



Open Letter from Community Organizations Calling for Action Regarding Burma to Support Ethnic Nationalities and Prioritize Human Rights

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(Washington, DC, February 11, 2021) – Today, 165 ethnic community organizations in Burma and from around the world sent a letter to the member and observer states of the United Nations Human Rights Council to call on their support for ethnic minorities and to prioritize human rights after the illegal military coup that occurred on February 1, 2021.

Human rights violations, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and mass atrocities committed by the Burma Army with impunity are well documented by community based organizations, civil society organizations on the ground, UN Rapporteurs, INGOs, and many others. For decades, the Burma Army waged campaigns of violence and executed clearance operations against the ethnic minorities, while inciting conflict with ethnic armed organizations. The extreme amount of abuses perpetrated by the Burma Army should encourage the member and observer states of the United Nations Human Rights Council to protest the Burma Army's long-standing human rights violations and to act with a sense of urgency in protecting the ethnic minorities.

While much of the international community's attention is focused on central Burma, the ongoing militarization continues to increase in ethnic states. The country's ethnic communities are still directly affected by the military coup. After the National League of Democracy came into power, it was clear the Burma Army still maintained its hold on the country and the brutal suffering of ethnic minorities continued without sufficient action from the international community. The fear of violence and the unknown continues to grow amongst the ethnic communities after the recent coup d'etat. The UNHRC needs to use their power and influence to ensure that the Burma Army ceases all forms of violence while taking decisive action to guarantee the safety of ethnic minorities and prevent further collapse of the situation.

"On Friday, as the UN Human Rights Council convenes to discuss the current state of affairs in Burma, it is important that the UNHRC remember the impacted communities who are suffering human rights abuses at the hands of the Burma Army. The UNHRC cannot forget that the military has targeted all ethnic nationalities for decades. In 2019, the UNHRC commissioned an independent fact-finding report that found that Burma's ethnic minorities universally experience human rights violations and severe discrimination at the hands of the very same Burmese military who staged the coup. The UNHRC should take the crimes of the Burma Army seriously and hold them accountable," said Myra Dahgaypaw.

After years of human rights abuses and no justice, the people of Burma deserve peace. Ensuring political stability, security, and democracy necessitates holding the Burma Army accountable for their crimes.

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