

## **Statement on long-term sentences for Dawei Watch reporters**

27 August 2024

Two Myeik-based journalists working for Dawei Watch, Ko Myo Myint Oo and Ko Aung San Oo, were arrested by the State Administration Council (SAC) on 11 December 2023.

After a secretive trial in a military court, the SAC sentenced Ko Myo Myint Oo to life imprisonment and Ko Aung San Oo to 20 years' imprisonment.

Although Myeik Township was not under martial law imposed by the SAC, the journalists were denied the right to a legal defense. Instead, they were illegally transferred to a military court inside Myeik prison and sentenced without due and transparent process.

The SAC did not disclose the legal codes applied in detail or the justification for these harsh sentences. We have also been unable to inquire about the legal procedures involved.

Dawei Watch strongly condemns the SAC for illegally arresting, interrogating, and detaining these journalists without giving them the right to a fair defense under the law. We urge their immediate release.

### Summary of the case

- Both journalists were arrested separately at their homes by heavily armed forces at midnight on 11 December 2023.
- They were told the detention was because of their news reporting, and their laptops and phones were seized during the raid.
- They were violently interrogated for four days in a detention center before being transferred to Myeik Prison.
- Their trials were conducted under anti-terrorism laws.
- Ko Aung San Oo was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment on 16th February, 2024 (an approximate date).
- Ko Myo Myint Oo was sentenced to life imprisonment on 15th May, 2024 (an approximate date).
- The SAC court did not take questions about these illegal arrests, and no official explanation or justification for their sentences has been provided.