

Complicity in Rohingya genocide cannot go unpunished



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The Rohingya are a minority ethnic group from Myanmar who have long been denied their right to citizenship and fundamental human rights. Several episodes of atrocities have been inflicted upon them since the 1962 military coup in Myanmar, which forced them to flee their land of origin frequently ever since.

Subsequently, in August 2017, the Myanmar military launched massive violence against the Rohingya, resulting in the deportation of over 700,000 people of the community. They eventually sought refuge in neighbouring Bangladesh. Since then, they have been trapped in a political dilemma in exile.

Cox's Bazar Rohingya refugee camp, known as the world's largest refugee camp, is home to one million-plus Rohingya refugees. Some of them fled Myanmar during the outbreaks of violence before the August 2017 onslaught that has been classified as a genocide and termed as a textbook example of ethnic cleansing, according to the United Nations.

The Rohingya have desperately been undergoing a surreal struggle for justice and the restoration of their citizenship for decades. Their case has been filed in three international courts—UN International

Court of Justice, International Criminal Court and an Argentinean federal criminal court—and the Rohingya remain optimistic, resiliently waiting for justice and the courts' decision to hold the perpetrators accountable.

On February 13, 2025, the Argentinean court issued an arrest warrant under universal jurisdiction for 25 people, including General Min Aung Hlaing, the chief of the military, Aung San Suu Kyi, Nobel Peace laureate, 1991 and former state counsellor, and U Htin Kyaw, former president of Myanmar, for their collective complicity in committing the genocide against the Rohingya in August 2017.

After a long overdue wait for justice, this declaration of an international arrest warrant for the perpetrators of the genocide is a remarkable move towards justice and accountability for the Rohingya.

"This brings a ray of hope to Rohingya who have suffered through decades of genocide, watching their families and culture be destroyed with impunity. It is also a victory for international justice at a time of growing violations of international law worldwide," Tun Khin, president of the Burmese Rohingya Organisation UK (BROUK), described in their press release on



FILE PHOTO: AFP

The August 2017 Rohingya genocide has been termed as a textbook example of ethnic cleansing by the United Nations, which many quarters in Myanmar refuse to acknowledge.

the issuance of the arrest warrant.

Soon after the issuance of the arrest warrant, on February 18, 2025, the National Unity Government (NUG) released a statement urging the Argentinean court to remove the names of Suu Kyi and Htin Kyaw, particularly, from the prosecution.

It's quite appalling to see the NUG struggling to defend alleged genociders Aung San Su Kyi and U Htin Kyaw, and trying to argue that they were not complicit in the genocide against the Rohingya in August 2017.

On February 19, 2025, U Ne Bone Lat, the NUG chief minister's office spokesperson,

told the Yangon-based media outlet Khit Thit Media that the NUG would use all protocols to revoke former State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi from being included in the arrest warrant issued by the Argentinean court.

Moreover, the NUG has been silent during the atrocious crimes committed against the Rohingya by the Arakan Army, similar to the atrocities committed by the military against the Rohingya back in 2017. This clearly demonstrates the NUG's concerns towards the Rohingya.

Although Aung Kyaw Moe, a Rohingya, is NUG deputy human rights minister, it does not ensure that the NUG recognised the

Rohingya as an indigenous ethnic group of Myanmar.

The recent statement released by the NUG shows their true face and that they have been playing a political game with the Rohingya. The inclusion of Aung Kyaw Moe in NUG is a mere strategy to gain international legitimacy.

Aung San Su Kyi rejected allegations of Rohingya genocide at the International Court of Justice in 2019. This clearly shows her role in providing the political cover in executing this genocide.

"Aung San Suu Kyi is not only defending the military and the military's actions against ethnic nationalities, but she is also defending herself. She is potentially criminally liable for international crimes against the Rohingya. At this point, I think a lot of her denials about the realities on the ground are, at least to a certain extent, rooted in that," Matthew Smith, chief executive officer of Fortify Rights, told BBC in an interview back in late 2019.

In NUG's statement, they welcomed the efforts of the Argentinean court to punish the perpetrators, but they referred to the genocide committed against the Rohingya as mass atrocities, indirectly saying that it was not a genocide.

The international community now sees the other side of the NUG and Aung San Suu Kyi. Nobel Peace Laureate Suu Kyi, known as the mother of democracy in Myanmar, does not support recognition of the Rohingya's right to citizenship. Those envisioning a federally democratic, inclusive and equitable Myanmar should stop defending Suu Kyi. She deserves nothing more than criticism for her role in the Rohingya crisis. As an internationally wanted criminal, she should face justice.

US exit from Ukraine: A turning point in global power struggles



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The recent developments surrounding the US' withdrawal from its active support for Ukraine are set to have profound geopolitical ramifications. This decision, following heated exchanges in the Oval Office between US President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Zelensky, signals a pivotal shift in the trajectory of the Russia-Ukraine war and broader global power dynamics.

President Trump's assertion that US involvement in peace talks would have been advantageous to Ukraine, coupled with the abrupt disengagement, highlights Washington's prioritisation of de-escalation over indefinite military entanglement. The immediate consequences will be most deeply felt by Ukraine, which has relied heavily on Western support to sustain its resistance against Russia. The war has already demonstrated that military engagements are not solely determined by battlefield strategy but also by the ability to secure long-term logistical and intelligence support. The backbone of Ukraine's counteroffensive has been advanced US weaponry, particularly HIMARS, whose success was contingent on US



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, and French President Emmanuel Macron hold a meeting during a summit at Lancaster House in London on March 2.

