



Special Advisory Council for MYANMAR

International Cross-Border Response to Typhoon Yagi Urgently Needed

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States neighbouring Myanmar must drop the politics and open their borders to allow international humanitarian aid to reach the Myanmar people through resistance authority and civil society networks, says the Special Advisory Council for Myanmar (SAC-M).

Typhoon Yagi hit northern Myanmar on 10 September causing severe flooding, landslides and widespread destruction across the country. Low-lying townships surrounding Naypyitaw and Mandalay have been inundated, while areas of Bago, and Magwe regions, as well as eastern and southern Shan, Karen, Karenni and Mon states have also been impacted. At least 113 people are known to have been killed and 325,000 people internally displaced by the storm, Myanmar military junta-controlled media reported on Sunday. The actual figures are likely to be far higher.

Myanmar was already facing a catastrophic humanitarian crisis, devastated by almost four years of revolutionary war against the military junta.

During this time, the military has increasingly relied on heavy aerial and artillery bombardment of populated areas, causing massive loss of civilian life and destruction of homes and infrastructure. An estimated 3 million people are internally displaced across the country, many living without basic food, shelter and sanitation. The military has consistently prevented humanitarian assistance from reaching those in need.

The full extent of the damage caused by typhoon Yagi in such circumstances is difficult to ascertain, but it is certain to have significantly exacerbated the crisis. An international humanitarian response to Yagi is urgently needed.

It is essential that international humanitarian actors engage with Myanmar resistance authorities and civil society to support their relief efforts. Resistance actors have greater control in more of the country than the military and, along with civil society, have experience in administering humanitarian assistance to people in their areas and beyond.

The Myanmar military junta is not the legitimate or de facto government of Myanmar, nor does it have the will or capacity to ensure aid is delivered to the majority of those



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in dire need. The military created Myanmar's pre-existing humanitarian crisis and will seek to use engagement with international actors on humanitarian grounds to advance its own military and political agenda at the expense of the Myanmar people. It has done this for decades, most recently in response to Cyclone Mocha in 2023.

Donors must be especially careful to ensure aid is provided in a way that reaches the people most in need and is not instrumentalised by the military junta. The military junta's lack of de facto and de jure legitimacy means international actors are not legally bound by the arbitrary restrictions it has sought, and will continue to seek, to impose on humanitarian access to and around Myanmar.

The onus now is on Myanmar's neighbouring States – China, India, Thailand, Laos and Bangladesh – to open their borders and allow international aid to cross into Myanmar and be distributed to people in need in coordination with Myanmar resistance authorities and civil society.

Myanmar's neighbours and the wider international community must act in solidarity with the people of Myanmar and not allow Min Aung Hlaing to exploit this latest disaster to further deepen Myanmar's suffering.

