at the level of the Country Team.
- Shortcomings of systematic and unified analysis from the field

Conclusion and Recommendations

- **Shared responsibility:** It was the shared responsibility on the part of all parties to protect the Rohingya's.
 - The agencies involved have not been able to accompany the Government's political process with constructive actions.
- The report says that the UN Security Council should bear some responsibility, "for not providing enough support to the Secretariat when such backing was required and continues to be essential.
- **The key lesson** was to foster an environment encouraging different entities of the UN System to work together to reinforce a "**broader, system-wide strategy**".

Rohingya people

- The **Rohingya people** are stateless, Indo-Aryan ethnic group who reside in Rakhine State, Myanmar.
- There were an estimated 1 million Rohingya living in Myanmar before the 2016–17 crisis. An estimated 625,000 refugees from Rakhine, Myanmar, had crossed the border into Bangladesh since August 2017. The majority are Muslim while a minority are Hindu.
- Described by the United Nations as one of the most persecuted minorities in the world. The Rohingya population is denied citizenship under the 1982 Myanmar nationality law. They have denied the Rohingya the possibility of acquiring a nationality. Although Rohingya history in the region can be traced back to the 8th century, Myanmar law does not recognize the ethnic minority as one of the eight national indigenous races.

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

- OCHA is the part of the United Nations Secretariat responsible for bringing together humanitarian actors to ensure a coherent response to emergencies. OCHA also ensures there is a framework within which each actor can contribute to the overall response effort.
- It works to overcome obstacles that impede humanitarian assistance from reaching people affected by crises, and it provides leadership in mobilizing assistance and resources on behalf of the humanitarian system. OCHA is not an operational agency directly engaged in the delivery of humanitarian programmes, and its added value is

as an honest broker, facilitator, thought leader and global advocate, providing support to the humanitarian system.