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PRESS RELEASE

UN Security Council Resolution lacks action against Myanmar military junta, in face of atrocity crimes

Responding to the UN Security Council's adoption of the draft resolution on Myanmar tabled by the UK, **Khin Ohmar, Founder and Chairperson of Progressive Voice** said:

"While this resolution sends a message to the military junta that its actions will not remain unchecked, we are deeply disappointed that the long-awaited resolution falls short of substantive measures. There must be stronger action to stop the junta from intensifying its war and terror campaign against the people of Myanmar and committing atrocity crimes with blanket impunity.

"In our engagement with the UK and other members of the Security Council, we have repeatedly stated that a resolution without substantive action is meaningless for the people of Myanmar.

"We are disappointed that the UK did not table a stronger resolution with substantive actions. Allowing China and Russia, which provide weapons and funds to the Myanmar military junta to shield the junta from strong action will only further embolden the junta and diminish the credibility and relevance of the Council.

"On December 15, the Myanmar Air Force commissioned two Su-30SME fighter jets, supplied by Russia. Russia is aiding and abetting the junta's atrocities.

"For over 20 months, the junta has demonstrated its total disdain and non-compliance of the ASEAN's failed Five Point Consensus. The Security Council's request for further reporting on the implementation of the Five Point Consensus will not yield any improvements for the people on the ground. Decisive action by the Council is what is needed, not more empty rhetoric.

"The Security Council must immediately impose a global arms embargo alongside targeted sanctions to stem military's atrocity crimes. It remains essential that the Council refer the situation in Myanmar to the International Criminal Court.

"In the face of the impotence of the Security Council that is being held hostage by the military's allies, we call on UN member states to immediately take action to cut the supply of arms to the Myanmar military and impose targeted sanctions against the military, its businesses and business partners, including a ban on aviation fuel, which it needs for its indiscriminate airstrikes.

For media inquiries and more information, please contact:

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About Progressive Voice

Progressive Voice is a participatory rights-based policy research and advocacy organization rooted in civil society, that maintains strong networks and relationships with grassroots organizations and community-based organizations throughout Myanmar. <http://progressivevoicemyanmar.org/>

Background:

The resolution on Myanmar is long overdue. It has taken decades of atrocity crimes committed against ethnic minorities, half a decade since the Rohingya genocide and nearly two years following the attempted coup by the illegitimate military junta for a resolution to be finally adopted, and yet it continues to fall short of action to resolve the crisis on the ground.

Emboldened by lack of concerted international action and in shadow of the waning international attention on Myanmar, the military have intensified its gross human rights violations nationwide, causing an unprecedented human rights and humanitarian crisis. The junta has killed over 2,600 people and over 13,000 people remain in detention, while 139 have been sentenced to death by the illegal military junta. Over 1.2 million people have been displaced, with exact numbers that are expected to be much higher.

On 12 February 2021, 177 civil society organizations (CSOs) sent an open letter to the President and members of the UN Security Council calling for urgent enhanced monitoring and intervention. Action by the Council has repeatedly been stymied by the Myanmar military's allies, including Russia, China, India and Vietnam, who currently hold a seat on the Council. Their position on Myanmar was condemned by 488 Myanmar CSOs.

Repeated and vehement calls by hundreds of CSOs have been made to the Council to take substantive action to address the urgent crisis in Myanmar. The CSOs have called for a global arms embargo on the military junta, imposing targeted sanctions and referral of the situation of Myanmar to the International Criminal Court or setting up an ad hoc tribunal.

Myanmar regional and international organizations have also consistently called on individual governments to act with the urgency which reflects the magnitude of the crisis on the ground. Recently, as the military junta increases the use of aerial attacks, 550 organizations called on the UK Foreign Secretary to sanction aviation fuel that have enabled the junta to intensify its attacks against the people of Myanmar.

In most recent responses to these mounting calls, Canada, targeted Asia Sun Group, a local partner of the Myanmar military involved in procuring, storing and distributing jet fuel, and the US Congress included the BURMA Act of 2022 in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023.

A strong action that reflects the gravity of crimes committed by the military – in the past and with the urgency of now – is vital.