



International Community Must Respond Immediately to Worsening Rights in Burma

18 February 2021 -- London, UK -- BHRN calls on the international community to immediately respond to Burma's newly amended Electronic Transactions Law (ETL) and a widespread crackdown against civilians taking part in the Civil Disobedience Movement. The draconian amendment was suddenly announced on 15 February and seeks to expand criminalization of communications and through vague language diminishes protection of user privacy. The law comes as the Burmese Military is increasingly cracking down on protesters who have organized around the country to protest the 1 February military coup. Protesters have faced water cannons, rubber bullets and live ammunition, and sweeping arrests around the country.

"The announcement of the ETL and increased crackdown on protesters is no coincidence. The military is clearly increasing the number of tools at its disposal to stifle opposition to their illegal seizure of power. By increasing their ability to surveil and prosecute, they are hoping to disrupt the movement as it gains momentum each day. It is vital that the international community acts immediately in response and prevents the military from further consolidating power and oppressing the will of the people," said BHRN's Executive Director, Kyaw Win.

The military's reaction to the protest movement has become more volatile as protests gain momentum and more people join the country's general strike. With neither side willing to budge, there is a great concern for the welfare of civilians who will be punished for participating in their fundamental right to assemble and protest. The new amendment to the ETL is the latest example of this.

BHRN calls on the international community to immediately launch sanctions against the Burmese military, its business interests, cronies, and relevant family members. Further, the military regime must be isolated from the world as a pariah government and given no recognition by any nation. The organizations and individuals leading the Civil Disobedience Movement must be supported, recognized, and aided as the legitimate response of the people's will in response to the military's coup.

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.

Media Enquiries

Please contact:

Kyaw Win, Executive Director

Burma Human Rights Network (BHRN)

E: kyawwin@bhrn.org.uk

T: +44(0) 740 345 2378