TO:

Government of New Zealand

Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade Rt Hon Winston Peters MP Minister for Defence The Hon. Judith Collins KC MP Ambassador to ASEAN H.E. Mr. Kevin Burnett. ONZM

CC:

ASEAN

Secretary-General
H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn
National Unity Government, Myanmar
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Daw Zin Mar Aung
Minister for Defence
U Yee Mon

6 April 2024

Subject: Request to support democratic representation of Myanmar people at upcoming ASEAN meetings involving New Zealand

Dear New Zealand Government leaders,

We, the undersigned organisations, are writing this open letter to you to request your public support for the human rights of Myanmar people in relation to the upcoming 31st ASEAN-New Zealand Dialogue hosted in Wellington on April 18 and 19, and the ASEAN Regional Forum Defence Officials Dialogue and Inter-Sessional Support Group Meeting on Confidence Building Measures and Preventative Diplomacy, co-chaired by New Zealand in Vientiane from May 8 to 10, 2024.

Specifically, we request that:

- representatives of the military junta and their appointees who are currently illegally occupying many of Myanmar's national institutions of government be excluded from these meetings;
- 2. military junta representatives and their appointees be banned from all future ASEAN meetings hosted and/or co-chaired by New Zealand;
- 3. the people of Myanmar be represented at these meetings by their democratically elected leaders, the National Unity Government;

If military junta representatives are not excluded from these meetings due to ASEAN protocols, we appeal to the Government of New Zealand to:

- 4. postpone chairmanship of ASEAN entities and/or decline hosting meetings that include military junta representatives;
- 5. boycott any other ASEAN meetings that include military junta representatives;

In any case, we further request your government's support through:

6. initiating formal and public engagements with principal representatives of Myanmar's democratically elected National Unity Government; and

7. taking the necessary steps to adopt targeted sanctions against the military junta, especially the financial and business entities it controls.

We would like to underline the fact that **the Myanmar military junta is not, by any definition, a government** and therefore has no legitimacy to represent the people of Myanmar in ASEAN meetings and activities. As you would be aware, a democratic general election was held in Myanmar on November 8, 2020. In a landslide victory, the voters elected a government led by the incumbent National League for Democracy party. Independent national and international election observers unanimously concluded in that the election was free and fair, and the result represented the will of the Myanmar people.

Yet, on February 1, 2021, the Myanmar military launched an **illegal coup attempt**. Since then, an illegal and illegitimate military junta has seized multiple institutions of government, including domestic ministries, central bank, overseas embassies and the former national chambers of commerce and industry, and attempted to pose as the government of Myanmar. The junta refers to itself as the 'State Administrative Council' (SAC), even though it has neither the authority to hold government office nor effective control over the majority of Myanmar's territories, which are under the administration of the democratic resistance movement and ethnic administration bodies.^{iv}

Meanwhile, the remaining elected members of the government and parliament (the 'Pyidaungsu Hluttaw' in Burmese) formed the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) and then the National Unity Government (NUG) based on the mandate gained from the 2020 election results. Thus, the appropriate, legitimate and democratically elected representatives of Myanmar people in all international fora, including ASEAN and related meetings, are the National Unity Government (NUG).

Under the guise of the SAC, the military junta has engaged in a nationwide campaign of heinous crimes against the people of Myanmar in an attempt to suppress and control them. To date, the military has killed over 4,700 people, and arrested more than 26,000 including the President, State Counsellor, elected members of parliament, journalists, pro-democracy activists, religious leaders and others. Over 20,000 remain incarcerated. The military has committed massacres, indiscriminate airstrikes, artillery shelling, sexual and gender-based violence, mass torture and mass arson. As a result of these crimes, over 2.8 million people are now internally displaced. Further, the military junta is now engaging in illegal forced recruitment of Myanmar people to serve its own purposes, which is causing mass exodus of those targeted and contributing to increased regional instability.

Such atrocities amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity, committed by the same military that stands accused of genocide and other gross crimes against the Rohingya before the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court and in the universal jurisdiction case in Argentina.

