



Coup in Burma is an Outrage that Demands Immediate Response

1st February 2021 -- London, UK -- Early in the morning on 1 February, several political leaders, including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and President U Win Myint, were confirmed to have been detained by the Burmese army. Shortly after, military media announced a year-long state of emergency in the country where the current Vice President, who was appointed by the military, would be president for the duration. Control of the government has been given to the military under command of General Min Aung Hlaing. The coup follows outrageous claims of election fraud during the country's recent General Election, and this is now being used as a pretext for the state of emergency. BHRN insists that the army immediately relinquish power, release all illegally detained politicians and activists, and that the international community immediately take steps to confront the issue.

"We have long known that the military sought to consolidate its power, and they have done so today by force with the world watching. These efforts completely demolish any democratic progress the country has made and serve only to protect and elevate the Commander-in-Chief, Min Aung Hlaing. The time for softball diplomacy is over, the international community must immediately impose targeted sanctions on the generals and their enterprises and should view these arrests as a continuation of the crimes which the Burmese military and its leadership are already being investigated for at the International Court of Justice," Said BHRN's Executive Director Kyaw Win

Under military rule, the safety and security of minorities in Burma are clearly compromised and the military must be held accountable for any human rights violation against them. Internet access and phone lines must be immediately restored. Without communication NGOs and diplomats are unable to monitor for human rights violations committed by the military. BHRN is also deeply concerned for the safety and security of human rights defenders, journalists, and activists.

The international community has spent far too much time using soft diplomacy with the Burmese military in an attempt to preserve what democratic progress they believed was being made. It has long been clear that the military would refuse to relinquish power, and now this is more apparent than ever. The international community must immediately institute new strict sanctions and isolate the military as a pariah. There must not be any compromise that would allow them to unconstitutionally maintain power or detain opposition political figures and activists. It must be made exceptionally clear that the Burmese army has crossed a line and that all options are on the table.

Organisation's Background

BHRN is based in London, operates across Burma and works for human rights, minority rights and religious freedom in Burma. BHRN has played a crucial role advocating for human rights and religious freedom with politicians and world leaders.

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