

Please copy and paste the following text into your e-mail

To: ASEAN Foreign Ministers

On 1 February, the Myanmar military seized power in a military coup d'etat and arbitrarily detained President Win Myint, State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and other civilian leaders. A year-long state of emergency was declared, installing Vice-President and former lieutenant-general Myint Swe as the acting President, who immediately handed over power to commander-in-chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

The coup has been met with nationwide peaceful demonstrations by the people of Myanmar demanding that the Military respects the outcomes of the November 2020 elections, restores the elected civilian government and releases all those who are arbitrarily detained, and that the Military be held accountable for its atrocities.

The junta has responded to these protests with systematic and violent crackdowns. The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar has described the junta's crackdown on peaceful protestors as crimes against humanity. Since the coup, over 755 people, including at least 43 children, women and medical workers have been killed so far in the junta's violence.

Also, over 4,496 people, including human rights defenders and journalists documenting the military's atrocities, civil society and political activists, and civilian political leaders have been arbitrarily arrested and detained and raided their offices and homes. Whereabouts of many who have been arrested remain unknown while several others have reported torture, sexual violence and ill treatment in detention.

Amid the growing opposition to the junta, the military has escalated its military offensives in ethnic areas displacing thousands of people and forcing many to seek refuge in neighbouring countries.

The junta has resorted to internet shutdowns, social media and media blackouts, disinformation campaigns, and disingenuous political overtures to counter the growing protest movement, silence opposition and hide and destroy evidence of its atrocities.

The unfolding human rights catastrophe will only worsen if ASEAN leaders fail to make a timely and collective intervention.

The 24 April ASEAN Special Summit on Myanmar was not enough to address the crisis in Myanmar, as well as risks legitimising a military junta that fought against the power of Myanmar's democratically elected Government of National Unity by giving Min Aung Hlaing a seat at the table.

As someone who is concerned about the situation in Myanmar where the violations committed by the military could amount to crimes against humanity, I urge ASEAN leaders to:

- Ensure the will and voices of the people of Myanmar are represented and included in all ASEAN discussions and decisions regarding the situation in Myanmar.
- Call on Myanmar military to respect the will of the people expressed in the November 2020 elections, restore the elected civilian government, release all those who are

arbitrarily detained, refrain from using violence against peaceful protestors, and ensure all fundamental rights of the people of Myanmar.

- Respect the protection of human rights, democracy and fundamental freedoms in the ASEAN Charter to forging an alternative regionalism to address key human rights violations in the region, such as the Myanmar coup and Rohingya genocide.
- Uphold a people-centric approach by ensuring meaningful civil society engagement in addressing key human rights issues within the region.
- Collaborate with the UN Security Council, UN Human Rights Council and other UN mechanisms to immediately send a delegation to the country to monitor the situation and help negotiate a democratic and human rights-based solution.
- Revising the terms of reference of the ASEAN mechanisms to empower them to respond to grave human rights violations effectively.
- Impose targeted financial sanctions on the Myanmar military as an institution, including its businesses and its associates, in a manner that respects human rights and gives due consideration to any potential negative socio-economic impacts on the civilian population, as recommended by the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar.
- Imposing an embargo on the transfer or sale of military arms and equipment to Myanmar.
- Encouraging ASEAN's dialogue partners to support ASEAN's initiatives in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

[Your Name]