

## Press Release

### Australia Must Impose Tougher Sanctions Against The Myanmar Junta

[Sydney, 2 November, 2023] — In an open letter to Minister for Foreign Affairs Penny Wong, a wide coalition of civil society groups have called for tough new sanctions against the Myanmar junta.

Following new sanctions imposed by the US, UK and Canada, the Myanmar Campaign Network, alongside more than 414 leading civil society organisations, trade unions, NGOs, human rights groups, humanitarian organisations, and faith-based organisations, have issued a strong call for enhanced Australian sanctions against the Myanmar military.

The coalition specifically calls for coordinated and targeted sanctions on state-owned enterprises, with a primary focus on key sectors such as oil and gas, mining, timber, and pearl and gems, among other high-value targets.

The recent US sanctions on lucrative state-owned enterprise Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE), combined with earlier US sanctions on Myanma Foreign Trade Bank (MFTB) and Myanma Investment and Commercial Bank (MICB), will prevent hundreds of millions in foreign revenue reaching the junta.

At the same time, Canada enacted sanctions on Myanma Mining Enterprise 1 and 2, along with multiple individuals, while the UK has targeted arms dealers, financiers and the aviation supply chain, showing escalating international pressure on the junta.

Despite the Australian Government's implementation of targeted sanctions on 16 individuals and 2 entities in February 2023, the coalition highlights that these sanctions represent only 2% of the international sanctions imposed on Myanmar.

Since the coup in Myanmar, over 4,000 deaths, 25,000 detentions, 86,000 burned homes, and 1.9 million internally displaced persons worsen the human rights and humanitarian crisis. Military airstrikes have increased by 300% in the past year continuing to cause loss of life, infrastructure damage, and displacement.

The coalition urgently calls for sanctions on high-value targets, including state-owned enterprises, banks, arms manufacturers, aviation supply chain, junta leaders, and the Union Election Commission.

Transparency International Australia CEO Clancy Moore said, "Australian miners and investors are still lurking in the shadows and doing business in Myanmar. This helps legitimise, and line the pockets of, the murderous Myanmar military and their state owned enterprises. Australia must follow the lead of our allies like the US, Canada and the UK and sanction Myanma Enterprise 1 and 2 and Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise."

Australian Council of Trade Unions President Michele O'Neil said, "We urge the Australian Government to strengthen its sanctions in line with global efforts to curb the junta's financial resources and protect the rights and wellbeing of the people of Myanmar."

Myanmar Campaign Network Campaign Manager Tasneem Roc said, "At this pivotal time, as pro-democracy forces gain control over half the country, it's not a matter of if Australia should issue additional sanctions on Myanmar, but rather, when. We have seen with Russia that sanctions can be swiftly enacted, not requiring months or years. Australian alignment with our democratic allies in coordinated action can play a pivotal role in restoring democracy and alleviating suffering in Myanmar."

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