Therefore, it must be understood that **the military junta is not a professional armed force** under civilian control that defends the people of Myanmar from external threats. Rather, the junta is an illegal criminal organisation that was formed by the Myanmar military, and it is strongly rejected by the people of Myanmar. Further, the military junta meets the criteria for a terrorist organisation under both Myanmar national law and as defined in international law.^{ix} Thus, it

would be an affront to democracy and the people of Myanmar to include a member or appointee of the military junta as an international representative of Myanmar.

When foreign governments engage with the military junta as though it were a government, and/or invite the junta's appointees and associates to represent Myanmar people in intergovernmental meetings this risks significant harms for the people of Myanmar, including:

- decisions being made illegitimately on behalf of Myanmar people;
- legitimising the Myanmar military junta and assisting their illegal attempts to appear as a government;
- assisting the military junta to build relationships and gain access to funds and resources;
 and
- ultimately, assisting the military junta in its illegal (and to date unsuccessful) quest to take full control of the country.

Engagement with the Myanmar military junta also brings **risks for foreign governments** themselves, such as **damaging your government's credibility** in the eyes of existing and future democratic leaders of Myanmar. When engagement with the junta is facilitated by ASEAN entities, it also inflames existing tensions within Myanmar and dramatically undermines any remaining credibility of ASEAN for diplomacy and mediation. Further, anyone providing or **facilitating the flow of funds and resources to the military junta risks being complicit in the junta's ongoing crimes**. Thus, it is also extremely important that you avoid facilitating any financial, business or trade relationships with the Myanmar military junta.

The previous **government of New Zealand took significant measures to avoid legitimising or supporting the military junta**. These included suspending high-level bilateral engagement, imposing travel bans against senior junta members, ensuring that aid programmes do not include projects that benefit the junta, and refusing to recognise the military junta as a government.^x These actions have been welcomed by the people of Myanmar. We are now **calling on the new government to continue this approach** to supporting democracy in Myanmar and to take further steps in the same direction.

ASEAN and its member states and dialogue partners have already taken some actions against the Myanmar military junta. ASEAN has decided not to allow Myanmar to assume the rotating leadership in 2026^{xi} and has excluded the junta from meetings of heads of state, foreign ministers and defence ministers. In recent weeks, the Australian government excluded junta leaders from the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit in Melbourne. Xii In November 2022, the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) excluded junta representative, Mya Tun Oo, from participation in ministerial meetings. Xiii Considering the participation of the junta in military cooperation particularly egregious, the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia boycotted the recent ADMM air force chiefs meeting hosted by the military junta. Xiv Similarly, ADMM-Plus members Australia, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea and the United States, as well as ASEAN member Singapore boycotted ADMM-Plus counter-terrorism training sessions hosted by the Myanmar military junta and RussiaXv. Further, since the junta began its attempted coup, ADMM-Plus members AustraliaXvi and the United StatesXvii Xviii Xii Xii Xii Xiii Anve imposed sanctions on members of the Myanmar military junta and entities that they control.

Yet, the **people of Myanmar urgently need further serious action** from ASEAN and its dialogue partners in support of their fundamental safety, human rights and will for democracy. **Your**

The appropriate democratically elected representatives of Myanmar people in all international fora, including all ASEAN meetings, are the National Unity Government (NUG). The Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Defence can be contacted via the details provided on the NUG's official website. We encourage you to formulate a relationship with them, if you have not done so already.

If you require further information about the current situation in Myanmar, and/or assistance in distinguishing legitimate government representatives of Myanmar from illegal military junta members, we remain at your disposal to assist in this process.

We await your response with much anticipation. Meanwhile, we will continue to monitor whether your actions support the people of Myanmar or the brutal and illegitimate military junta.

Sincerely,

This letter is endorsed by **438 organisations** representing Myanmar regional and international civil society, including the 340 organisations listed below and 98 organisations which have chosen not to disclose their names.

