

LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP: CRIMINAL JUSTICE APPROACHES
FOR PREVENTING MASS ATROCITIES

MODULE 7: First-Hand Testimony



UNITED STATES
HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
MUSEUM



MODULE 7: FIRST-HAND TESTIMONY

The purpose of this module is for participants to reflect on the human impact of decisions made by criminal justice professionals during mass atrocities. The module can also serve to remind participants of their own potential agency even in complex situations. Participants will view a video featuring Wai Wai Nu, a representative from the Rohingya community who shares her experiences interacting with the criminal justice system in Burma from 2012 to 2016. In lieu of this video, the instructor may choose to lengthen the module and bring in an in-person speaker who can talk about his or her encounters with the domestic criminal justice system as a member of a targeted group in the context of mass atrocities. Guidelines for arranging a Holocaust survivor presentation can be found [here](#); these guidelines may also be adapted when inviting members of communities affected by other mass atrocities to speak.

The second segment of the module will provide time for participants to reflect on their own domestic context (which can include the before stage) to consider what roadblocks they might face as members of the criminal justice system in seeking to address mass atrocity-related issues. They will consider what possible solutions exist to solve these roadblocks.

Guiding questions for this module

- How do mass atrocity events affect individuals, their families, and their communities?
- Why does this matter for criminal justice professionals?
- What are the obstacles to addressing the possibility of a mass atrocity event?
- How can these obstacles best be overcome?

Module objectives

- Participants better understand the human impact, both positive and negative, that the actions of criminal justice leaders can have on targeted groups. As a result, participants are motivated to dialogue with communities affected by mass atrocities appropriately and to engage these communities in their work.
- Participants demonstrate enhanced understanding of the key themes of the course and how they relate to criminal justice professionals.
- Participants are able to identify potential challenges for criminal justice professionals attempting to prevent, mitigate, or address mass atrocities and possible ways to overcome these challenges.

Module length: 30 minutes

SEGMENT	LENGTH
Introduction	2 minutes
Video and Discussion: One Story of Many: Rohingya Testimony	27 minutes
Conclusion	1 minute

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Required materials

- Module #7 PowerPoint
- Video: “[One Story of Many: Rohingya Testimony](#)”
- Chart paper for recording responses to roadblocks question (optional)

Further reading

- Key Resource: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, [Guide to Criminal Justice and Preventing Mass Atrocities](#) (2023), Chapters 2 and 4
- United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, [Guidelines for Arranging a Survivor Presentation](#)
- United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, [Guidelines for Teaching with Holocaust Survivor Testimony](#)

LESSON PLAN

Introduction (2 minutes)

Slides 1–2

Explain: “In this session, we will view a short testimony video of Wai Wai Nu, a member of the Rohingya community, lawyer, and human rights advocate, describing her interactions with the criminal justice system in Burma just before the onset of mass atrocities against the Rohingya in 2017.

“Through Wai Wai Nu’s testimony, we will

- Explore the impact of mass atrocities on individuals, their families, and their communities
- Discuss the impact, both positive and negative, that the actions of criminal justice leaders can have on targeted groups
- Discuss what roadblocks exist to addressing mass atrocity risk in your own context and possible solutions to these roadblocks

Note: In lieu of Wai Wai Nu’s testimony, the instructor may choose to allot more time for this module and bring in an in-person survivor speaker who can share his or her encounters with the domestic criminal justice system as a member of a targeted group in a mass atrocity scenario. In this case, the instructor can modify the discussion questions that follow to fit with the survivor testimony presented to participants.

Video and Discussion: Rohingya Testimony (27 minutes)

Slides 3–5

Instructor should play the short video of Wai Wai Nu’s testimony (*approximately 5–10 minutes*). After the video has been played, the instructor may wish to use a “think-pair-share” format, where participants are given a few minutes to reflect quietly and write down their answers to the discussion questions, then a few minutes to share in pairs with their neighbor, and then the remaining time is spent in discussion with the larger group.

Ask: “What stood out to you as you listened to Wai Wai Nu’s testimony?”

Ask: “What impact did the actions of police and others within the Burmese criminal justice system have on Wai Wai Nu and those in her community? What impact might these actions have on the larger society or the criminal justice system going forward?”

Ask: “This testimony addressed the role of criminal justice leaders in the midst of complex situations. What roadblocks, if any, exist to addressing mass atrocity risk in your own context? What are some possible solutions to these roadblocks?”

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Note: Instructor may wish to collect the roadblocks listed by participants on a piece of chart paper during the discussion for possible reference and use during Module 9. Instructor may also wish to emphasize how working with affected communities can help participants overcome some of the roadblocks identified and the ways in which affected communities can help with early warning, conflict mitigation, protections, and more.

Conclusion (1 minute)

Instructor may conclude the segment by summarizing points made by participants about the impact of the actions of criminal justice professionals on targeted communities and transition to the next module on redress.

Cover: A displaced Yazidi man from Iraq shows the bullet that was pulled from his leg. He was shot by Islamic State fighters but was lucky enough to survive and escape. *Mackenzie Knowles-Coursin for the US Holocaust Memorial Museum*