

DATE: 24 March 2023
FROM: The Sentry and Justice For Myanmar
SUBJECT: **Joint Statement Welcoming US Sanctions on Myanmar Cronies**

Justice For Myanmar and The Sentry welcome the adoption of [sanctions](#) today by the United States on Star Sapphire Group of Companies, Star Sapphire Trading Company Limited, Star Sapphire Group Pte. Ltd., and two of their owners, Tun Min Latt and his wife Win Min Soe.

Star Sapphire Group of Companies is a Myanmar conglomerate with diversified interests in trading, power, hospitality, and mining. As revealed by Justice For Myanmar in an [April 2022 report](#), Star Sapphire Group of Companies has substantial business links with the Myanmar military. The [United Kingdom](#) sanctioned Star Sapphire Group of Companies in August 2022.

According to the Department of the Treasury's press release, Tun Min Latt has used his companies "to import military arms and equipment, including drones and aircraft parts" and has acted as Myanmar's agent with the US-sanctioned Chinese arms manufacturer NORINCO. Alongside institutional links between Star Sapphire Group of Companies and the Myanmar military, significant ties exist between Tun Min Latt and his wife Win Min Soe and the family of junta leader and commander-in-chief of the Myanmar military Min Aung Hlaing. Research by [Justice For Myanmar](#) and [Reuters](#) published in January 2023 revealed that Tun Min Latt held assets in the names of Min Aung Hlaing's adult children at the time of Tun Min Latt's arrest by the Thai police in Bangkok in September 2022.

The arrest was carried out after Tun Min Latt and his associates were charged with drug trafficking and money laundering; he remains in custody in Thailand where [his trial is ongoing](#). Thai police found at the time of his arrest that Tun Min Latt was in possession of the property deed for a luxury Bangkok condominium in the name of Aung Pyae Sone and a checkbook for a Thai bank account in the name of Khin Thiri Thet Mon.

Aung Pyae Sone and Khin Thiri Thet Mon are the adult son and daughter, respectively, of Min Aung Hlaing; both children were [sanctioned](#) by the US in March 2021 for having "directly benefitted from their father's position and malign influence."

The Sentry and Justice For Myanmar welcome the decision by the US to sanction these military cronies and call for likeminded jurisdictions, including the European Union, United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia, to coordinate efforts to ensure that all of the Star Sapphire entities and owners are sanctioned by each jurisdiction.

Yadanar Maung, spokesperson for Justice For Myanmar, stated: "We welcome the latest round of US sanctions against Star Sapphire entities and two of their owners, who have aided and abetted the Myanmar military's genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity through financial support and the brokering of arms. These sanctions are also significant for targeting a Singaporean entity for the first time and help send a message that Singapore is no longer safe for Myanmar cronies. Tun Min Latt also has deep personal ties with the war criminal Min Aung Hlaing and his family, helping them profit from the military's illegal coup attempt and hide assets offshore. We urge the US and its allies to extend sanctions to the whole Star Sapphire network, including Htet Aung, Khine Wint Mon, Sithu Maung, and Thant Lwin Moe, as well as all other enablers of the illegitimate Myanmar military junta."

Justyna Gudzowska, director of illicit finance policy at The Sentry, said: “Tun Min Latt, Win Min Soe, and the Star Sapphire entities epitomize the enablers that facilitate business transactions with the Myanmar military in ways that benefit both the genocidal institution and its leadership. These welcome designations act as a warning and deterrent to businesspersons, corporate entities, and financial institutions from Myanmar and beyond that engaging in transactions with the Myanmar military will incur legal and reputational consequences.”

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About Justice For Myanmar

Justice For Myanmar is a collective of covert activists working to create a just, peaceful, and federal democratic Myanmar. The collective uses painstaking research, data visualization, and hard-hitting reporting to expose multinational corporations with business ties to the Myanmar military—money that funds inequality, corruption, violence, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. Their work has helped pressure multinational corporations to divest hundreds of millions of dollars from the Myanmar military, led to targeted sanctions, and raised international awareness of the situation in Myanmar.

About The Sentry

(Short descriptor for press use: “The Sentry, an investigative organization that tracks corruption”)

The Sentry is an investigative and policy organization that seeks to disable multinational predatory networks that benefit from violent conflict, repression, and kleptocracy. Pull back the curtain on wars, mass atrocities, and other human rights abuses, and you’ll find grand corruption and unchecked greed. These tragedies persist because the perpetrators rarely face meaningful consequences. The Sentry aims to alter the warped incentive structures that continually undermine peace and good governance. Our investigations follow the money as it is laundered from war zones to financial centers around the world. We provide evidence and strategies for governments, banks, and law enforcement to hold the perpetrators and enablers of violence and corruption to account. These efforts provide new leverage for human rights, peace, and anti-corruption efforts.