



Special Advisory Council for MYANMAR

“We will either die of starvation or die fighting”

UN Security Council Must Act on Myanmar

29 October 2021: People in Myanmar are on the brink of starvation and in urgent need of medical supplies and food after months of sustained assaults by junta forces, SAC-M has learned. The UN Security Council must finally issue a resolution to consolidate international action towards resolving the crisis.

A representative of the Mindat People’s Administration spoke of his people’s desperation in Mindat, Chin state, at a panel discussion hosted by SAC-M today. Mindat has been subjected to months of sustained attacks by the Myanmar military.

“We want the world to act within the spirit of humanitarian assistance. For four months we've had our supplies destroyed, we're running out. We will either die of starvation or die fighting. Those are our two choices,” said the representative of Mindat People’s Administration, who cannot be named for security reasons.

The Myanmar military has cut off access to the region in northwest Myanmar, restricting food supplies. Thirty-three people have already died from malnutrition and lack of medicine, according to the representative.

“Our people can't withstand another month in this situation, so if we are to continue resisting the military, we need medical supplies, we need everything,” he said.

The statement comes as the military has launched a so-called clearance operation in the northwest of Myanmar on a scale potentially not seen in modern times. Other parts of Myanmar, including Karenni (Kayah) state in the east are also under severe attack.

The Foreign Minister of the National Unity Government of Myanmar, H.E. Daw Zin Mar Aung told the panel that the crisis is having a destabilizing effect on the region and is not only an issue for Myanmar.

“We are being threatened every second of every minute. Our human security is under constant threat. We need ASEAN, the Security Council and the rest of the international community to work with us to find a solution to this crisis,” said the Foreign Minister.

Marzuki Darusman, founding member of SAC-M and former chair of the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar, said the ASEAN Special Envoy to Myanmar must meet with the UN Security Council in New York and request it issue a resolution that consolidates the actions of the international community on one single track.

“The resolution must, as a starting point, recognise the illegality of the coup and the need to enforce arms embargos, sanctions, an end to impunity and the release of all political prisoners,” said Marzuki Darusman. **“It must commit all parties to implementation of the ASEAN five-point consensus. Of no less importance is the great need for humanitarian assistance.”**

Yanghee Lee, founding member of SAC-M and former UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Myanmar responded by saying that **“I certainly hope that the people in New York, especially those sitting in the UN Security Council, are listening.”**

Both Yanghee Lee and Marzuki Darusman commented on Min Aung Hlaing’s failed leadership, noting that cracks are starting to show, and the crisis may be at a tipping point.

“The junta has driven itself into a corner. For the first time we're seeing the junta is under considerable pressure from both within and from outside Myanmar. The junta is running out of options,” said Marzuki Darusman. **“But time is of the essence.”**