Spokespeople:

Mon Zin Global Myanmar Spring Revolution (GMSR) +61 402 244 000 (via Signal app) (Languages: MM & EN)

Khet Sit
General Strike Coordination Body (GSCB)
+ 66 93 78 70 579 (via Signal app)
(Languages: MM & EN)

Naw Aung Defend Myanmar Democracy + 66 81 64 90 228 (via Signal app) (Languages: MM & EN)

List of organisations:

1.	5/ of Zaya State Strike
2.	8888 Generation (New Zealand)
3.	Action Committee of Basic Education Students (ACBES)
4.	Ah Nah podcast- Conversations with Myanmar
5.	All Arakan Youth Organization
6.	All Aung Myay Thar San Schools Strike Force
7.	All Burma Federation of Student Unions (Monywa District)
8.	All Burma Student Democratic Front (ABSDF) - Australia
9.	All Burma Ulmas' Union
10.	All Young Burmese League (AYBL)
11.	All Burma Democratic Front in New Zealand
12.	Alliance of Students' Union – Yangon (ASU-Yangon)
13.	ALTSEAN-Burma
14.	Anti Dictatorship in Burma - DMVPA Area
15.	Anti-coup Forces Coordination Committee (ACFCC -Mandalay)
16.	Anti-Junta Alliance Yangon-AJAY
17.	Arakan CSO Network
18.	Arakan Youth Peace Network (AYPN)
19.	Association of United Nationality in Japan (AUN)
20.	Association Suisse-Birmanie (ASB)
21.	Auckland Kachin Community NZ
22.	Auckland Zomi Community NZ
23.	Aung San Su Kyi Park, Norway
24.	Australian Karen Organisation (AKO)
25.	AWDO (Nagphe)
26.	A-Yar-Taw People Strike
27.	Ayeyarwaddy West Development Organisation - AWDO (Magway)
28.	Back Pack Health Worker Team
29.	Basic Education General Strike Committee (BEGSC)
30.	Basic Education Worker Unions - Steering Committee (BEWU-SC)
31.	Blood Money Campaign (BMC)
32.	Blooming Padauk (ပိတောက်ဖူး)
33.	Burma Human Rights Network
34.	Burma Refugee Saving Association (B.R.S.A) - Japan
35.	Burmese Canadian Network, Myanmar Emergency Fund
36.	Burmese Community Development Collaboration (BCDC)
37.	Burmese Community Support Group (BCSG)
38.	Burmese Medical Association Australia (BMAA)
39.	Burmese Muslim Association (BMA)

Burmese Rohingya Welfare Organization New Zealand Trust

Burmese Community Group (Manawatu, NZ)

- 43. Burmese Rohingya Welfare Organisation New Zealand
- 44. CDM Medical Network (CDMMN)

Burmese Women's Union

45. Center For Action Points

40.

41. 42.

- 46. Chanmyatharzi Township People's Strike 47. Chaung Oo Township Youth Strike Committee 48. Chin Community of Auckland 49. Chin Community of Japan (CCJ) Chin Comunity in Norway 50. Chin Youth Organization of Japan (CYO-JP) 51. Chindwin (West) Villages Women Strike 52. 53. Citizen of Burma Award - New Zealand 54. Civil Information Network (CIN) Civil Society Organizations Coordination Committee (Monywa) 55. Coalition Strike Committee - Dawei 56. Colorful Spring (ရောင်စုံနွေဦး) 57. Community Resource Center Foundation (CRCF) 58. 59. Co-operative University Mandalay Students' Strike 60. **CRPH & NUG Supporters Ireland** 61. **CRPH Funding Ireland** 62. CRPH Support Group, Norway CRPH, NUG Support Team Germany - Deutschland 63. 64. Daung Sitthe Strike 65. Dawei (Ashaetaw) Women Strike 66. Dawei Youths in Japan (DYJ) 67. Dawei Youths Revolutionary Movement Strike Committee 68. **Defend Myanmar Democracy** 69. Democracy Movement Strike Committee (Dawei) 70. Democratic Party for a New Society, Norway 71. **Democratic Youth Council** 72. Depayin Township Revolution Steering Committee 73. Depayin Women Strike 74. Dhobama (2021 Generation) 75. Doh Atu - Ensemble pour le Myanmar 76. Dragon Dawn 77. **Dunedin Myanmar Community-New Zealand** 78. Each New Red Step 79. **Educational Initiatives Prague** 80. Ethnic Youth General Strike Committee (Mandalay) 81. **ETOs Watch Coalition** 82. Federal Aid Burma (FAB) 83. Federal Corner 84. Federal FM Mandalay 85. Federal Myanmar Benevolence Group (NZ) Federation of Worker's Union of Burmese Citizens in Japan (FWUBC) 86.
- 87. Former Political Prisoners and New Generation Group – Monywa 88. Free Burma Free Rohingya Coalition (FRC) 89. Friends Against Dictatorship (FAD) 90. 91. From Singapore to Myanmar (FS2M)
- 92. Gangaw Women Strike
- 93. General Strike Collaboration Committee (GSCC)

