

**PRESS RELEASE**

716/22

25/07/2022

## **Myanmar/Burma: Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the execution of pro-democracy and opposition leaders in Myanmar/Burma**

Myanmar's military regime has executed former NLD Member of Parliament Phyo Zeya Thaw, prominent activist Kyaw Min Yu, widely known as 'Ko Jimmy' as well as Aung Thura Zaw, and Hla Myo Aung. The European Union strongly condemns the executions and expresses its sincere condolences to the bereaved families and friends of the victims.

These politically motivated executions represent yet another step towards the complete dismantling of the rule of law and a further blatant violation of human rights in Myanmar. The four men were the first prisoners to be executed in Myanmar in more than three decades, a move that is contrary to the overall worldwide trend to abolish the death penalty. The European Union is fundamentally opposed to the death penalty as an inhumane, cruel and irreversible punishment that violates the inalienable right to life.

The executions are reprehensible acts that show that the military authorities have no respect for the life or dignity of the very people they are supposed to protect. They will only exacerbate the polarization, violence and dramatic humanitarian situation in Myanmar. The EU stands unequivocally with the people of Myanmar and their aspirations for freedom, and urges the military regime to end all acts of violence without further delay and calls for the unconditional and immediate release of all those arbitrarily detained, as well as to return to a democratic path. We will continue to support all efforts by the United Nations and ASEAN to this end.

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