



## **The Women's League of Burma reinforces our condemnation of the junta's illegal and unjust seizure of power and urges international community to act**

Date: September 1, 2021

On the day marking seven months since the Burmese military's attempted coup, the Women's League of Burma (WLB) reinforces our condemnation of the junta's illegal and unjust seizure of power and categorically rejects the assault on civilian livelihoods including the infringement of basic human rights freedoms and protections by the Burmese Army, and in particular the targeting of women and girls through sexual violence as a weapon of war. WLB also condemns the junta's efforts of using its controlled media and personnel to defame women who have joined resistance forces fighting against them, particularly the junta's spokesperson shameful use of sexist and patriarchal language against these brave women.

Since February the first, the whole country has been pushed back to living under constant threats and insecurity. The military has used all forms of violence including arrest, killing, torture and sexual assault to suppress any actions taken against the coup. Over 1,000 civilians have been killed by security forces, including over 73 women. More than 1,084 women were among 7,300 people arrested simply for their political views.

Moreover, the junta has launched military offensives including airstrikes in Kachin, Karen, Karenni/Kayah, Rakhine and Shan State and Sagaing Region. As a result, more than 240,000 people have been internally displaced across the country adding to the already-existing numbers of IDPs. Among those, 80 percent, are women and children who face risks of malnutrition and sexual violence by the Burmese soldiers. Pregnant women have been forced to give birth while hiding in the jungle without proper health care. An increase number of rape and sexual abuse by the junta's security forces against women has been reported daily.

Besides its brutal attacks against the people, the Burmese military is blocking the routes to transport humanitarian aid to those in need, or even arresting relief workers. This humanitarian crisis unfolding across the country has heightened the needs of vulnerable communities against the backdrop of a raging pandemic. The COVID-19 has allowed the junta to restrict the movement of opposition forces and to limit civilian access to health care.

WLB reiterates our commitment fighting against all forms of dictatorships in our country alongside with our alliances in the federal democracy movement as well as with various international and regional actors to raise awareness about the situation inside Burma, in particular highlighting the plight of women, girls including all human rights defenders.

On this occasion, we urge international community to act as follows:

### **To the International Community**

- Categorically reject the military junta by supporting and standing with the people of Burma to topple the military dictatorship;
- To apply pressure on the junta for the immediate and unconditional cessation of military violence and the release of all arbitrarily detained protesters and political prisoners including female detainees as well as an end to the use of sexual violence by security forces against female detainees;

- To provide support and work in partnership with local/ethnic communities, community-based organizations, civil society organizations and ethnic health organizations to deliver humanitarian assistance, including cross-border aid to internally displaced people in ethnic areas;
- To impose targeted sanctions against the extended leadership of the military, including family members and military conglomerates, in order to inflict a direct blow to their economic interests and opportunities;
- To work in partnership with and provide assistance through ethnic health providers, civil society and ethnic health organizations to provide COVID-19 support.

#### **To UN bodies**

- To immediately dispatch a well-equipped monitoring and intervention mission to Burma to end the military violence and terror campaign against the people, to prevent further atrocity crimes;
- To echo calls for the cessation of military offensives and airstrikes, the removal of troops and the demilitarization of all areas, including ethnic areas;
- To boycott the use of all military products and ensure commercial relationships are not providing revenue to any businesses owned or controlled by the military, its members, their families and significant business associates;
- To provide comprehensive support for women organizations, rights based independent organizations, women human rights defenders, the Civil Disobedience Movement and general strike committees.
- For the UN Secretary-general to immediately intervene to address the latest catastrophic wave of COVID-19 in Burma in accordance with the UN security council resolution 2532 calling for a global response to combat the pandemic with the “UN playing a key coordination role”
- To create a political space for women’s rights organizations and civil society organizations which ensures meaningful dialogue and inclusion in all formal and informal political and peace processes aimed at restoring democracy.

#### **To the United Nations Security Council:**

- To refer the situation on human rights in Burma to the International Criminal Court for their crimes against humanity, which have been perpetrated against innocent civilians, including peaceful protests and ethnic groups;
- To institute a comprehensive global arms embargo, with robust monitoring and enforcement mechanisms, to end the direct and indirect supply, sale, or transfer of all weapons and other equipment that may be used for training, intelligence and military assistance;

#### **To ASEAN:**

- To work in tandem with UN bodies to resolve the multiple crises in Burma in order to preserve the dignity of people in the country, but particularly those at risk of unlawful arrest and punishment by the junta;
- To cooperate with cross border humanitarian organizations to ensure the flow of aid for refugees and IDPs and other vulnerable groups inside Burma;
- To enact targeted sanctions against the junta which effectively cut off financial flows;
- To put pressure on the junta to immediately and unconditionally release all detained political prisoners.

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