

Downfall of an Icon: Aung San Suu Kyi, the Rohingyas, and the Bigger Picture

Global Research News Hour episode 191

By [Michael Welch](#), [Stephen Lendman](#), and [Whitney Webb](#)

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Region: [Asia](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [GLOBAL RESEARCH NEWS HOUR](#),
[Media Disinformation](#), [US NATO War](#)
[Agenda](#)

"There have been disturbing reports of attacks by security forces against civilians, which are completely unacceptable. Aid activities...have been severely disrupted. I call on the Myanmar authorities to suspend military action, end the violence, uphold the rule of law, and recognize the right of return of all those who had to leave the country." – United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres (September 13, 2017) [1]

"Like so many other cases of ethnic cleansing, the Rohingya conflict is essentially a conflict over resources, namely oil and gas." – Whitney Webb (September 20, 2017) [2]

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Over the last year, and particularly in recent weeks, Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi has had her status as a pro-democracy icon [tarnished](#).

Since August 25th, violence directed by the Myanmar security forces toward the Rohingya peoples has forced more than 400,000 to cross the border into neighbouring Bangladesh. [3]

Former allies and admirers of Aung San Suu Kyi are now condemning her inaction in the face of these measures against the Rohingya. There has been open talk of [rescinding her Nobel Peace Prize](#). Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is facing pressure to [revoke the Myanmar leader's status as an honorary Canadian citizen](#). Even fellow Nobel laureate and celebrated anti-apartheid activist [Desmond Tutu could not contain his disappointment](#) saying:

"If the political price of your ascension to the highest office in [Myanmar](#) is your silence, the price is surely too steep...It is incongruous for a symbol of righteousness to lead such a country."

The Myanmar top general claims the recent crack down is [in retaliation against Rohingya militants](#), a group "with no roots in the country" which attacked dozens of police positions on August 25th.

On September 13th, the UN Secretary-General gave the crisis [top billing during a press](#)

[conference](#). The ‘ethnic cleansing’ of the Rohingya is making international headlines.

It is not unusual for mainstream press and Western political leaders to downplay human rights abuses by their allies (eg. Israel, Saudi Arabia) while waxing indignant about the crimes of official enemies (eg. Cuba, Venezuela, Syria).

So what are we to read into the change in attitude toward Aung San Suu Kyi, [arguably a tool of US ambitions in the region](#) since the beginning? This question dominates our focus on this week’s Global Research News Hour.

In our first half hour, fellow broadcaster Stephen Lendman joins us to share what prompted him to write two recent articles on the Rohingya and Aung San Suu Kyi. [4] [5] In a 20 minute discussion we explore the question of foreign support for Suu Kyi’s ‘pro-democracy’ movement, the role of celebrity in achieving imperial ends, and whether the current ‘calling out’ of the former darling of the West signals a welcome correction of US strategic aims.

In our second half hour, we probe more deeply into the question of US imperial aims. Chile-based writer Whitney Webb wrote an article for Mint Press News entitled [Oil, Gas, Geopolitics Guide US Hand In Playing The Rohingya Crisis](#). This September 20th article, exposes a destabilization campaign being deliberately instigated through Saudi and Pakistani sources, prompting the Myanmar government’s violent crack-down. She brushes aside misleading rhetoric about human rights as a motivating factor and puts Myanmar in the context of basic power principles and the South Asian state’s critical role on the current geopolitical chessboard.

Stephen Lendman is an independent journalist, blogger and broadcaster with the [Progressive Radio network](#). He is a project censored winner and recipient of the Mexican Journalists Club international journalism award. He is also the editor of and contributor to the 2014 book “[Flashpoint in Ukraine: How the US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III](#).” from Clarity Press. He is also a frequent contributor to Global Research and a frequent guest on this program. His writings are archived on his new website: [stephenlendman.org](#).

Whitney Webb is a contributor to [Mintpress News](#) and has written for several news organizations in both English and Spanish. Her stories have been featured on ZeroHedge, the Anti-Media, Global Research, 21st Century Wire, and True Activist among others. She is based in Temuco, Chile.

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It is also available on 93.9 FM cable in the communities of SFU, Burnaby, New Westminister, Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, Surrey and Delta, in British Columbia, Canada. – Tune in at its new time – Wednesdays at 4pm PT.

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Notes:

1. <http://webtv.un.org/watch/ant%C3%B3nio-guterres-un-secretary-general-press-conference-13-september-2017/5575111900001/>
2. <http://www.mintpressnews.com/oil-gas-geopolitics-us-rohingya-crisis/232145/>
3. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41315924>
4. <http://stephenlendman.org/2017/09/the-rohingya-genocide/>
5. <http://stephenlendman.org/2017/09/nobel-laureate-suu-kyi-ignores-genocidal-slaughter-rohingyas/>

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