94. General Strike Committee of Basic and Higher Education (GSCBHE) 95. General Strike Coordination Body (GSCB) 96. Generation Network Myanmar 97. **Generation Wave** 98. **GenY For Revolution Japan** German Solidarity with Myanmar Democracy e.V. 99. 100. Global Myanmar Spring Revolution (GMSR) 101. Global Myanmar Spring Revolution (Japan) 102. Global Myanmar Spring Revolution (Korea) 103. Hope For Youth -Kyushu Japan India for Myanmar 104. 105. Industrial Training Centre (ITC) Family Sydney 106. **Industries Strike** 107. Info Birmanie 108. Initiatives for International Dialogue 109. International Association, Myanmar-Switzerland (IAMS) 110. International Society of Myanmar Scholars and Professionals (Japan) 111. Italy - Burma Friendship Association 112. Japan Myanmar Future Creative Association (JMFCA) 113. Japan Myanmar Help Network - JMHN 114. JMC Inn Lay Justice For Myanmar 115. 116. Kachin Affairs Organizintion - Japan (KAO (Japan) Kachin Association Australia (KAA) 117. 118. **Kachin Association Norway** 119. **Kachin Student Union** 120. **Kachin Waves News Agency** 121. Kalay Township Strike Committee 122. Kalay Women Strike 123. Kansai Group Japan 124. KantBaLu Strike Committee 125. Karen National League Japan-KNL Karen Peace Support Network (KPSN) 126. 127. Karenni Association - Norway 128. Karenni Human Rights Group (KnHRG) 129. Karenni National Society (KNS) Japan 130. Karenni Zero (Support Team) Karenni Society New Zealand 131. KayahLi Phu Youth-KLY 132. 133. K'cho Ethnic Association 134. KnowUsMoreMyanmar (KUM) Kobe Myanmar Community (KMC) 135. Kyain Seikgyi Spring Revolution Leading Committee 136. 137. Kyauktada Strike Committe 138. Latpadaung Region Strike Committee 139. League For Democracy in Burma (L.D.B Japan) 140. Legal Aid for Human Rights

141.

LGBT Alliance

142.	LGBT Alliance Myanmar (Kalay Region)
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- 143. LGBT Alliance Myanmar (Kyaukse Region)
- 144. LGBT Community Yangon
- 145. LGBT Union Mandalay
- 146. Local Development Network (LDN) Karenni
- 147. Magway People's Revolution Committee
- 148. Magway Region Human Rights Network
- 149. Maharaungmyay Township People's Strike
- 150. Mandalar University Students' Strike
- 151. Mandalay Alliance Coalition Strike
- 152. Mandalay Medical Family (MFM)
- 153. Mandalay Strike Force (MSF)
- 154. Mandalay Women Strike
- 155. Mandalay Youth Strike
- 156. Mandalay-based People's Strike
- 157. Mandalay-Based University Students' Unions (MDY SUs)
- 158. Matu Burma Foundation
- 159. Matu Chin Community NSW/UPU Chin Association
- 160. Matupi Community Development Organization
- 161. MayMyo Strike Force
- 162. Members of Parliament Union (Burma) MPU
- 163. MilkTeaAlliance Calender team
- 164. Min Hla farmers Group
- 165. Minbu farmers Group
- 166. Mindat Chin Community NSW
- 167. Mon Association Norway
- 168. Mon Communities NZ
- 169. Mon National Council (MNC)
- 170. Mon State Development Center
- 171. Mon Youth For Federal Democracy (MYFD)
- 172. Monywa LGBT Strike
- 173. Monywa People's Strike Steering Committee
- 174. Monywa Women Strike
- 175. Monywa-Amyint Road Strike Leading Committee
- 176. Monywa-Amyint Road Women Strike
- 177. Multi-Religions Strike
- 178. Mya Taung Strike
- 179. Myanmar action group Denmark
- 180. Myanmar Baptist Churches in Norway
- 181. Myanmar Catholic Community In Norway
- 182. Myanmar Community Austria
- 183. Myanmar Community Coffs Harbour (MCC)
- 184. Myanmar Community in Italy
- 185. Myanmar Community in Norway
- 186. Myanmar Development Support Group (MDSG)
- 187. Myanmar Engineering Association of Australia (MEAA)
- 188. Myanmar Engineers- New Zealand
- 189. Myanmar Gon Ye New Zealand

190.	Myanmar Hindu Community - Norway
191.	Myanmar Institute of Information Technology Students' Strike
192.	Myanmar Labor Alliance (MLA)
193.	Myanmar Labour Society
194.	Myanmar Muslim Organization - Norway
195.	Myanmar Muslim Revolution Force
196.	Myanmar Nationalities' Support Organization – JP (MNSO)
197.	Myanmar Professionals Association Australia (MPAA)
198.	Myanmar Spring Revolution Japan (MSRJ)
199.	Myanmar Student Association Ontario (Canada)
200.	Myanmar Student Christian Movement
201.	Myanmar Student Union - Skyline College (ABFSU)
202.	Myanmar Tozan Club (MTC)
203.	Myanmar Youth and Student Association, Japan (MYSA)
204.	Myanmar Community Christchurch-New Zealand
205.	Myanmar Students' Union in New Zealand
206.	Myanmar's Youth Association Hokkaido (MYAH)
207.	Myaung Youth Network
208.	MyaYar Knowledge Tree
209.	Myingyan Civillian Movement Committee
210.	Myingyan Generation-Z Group
211.	National Alliance Bangkok
212.	National League for Democracy (Monywa Township)
213.	Nelson Chin Community-NZ
214.	Nelson Karenni Community New Zealand
215.	Nelson Zomi Community-NZ
216.	Nelson Burmese Community New Zealand
217.	Network of University Student Unions – Monywa
218.	New Myanmar Foundation
219.	New Power Generation
220.	New Rehmonnya Federated Force - NRFF
221.	New Zealand Zo Community Inc
222.	New Zealand Karen Association
223.	New Zealand Zo Community Inc.
224.	New Zealand Doctors for NUG
225.	NLD Organization Committee (International) Norway
226.	NLD Solidarity Association (NSW chapter)
227.	No Boundary Supporting Group "NBSG"
228.	No.12 Basic Education Branch High School (Maharaungmyay) Students' Union
229.	Norway Falam Community
230.	Norway Matu Community
231.	Norway Rawang Community
232.	NSW Karenni (Kayah) Communities
233.	Nyan Lynn Thit Analytica
234.	NZKA Wellington (New Zealand Karen association)
235.	Okinawa Myanmar Association (OMA)
236.	Overseas Mon Association-New Zealand
237.	Oway Institute

