



Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP)
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Statement on the 25th Anniversary of the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP)

March 23, 2025 marks the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP).

Over the past 25 years, AAPP's founding objective has been to advocate for the release of political prisoners and to provide them with psychological and material support. We have also assisted with the healing and rehabilitation of former political prisoners and their families and their reintegration back into society.

Through these efforts, preparations are being made for a transitional justice process that is necessary in the establishment of the future nation, ensuring national reconciliation and peaceful coexistence among diverse ethnic groups. In this process, we at AAPP have focused on promoting human rights and protecting civilians from human rights violations.

After the military coup on February 1, 2021, the junta committed widespread and systematic human rights violations, plunging the country into one of the most severe human rights crises in its history.

The military regime has arbitrarily amended and enacted laws to suppress dissent, unlawfully arrested and tortured political prisoners, and imposed unjust punishment. Additionally, the military junta has committed sexual violence against women, perpetrated the mass killing of innocent civilians, and targeted genocidal acts against persecuted groups. The junta has deliberately attacked residential areas, schools, hospitals, and religious sites through gunfire, ground assaults, and airstrikes. Civilians have been forcefully displaced from their homes. These actions constitute serious war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Furthermore, as the military regime continues to lose territorial control, it has revived its military conscription law, forcibly recruited young people and sending them to the battlefield. The younger generation has had its futures stolen from them, as they are being forced into the military against their will.

The military coup has left thousands of innocent civilians dead. Millions of people have been forced to flee their homes, leaving their belongings behind. Most of them are now internally displaced in the jungle, facing a shortage of food, water, and other basic necessities. Due to the military conscription law, many young people have lost their lives. Over the past four years, more than 28,000 political prisoners have been arrested and sentenced. Currently, more than 22,000 political prisoners remain incarcerated. At least 2,019 political prisoners have died whilst in detainment.

In response, AAPP systematically documents the conditions and experiences of political prisoners inside Burma's prisons, the challenges faced by former political prisoners, and the ongoing human rights violations across the country. This evidence is continuously shared with the people of Burma, the United Nations, and the international community. AAPP advocates for the release of political prisoners at the international level, applying pressure and lobbying for action. Additionally, AAPP documents crimes committed by the military junta, including genocide against ethnic minorities, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. This documentation is provided to relevant international organizations, to support the fulfillment of their own mandates.

AAPP is providing reparations and rehabilitation through its Mental Health Assistance Program, delivering counseling services to individuals, coping with stress and self-care mental health consultation services and psycho-social service provision. AAPP is also providing mental health awareness, basic coping skills and self-care training to several civil society organizations, different ethnic organizations and activist groups, among others.

AAPP is supporting the future transition by working on institutional reform and supporting international efforts that aim to achieve justice and reconciliation. The goal is to ensure a smooth transition to a future federal union. To achieve this, AAPP collaborates with partner organizations and stakeholders, engaging in discussions, sharing knowledge, and carrying out training programs to support these efforts.

AAPP has been able to stand strong for 25 years. Our achievements are a direct result of the unwavering dedication of our current team, as well as those who have previously worked with us, the support from allied organizations, and the individuals who have provided material or moral support to AAPP. Therefore, we (AAPP) extend our deepest gratitude to every individual and organization that has been instrumental to our success.

In particular, we (AAPP) extend our special thanks to the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and other domestic and international donor organizations, international diplomats, and individual donors who have continuously provided financial assistance to AAPP since it was established, ensuring the implementation of our activities.

On its 25th anniversary, AAPP reaffirms its determination to accomplish its mission with all its available resources and effort. The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) will continue to play its role, working towards the release of all political prisoners, including President U Win Myint and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, ending military dictatorship, promoting human rights and democracy, pursuing justice, and building a federal country in the future.

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