



**Joint Statement by the Ministry of Women, Youths and Children Affairs & Ministry
of Human Rights Affairs of the National Unity Government of Myanmar**

3/2021

13th August 2021

We view that the peaceful protests erupted across prisons one at Insein prison of Yangon on July 23, 2021 and another at Oh Pho prison of Mandalay on August 8, 2021 on the 33rd anniversary of the 8888 Democracy Uprising were caused by the junta's mismanagement, especially of the coronavirus pandemic in those prisons. We pay tribute to those rights activists who have been wrongfully arrested in the first place for exercising their right to free speech and for opposing the terrorist military council, and who have fearlessly demanded for their unalienable rights, including access to healthcare, despite being imprisoned.

We understand that prison authorities have yet to provide an equal access to healthcare and treatment for prisoners even though authorities had agreed to increase Covid-19 prevention measures in prisons as demanded by protestors. We do not have further information about the condition of those activists who had staged recent prison protests. We are deeply concerned by the reports of the high rate of Covid-19 cases in Insein prison, and of the recent deaths of several senior political leaders. We are also highly concerned by the reports of military vehicles entering into Oh Pho prison in the wake of the protests last night.

Therefore, it is of utmost importance that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is allowed to visit prisons in Myanmar as soon as possible to assess the worsening conditions of prisoners in order to take necessary measures to stop the further spreading of coronavirus.

Hence, we strongly urge the international community to increase their pressure and demand the terrorist military council to implement the followings:

- * Ensure equal access to healthcare for all Covid-19 patients in prisons, and access to adequate medicines, protective materials and resources for the prevention of Covid-19;
- * Allow prisoners infected with coronavirus to notify their families;
- * Lift the ban on family visits, mails and packages to prisoners;
- * Ensure an access to adequate water supply and health care for women's personal hygiene and their health;
- * Ensure an unrestricted access to ICRC for political prisoners and CDM public servants through individual or group meetings to present their needs;
- * Ensure that prison authorities respect the dignity of prisoners and not to resort violence and to fulfil the needs of prisoners on a humanitarian basis.



We believe that only through the concerted efforts can we adequately pressure the junta to respect the rights of those who are unjustly being imprisoned. Thus, we appeal to you to speak up for those activists behind the bars and demand for their rights with one united voice.

National Unity Government (NUG) of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar