

# HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL - 48<sup>th</sup> SESSION

## Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Myanmar (oral progress report)

[Thomas H. Andrews - UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar:](#)

Since 1 February, the military junta and its forces **murdered more than 1,100 people, arbitrarily detained more than 8,000, and forcibly displaced more than 230,000 civilians**, bringing the total number of internally placed persons in Myanmar to well over **half a million**.

Junta military forces have **killed protesters in the streets, murdered civilians in their homes, beaten individuals to death and tortured people to death** while in **detention**. They have killed people with **bombings, rocket-propelled grenades and automatic weapons**. They have attacked entire villages with **airstrikes**. They have also **blocked critical humanitarian aid, food, medicine and other supplies**. Children have not been spared. As of July, the **junta had killed at least 75 children** aged from 14 months to 17 years. These children were hit by junta vehicles, shot by junta forces or killed by artillery.

The junta has also systematically **destroyed civil and political rights in Myanmar**, dismantling freedom of **expression and association**, the **right to privacy, access to justice**, and a **free press**. It shuts down the **Internet** and **tortures journalists**. Now the junta is relying on the use of **collective punishment**, including the **abduction** of family members of those who have been issued arrest warrants. The junta also continues to **deny the existence of the Rohingya** ethnic minority while denying them citizenship and fundamental rights, putting more than **600,000 Rohingya** living in Myanmar in danger.

The **right to health** is being undermined by the junta's **assault on the health care system** and health care professionals who are working tirelessly during the pandemic. Junta forces are harassing, **arbitrarily detaining, torturing and killing health care providers**. Junta forces attacked healthcare workers or facilities in at least **260 separate incidences** from 1 February to 25 August 2021.

There is a compelling case that the military junta is committing **crimes against humanity**.

As conditions deteriorated, a **National Unity Government (NUG)** was formed as a legitimate opposition government to the junta by members of the deposed civilian government and ethnic leaders. The NUG has sought support from the international community to confront Myanmar's health care crisis and is **working on accountability for past crimes**. With the escalation of attacks by junta forces, the NUG declared that the people of Myanmar have the **right to protect themselves**.

Despite the current climate we observe **positive developments** such as **relentless activists, peaceful protesters, police and military defectors, doctors** who continue to care for patients despite the dangers of doing so. Over **5,000 peaceful protests** have occurred since the coup and an estimated **2,000 police and military personnel** have **defected from the junta**.

The **Civil Disobedience Movement**, civil society organizations and people throughout Myanmar have appealed to the nations of the world to support their **citizen sanctions with targeted economic sanctions**. 462 Myanmar civil society organizations signed an appeal for **sanctions** to be imposed on **Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise** to stop the junta from continuing to steal the country's natural-resource wealth. What can be the role played by the international community? Nations that are willing to support Myanmar's citizen **sanctions** should do so in a **coordinated program of targeted economic sanctions and an embargo of weapons** and dual use technology. There is no time to lose.

Current efforts by the international community to stop the downward spiral of events in Myanmar are simply not working. A **change of course is necessary**. **Inaction and complacency** with the status quo should not be an option that is acceptable to **members of this Human Rights Council**.



## INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

### Delegations that took the floor during the Interactive Dialogue (26 statements)

European Union, Pakistan *on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation*, Sweden *on behalf of Nordic-Baltic States*, Liechtenstein, France, Australia, Luxembourg, Bangladesh, Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Thailand, United States, Turkey, India, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Belgium, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Philippines, United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Timor-Leste, Lao, Brunei-Darussalam, Maldives.

All delegations taking the floor expressed their deep concerns over the situation in Myanmar. States condemned the **grave human rights violations committed in Myanmar** by the military junta, including the **arbitrary arrests, killings of civilians, violations of freedoms of expression, opinion and movement and targeting of human rights defenders, health workers, journalists and children**. States reiterated that **accountability** for the violations committed was the key for justice and lasting peace in Myanmar.

States urged the junta to resume **cooperation with the Special Rapporteur** and allow his **visit to Myanmar**.

Several States taking the floor expressed their **support for the ASEAN peace** process and the **5-points consensus for Myanmar** (1 - an immediate cessation of violence in Myanmar; 2- constructive dialogue among all parties; 3 - the appointment of a special ASEAN envoy to facilitate dialogue; 4 - the provision of humanitarian assistance; 5 - a visit by the envoy to Myanmar).

States were concerned by the **humanitarian situation in Myanmar**. With **COVID-19 exacerbating the crisis**, they agreed with the Special Rapporteur that the humanitarian crisis could be a **risk for the region**. States urged the junta to allow **unhindered access to humanitarian aid** in Myanmar.

Several States also underlined the situation of the **Rohingya Muslims** and called for **their safe and dignified return**.

**Indonesia and Philippines** expressed their **disagreement with the sanctions** advised by the Special Rapporteur. They reminded that sanctions have negative effects on the human rights of the population.

### 8 NGOs took the floor during the Interactive Dialogue:

CIVICUS, Human Rights Now, FIDH, Forum Asia, Article 19, Christian Solidarity Worldwide, International Commission of Jurists, Legal Action Worldwide.

Statements from civil society denounced the **grave human rights violations** committed by the military junta in Myanmar. *CIVICUS* denounced the **terror campaign** of the junta against the **human rights defenders** and the **ill-treatment, enforced disappearances and arbitrary arrests** of **journalists** and members of civil society in Myanmar. *Human Rights Now* denounced the **firing of live ammunitions** against peaceful protesters and the **curfew** and **internet restrictions** imposed. *FIDH* denounced the **civilian deaths in detention** due to ill-treatment and torture, and urged the Security Council to **refer the situation to the ICC**.

*Forum Asia* reminded that since the attempted coup, the junta has **killed at least 1,114** and arrested **8,289 people**. At least **6,637, including children, are still in detention**, with many subjected to torture. *Article 19* exposed the **violations of freedom of expression** and situation of **journalists** and media workers in Myanmar. *Christian Solidarity Worldwide* demanded a **global arms embargo on Myanmar** to pressurize the military regime. *The International Commission of Jurists* stated that the military junta was responsible of **crimes against humanity**. *Legal Action Worldwide*, **representing 500 Rohingya survivors** demanded justice for the crimes committed by the Tatmadaw, in order to return home safely and with dignity.

Watch the full Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on [UN WebTV](#)