



Republic of the Union of Myanmar

National Unity Government

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Statement (18/2022)

“Statement on the joint letter addressing the United Nations Transforming Education Summit in New York”

August 13, 2022

The National Unity Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar expresses its grave concern and extreme disappointment at a joint letter issued by 12 organisations on 11 August 2022.

The letter, which discusses the upcoming United Nations Transforming Education Summit in New York, was addressed to Min Aung Hlaing and was copied to other junta members including Wunna Maung Lwin.

The joint letter is supremely insulting to the Myanmar people and damaging to reputations of the 12 co-signatories. While the National Unity Government acknowledges the subsequent public apology issued by Human Rights Watch, this too falls woefully short.

The National Unity Government is the legitimate representative of the Myanmar people. It was established by parliamentarians who were democratically elected in November 2020. It enjoys the popular support of the Myanmar people and large segments of the international community. It exercises significant and effective territorial control, manages ordinary governmental operations and delivers governmental services. The UN

Security Council, General Assembly, and Secretary-General have each affirmed the continuing authority of the National Unity Government's leaders.

Min Aung Hlaing, however, is a war criminal responsible for atrocity crimes. In 2018, the UN's Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar called for Min Aung Hlaing to be investigated and prosecuted for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, including against the Rohingya in Rakhine State. An associated genocide case is active before the International Court of Justice.

Since he has presided over his terrorist junta, Min Aung Hlaing has also been found responsible for grave human rights violations and probable war crimes and crimes against humanity by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, and the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar.

The National Unity Government therefore expects the 12 signatory organisations to issue a fuller apology to the people of Myanmar that also recognises the National Unity Government as the legitimate representative of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. At the same time, the 12 organisations must urgently determine how this serious mistake occurred and put in place procedures to prevent a repeat. Such a review would be consistent with the repeated calls on organisations and their donors to ensure that all policies, programs and interventions directly benefit the Myanmar people.

In their joint letter, the organisations called on states to use the UN Transforming Education Summit to provide a 'strong foundation for stronger international standards' on education. As the Special Rapporteur on Myanmar reported to the UN Human Rights Council on 29 June 2022, junta attacks "on schools and children and the collapse of the state education system have deprived at least 7.8 million children of access to education".

The National Unity Government and its ethnic partner organisations are closing this gap by providing Myanmar's children and youth with access to education. It follows that UNESCO must accredit the Myanmar representatives presented by the National Unity Government at the UN Transforming Education Summit in September. The 12 signatory organisations should make representations to UNESCO to this effect.

National Unity Government