



Women's Peace Network

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Statement: Myanmar military and security forces must be held accountable for unlawful death in custody, including that of Ma Malar Win | March 21, 2021

Women's Peace Network is extremely appalled at the tragic death of Ma Malar Win, a 39 year-old woman, wife, and a mother of three in Pakokku, Magway Region. On the night of March 19, the Myanmar military and security forces brutally cracked down on protesters, shot Ma Malar Win in the thigh, and arbitrarily arrested her and seven other civilians. The following morning, Ma Malar Win's family was contacted to retrieve her: her bruised, scarred, and dead body. Ma Malar Win's murder follows the cases of U Khin Maung Win and U Zaw Myat Lin, all of whom died in the Myanmar security forces' custody -- with justice yet to be served.

Notorious for its practice of torture and abuse, the Myanmar military and security forces must be held accountable for committing these heinous crimes immediately.

We urge the international community, under international law, to investigate the brutal murder of Ma Malar Win according to the Minnesota Protocol on the Investigation of Potentially Unlawful Death. Wrongful death in custody is a serious violation of international law and human rights norms, including the UN Charter, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Punishment. In particular, torture against women is a violation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women.

Moreover, we call upon the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to immediately take measures for conducting detention visits. As preventing torture is a part of its mission, the ICRC must work towards ensuring the well-being and safety of all detainees and political prisoners in Myanmar.

We call for immediate action before another civilian dies in custody, as the Myanmar military and security forces' widespread and systematic use of violence may amount to crimes against humanity.