238.	Palaung National Society Japan, PNS-Japan
239.	Palaw Supporting Group - Japan
240.	Palaw Supporting Group - Malaysia
241.	Palaw Supporting Group - Singapore
242.	Palaw Supporting Group - Thailand
243.	Pale Township People's Strike Steering Committee
244.	Palmerstan North Karen Community-NZ
245.	Pa-O National Federal Council
246.	People's Embrace (ပြည်သူ့ရင်ခွင်)
247.	People's Hope Spring Revolution (PHSR)
248.	Progressive Voice
249.	Punnyakari Mon National Society Japan, PMNS-Japan
250.	Pwintphyu Development Organisation
251.	Pyi Gyi Tagon Strike Force
252.	Rainbow in the storm (RIS)
253.	Representative Committee of University Teacher Associations (RC of UTAs)
254.	Revolution Tokyo Myanmar (RTM)
255.	Rohingya Community in Norway
256.	Rural Community Development Society
257.	Rvwang Community Association New Zealand
258.	Samgha Sammaga-Mandalay
259.	SAVE MYANMAR - USA
260.	Save Myanmar Fundraising Group (New Zealand)
261.	Seinpann Strike
262.	Shan Community in Japan (SCJ)
263.	Shan Community (New Zealand)
264.	ShizuYouth For Myanmar (Japan)
265.	Shwe Pan Kone People's Strike Steering Committee
266.	Sisters 2 Sisters
267.	Sitt Nyein Pann Foundation
268.	Social Garden
269.	Sone See Yar (Volunteer Group)
270.	Southern Monitor
271.	Southern Dragon Myanmar
272.	Southern Yesagyo Supporting Organization (SYSO)
273.	Spring Friends
274.	Spring Revolution Myanmar Muslim Community (SRMMC)
275.	Spring Revolution Restaurant (SRR)
276.	Spring Traveler
277.	Sujata Sisters Group
278.	Supporting Brothers
279.	Sydney Friends for Myanmar Unity
280.	SYDO (Southern Youth Development Organization)
281.	Ta Mar Institute of Development
282.	Tai Youths Network Japan (TYNJ)
283.	Taze Strike Commitee
284.	Taze Women Strike
285.	Technological Teachers' Federation (TTF)
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286.
          Thakhin Kodaw Mhine Peace Network (Monywa)
287.
          Thayat Chaung Women Strike
288.
          The 88 Generation Peace and Open Society (Monywa)
289.
          The Mekong Butterfly (TMB)
290.
          Thint Myat Lo Thu Myar Organization
291.
          Try Together At Japan (TTAJ)
292.
          Twitter Team for Revolution (TTFR)
293.
          Union of Myanmar Citizen Association - Japan
294.
          University Students' Unions Alumni Force
295.
          Voice For Justice (Japan)
296.
          Volunteers in Myanmar
297.
          We Are One Saga MOSA (Japan)
298.
          We for All (Japan)
299.
          We Pledge CDM (Australia)
300.
          We Support (Japan)
301.
          Wellington Chin Community (New Zealand)
302.
          Wetlet Revolution Leading Committee
303.
          Wetlet Twonship Women Strike
304.
          White Coat Society Yangon (WCSY)
305.
          Women Advocacy Coalition Myanmar (WAC Myanmar)
306.
          Women Alliance Burma (WAB)
307.
          Women for Justice
308.
          Women Lead Resource Center
309.
          Women's League of Burma
310.
          Yadanabon University Students' Union (YDNBUSU)
311.
          Yangon Deaf Group
          Yangon Women Strike
312.
313.
          Yasakyo Township People's Strike Steering Committee
314.
          Yaw Funding Japan
315.
          Yaw Funding Malaysia
316.
          Yaw Funding Thailand
317.
          Yinmarpin and Salingyi All Villages Strike Committee
318.
          Yokohama Pamphlet Campaign - Myanmar
319.
          Youth Empowerment
320.
          Youth for democratization of Myanmar (UDM)
321.
          YW Funding Singapore
          Zomi Association Australia Inc.
322.
323.
          Zomi Christian Fellowship of Norway
          Zomi Community Norway
324.
          Zomi Innkuan Wellington Inc (NZ)
325.
          ဂျပန်ပြည်မှတွဲလက်များ
326.
          တွဲလက်ညီ ထောက်ပို့အဖွဲ့
327.
          ထားဝယ်ခရိုင်နိုင်ငံရေးဦးဆောင်အဖွဲ့-DDPLF
328.
          ဒို့မြေကွန်ရက် (LIOH)
329.
          ဒေါင်းသွေးနီ ထောက်ပို့အဖွဲ့
330.
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331.	ပြည်သူ့ကောင်းကျိုးဆောင်ထောက်ပို့အဖွဲ့
332.	ပွင့်ဖြူလယ်ယာမြေကွန်ရက်
333.	ရုန်းကန်သံအဖွဲ့
334.	လူသားချင်းစာနာမှု ကူညီထောက်ပံ့ရေးအဖွဲ့
335.	သမိုင်းသစ်သယ်ဆောင်သူများ
336.	အမှောင်ကိုခွင်း အလင်းရောင်ရှိ ထောက်ပို့အဖွဲ့
337.	အင်လေးအမျိုးသမီးသမဂ္ဂ
338.	အနာဂတ်ပန်းတိုင်ဆီးသို့ ပြည်ပထောက်ပို့အဖွဲ့
339.	အနာဂတ်အလင်းရောင် ထောက်ပို့အဖွဲ့
340.	သံယံဧာတဆိုင်ရာ တာဝန်ခံမှုဖော်ဆောင်ရေး အဖွဲ့

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