



Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP)
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Singapore's Foreign Minister, Vivian Balakrishnan, today offered his comments on the attempted military coup and crackdown in Burma.

After acknowledging the “national shame” any military should have for shooting unarmed peaceful protestors. He went on to say that “external pressure” and “economic sanctions” will not have a required impact.

This does not acknowledge the fact sanctions did not work in the past because they were initiated as a detached policy. Sanctions must be used alongside stern and forceful diplomatic intervention. The regime after 1988 could not have survived without the economic investment and non-interference of the region.

ASEANs non-interference policy is currently having a tremendous negative effect on the lives and liberty of people in Burma.

We are also deeply concerned if Singapore is in “daily contact” with the junta designated Foreign Minister Wunna Maung Lwin, any action which provides legitimacy to the military is not in line with the desires of people in Burma.

If ASEAN provides legitimacy to the junta regime, they are condoning the grave human rights abuses committed by the military. This must not be allowed to happen.

Diplomatic regional support is what the military is relying on when it terrorizes its people, the junta admitted this to Special Envoy Schraner Burgener this week, telling her “we have to learn to walk with only few friends”.

Looting, and killing unarmed peaceful protestors is not guaranteed in the ASEAN Charter. This is about morality and giving dignity to the people in Burma who are making their voices heard.

If regional leaders are not standing with Burma's people, then they are standing with the military's past and present crimes against humanity.

**In Solidarity,
AAPP**