PHOTO: AFP

to sustain Ukraine without US backing is highly uncertain. Internal divisions within the EU further complicate matters, as demonstrated by disputes over financial commitments and strategic direction. Recent reports of France blocking proposed funding for Ukraine illustrate these fractures, raising doubts about the bloc's ability to act cohesively. While

to gain significantly from this shift. With Ukraine's capacity to counterattack diminished, Moscow is likely to capitalise on the situation by intensifying its operations. The removal of US intelligence support further tilts the balance in Russia's favour, making it increasingly difficult for Ukraine to intercept and neutralise missile strikes. Reports of additional North Korean forces being sent to support Russian efforts underscore the Kremlin's strategy of leveraging allied resources to exert pressure on Kyiv. If Ukraine's defensive capabilities weaken substantially, the likelihood of Russia securing further territorial gains increases, placing additional strain on President Zelensky's government.

In Washington, the situation is further complicated by the unpredictability of US politics. If Donald Trump returns to power, the US approach towards Ukraine could shift even more dramatically. Trump's transactional foreign policy style suggests he may push for swift negotiations, possibly leveraging intelligence to pressure Kyiv into a settlement. The overarching implication is that Ukraine has limited options and may have to accelerate its diplomatic efforts to avoid further losses. The geopolitical repercussions extend beyond Ukraine and Russia. The US decision signals a broader recalibration of its global commitments, reflecting a shift from interventionist policies towards more calculated strategic engagement. This repositioning may erode global confidence in US commitments, reinforcing the perception that US alliances are conditional and subject to rapid change. Such a perception creates opportunities for rival powers, particularly China, to expand their influence by presenting themselves as more reliable partners in international diplomacy.

The broader takeaway from these developments is that war, particularly in the modern era, is as much about technological superiority and strategic alliances as it is about direct combat. The reliance on intelligence, cyber capabilities, and advanced military logistics has redefined the nature of warfare. The US' withdrawal from active involvement in Ukraine is not merely a shift in policy but a revelation of the structural limitations that even well-equipped nations face in sustaining prolonged conflicts. For Ukraine, the imperative now is to reassess its strategy in light of diminished external support, while Europe must confront the reality of its military dependencies. The consequences of this moment will reverberate far beyond the battlefield, shaping the geopolitical landscape for years to come.

The psychological toll of this shift cannot be overstated, as the perception of abandonment risks demoralising troops and complicating strategic planning. The immediate political consequence is that Kyiv's negotiating position is severely weakened.

cyber and satellite assistance. The cessation of such support renders these systems significantly less effective, exposing Ukraine to renewed vulnerabilities.

The impact extends beyond hardware deficiencies to a more critical challenge—morale. Ukrainian forces, who have fought fiercely in the belief that continued Western

support would eventually tip the scales in their favour, now face a stark reality where the largest contributor to their military effort has effectively stepped back. The psychological toll of this shift cannot be overstated, as the perception of abandonment risks demoralising troops and complicating strategic planning. The immediate political consequence is that Kyiv's negotiating position is severely weakened. The US' prior insistence on peace talks, coupled with economic pressures and dwindling supplies, will likely push Ukraine towards a settlement on terms less favourable than previously envisioned.

For Europe, the repercussions of US' retreat are equally significant. The European Union, despite its vocal backing of Ukraine, has long remained dependent on US military capabilities, particularly in intelligence gathering, satellite data, and weapons systems. With US stepping back, the question now arises as to whether European powers can fill the void. While the United Kingdom, France, and Germany possess military resources, their ability

some European states may push for increased military aid, others will likely advocate restraint, fearing the economic and security consequences of prolonged involvement.

The larger strategic fallout will be seen in Europe's defence policies. Historically reliant on US military dominance, European nations now face the necessity of bolstering their own capabilities. The recognition of vulnerabilities in air defence and missile deterrence is already prompting discussions on increased defence spending, with some assessments suggesting that Europe requires over a thousand long-range nuclear capable missiles to establish credible deterrence against Russia. However, such military expansion is not a short-term endeavour, and economic constraints will pose significant hurdles. In the long run, the prospect of an arms race in Europe could intensify regional tensions, raising the possibility of larger conflicts rather than ensuring stability.

Russia, on the other hand, stands

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
1 Provide food for
6 Venomous snake
11 Throw with effort
12 Irritate
13 Military, navy, etc.
15 Diner dessert
16 Corn spike
17 Mine yield
18 Butler or maid
20 Animal abode
21 Golfer Ernie
22 Witty remark
23 Sells for
26 Some statues
27 Aware of
28 Egg layer
29 In the style of
30 Diet unit
34 Stimp's pal
35 Maximum amount
36 Santa — winds
37 Groups of company vendors
40 Calendar entry
41 Question of place
42 Oboe parts
43 Classes
- DOWN**
1 Cowboy wear
2 Eagle's home
3 Circus performer
4 Genesis name
5 Gives out new hands
6 Left, on a liner
7 German article
8 Breaks a cipher
9 Himalayan peak
10 Bristles at
14 Stadium group
19 White House power
22 Jupiter's wife
23 More vulgar
24 Taking a sabbatical
25 Spider-Man creator
26 Accordion part
28 Sports period
30 Play groups
31 Indy entrant
32 Like argon
33 Moves cautiously
38 Final part
39 Pi follower



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