



Special Advisory Council for MYANMAR

United Nations Special Envoy Can Now Meet with Genuine Stakeholders in Myanmar's Democratic Future

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The Special Envoy of the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General to Myanmar can now look forward to holding constructive and public meetings with the National Unity Government of Myanmar, having fulfilled the absolute minimum requirement of her mandate by meeting with the leader of the military junta in Myanmar, Min Aung Hlaing, says the Special Advisory Council for Myanmar (SAC-M).

SAC-M was pleased to learn that nine months after her appointment, the UN Special Envoy was finally able to fulfil the minimum requirement of her mandate and travel to Nay Pyi Taw to meet with the leader of the military junta, Min Aung Hlaing. The members of SAC-M have been calling for Min Aung Hlaing to be prosecuted for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes since their respective tenures as UN mandate-holders on Myanmar.

"We can only imagine how awful it must have been for the UN Special Envoy to meet with murderer-in-chief Min Aung Hlaing, and the revulsion she must have felt at having to shake his blood-soaked hand," said Chris Sidoti of SAC-M. **"Meeting with Min Aung Hlaing may have been essential to the Special Envoy in attempting to fulfil her mandate, but it is clear that nothing of significance will come of it."**

Previous Special Envoys of the UN Secretary-General, a mandate that has existed for many years, have repeatedly tried to appeal to leaders of the Myanmar military for clemency towards the people of Myanmar. These include failed attempts to end the genocidal persecution of the Rohingya.

More recent international efforts to curb the atrocities orchestrated by Min Aung Hlaing have been made following the military's attempted coup, by successive Special Envoys of the Chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to Myanmar, all of which have been met with contempt.

"The UN Special Envoy can surely have been under no illusions as to Min Aung Hlaing's true character and intentions, however cordial their meeting may have been," said Yanghee Lee of SAC-M. **"The Special Envoy, coming from the region and with past experience as the Executive Secretary of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, is well aware of the will of the Myanmar people."**



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Their aspirations were clearly expressed in the 2020 general elections, and the Special Envoy must now be looking forward to formally engaging with the National Unity Government, which was, of course, formed on the basis of the results of those elections. She must go the extra mile to find a solution acceptable to the peoples of Myanmar."

The National Unity Government of Myanmar has made clear its support for the Special Envoy's mandate and its commitment to working with the Special Envoy and the UN to reach a durable solution to Myanmar's multiple, protracted military-induced crises.

In addition to being the legitimate representative of the Myanmar people, the National Unity Government and its allied Ethnic Resistance Organisations control more of Myanmar's territory than the military junta and are increasing their capacity to administer government functions even in the face of the military's massive ongoing campaign of destruction.

"In order to have a positive influence on Myanmar's political landscape, the UN Special Envoy will know that she must support the real agents of democratic progress in the country, and that is the people, represented by the National Unity Government," said Marzuki Darusman of SAC-M. **"It is the people's movement that has resisted the military's attacks and, by forming administrative systems to provide life-saving and other governance services in the majority effective controlled areas, prevented Myanmar from becoming a failed state. The sooner that tangible international support can be channelled to the people through the National Unity Government, the sooner the massive human suffering in the country can be alleviated and the sooner Myanmar's democratic future can be realised."**

