



**The Network for Human Rights Documentation - Burma Releases New Briefing Paper,
*Defending Democracy: Four Years Since the Failed Coup in Burma***

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Four years ago, the military junta attempted to undermine the results of a free and fair national election in Burma, in which the National League for Democracy achieved an overwhelming victory. On 1 February 2021, the Burma Army, led by war criminal Min Aung Hlaing, swiftly imprisoned activists, politicians, and critics of the regime while falsely declaring themselves the legitimate authority of the country, alleging election fraud without evidence. Within hours, Burma's political discourse would be remembered as a dark and deliberate attack on democratic principles, rights and freedoms.

Today, the Network for Human Rights Documentation-Burma (ND-Burma) publishes "*Defending Democracy: Four Years Since the Failed Coup in Burma*," which examines the key movements and significant events that have influenced the People's Revolution. Despite the tremendous risks faced by human rights defenders in Burma and border regions, their steadfast dedication to achieving a federal Burma has prevented the junta's coup from succeeding.

The military's violence has increasingly undermined the rights and freedoms of the people of Burma, among them millions of innocent women and children who continue to suffer. The first year of the failed coup saw deaths in broad daylight across urban and rural areas. By the second year, the junta brutally ordered the executions of four prominent, imprisoned activists: Ko Jimmy (Kyaw Min Yu), Phyo Zeya Thaw, Hla Myo Aung, and Aung Thura Zaw. In 2023, the intensifying armed conflict impacted 80% of the country's townships (225 out of 330).


Last year, in September 2024, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights declared that at least 5,350 civilians have been killed and more than 3.3 million displaced in Burma since the coup. Local organizations have reported higher numbers in their respective areas.

Women and children are disproportionately impacted by violence in Burma. The escalation of attacks includes the use of drones by the military junta, which are becoming a new tool of terror in the war against innocent people. ND-Burma member organizations have consistently and courageously continued to document human rights violations to ensure evidence is preserved to hold the junta accountable for its widespread and systematic crimes.


As Burma's citizens enter the fifth year since the blatant attack on their rights and freedoms, the strength of the People's Revolution remains undiminished and shows no signs of stopping. The international community must demonstrate its commitment to democratic values by ending all ties that risk legitimizing the military junta. They must also heed the calls made by civil society organizations and the National Unity Government to ensure that Burma's future is one where all people can live freely and safely.

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The Network for Human Rights Documentation-Burma (ND-Burma) consists of 13 organisations representing a range of ethnic nationalities, women, and former political prisoners. Since 2004, ND-Burma member organisations have been documenting human rights abuses and fighting for justice for victims. The network has nine full members and four affiliate members.