

## **Briefing Note on situation in Myanmar**

### **National Defence and Security Council Meeting held**

On July 31, 2024, the National Defence and Security Council of Myanmar convened its 2/2024 meeting in Nay Pyi Taw. The council decided to extend the state of emergency for an additional six months starting August 1, 2024, to ensure continued security and stability, as well as to facilitate the proper implementation of electoral processes. Key among the council's priorities is the preparation for future elections, which includes rectifying voter lists and conducting a comprehensive population and household census in October 2024 to prevent issues akin to those experienced during the 2020 election.

The council also addressed ongoing security challenges posed by terrorist attacks, underscoring the need to restore peace and stability to support electoral preparations. Throughout the meeting, the State Administration Council (SAC) reaffirmed its commitment to upholding the Constitution and advancing the multiparty democratic system, emphasizing the necessity of legal and procedural adherence to ensure a successful electoral process.

### **Current security situation in Myanmar debriefed by the SAC Chairman**

To address the widespread voting fraud during the 2020 elections, the Pro Tem President convened the National Defence and Security Council. The Tatmadaw (Myanmar military) was tasked with governing under the Constitution and forming the State Administration Council, which aims to hold new elections. However, some Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs), including both non-signatory and signatory EAOs, as well as the so-called People's Defense Force (PDF), have engaged in bombings, shootings, and attacks on civilians, infrastructure, and security forces.

Insurgent groups such as the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA), Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA), and Arakan Army (AA) have

rejected peace offers, launched attacks on security posts, and destroyed critical public infrastructure. They have targeted civilians, healthcare facilities, and educational institutions, causing widespread displacement and damage. In Rakhine State, the AA insurgents have caused severe disruptions, forcing residents to flee.

The Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and Chin National Front (CNF) groups are also involved in supplying arms and training to terrorist groups, contributing to violence in the Sagaing Region and Chin State. The Karen National Union (KNU) group has violated the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement by attacking various towns in Kayin State. Additionally, the Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP)/ Karenni Nationalities Defence Force (KNDF) insurgents have launched attacks in Kayah State and Shan State, leading to severe damage and loss.

These armed groups are receiving funding, arms, and technology support from abroad that lead escalates of the conflict. Security forces are striving to maintain stability while adhering to rules of engagement to minimize civilian harm.

### **Myanmar destroys over \$349 Million worth of sized narcotic drugs**

On June 26, 2024, Myanmar observed the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking with a series of ceremonies across 24 locations, during which a significant quantity of seized narcotic drugs, precursor chemicals, and stimulants were incinerated. In Taunggyi, Shan State, 17 types of narcotic drugs and 25 categories of precursor chemicals, valued at \$137.01 million, were destroyed.

In Yangon, narcotic drugs worth \$86.89 million were similarly burned. Mandalay saw the destruction of 21 types of narcotic drugs and 20 categories of precursor chemicals, totaling \$125.54 million. Throughout the year, Myanmar's

law enforcement agencies have seized and destroyed 77 types of narcotic drugs and precursors, with a combined value exceeding \$349 million.

### **Banking Sector in Myanmar's Response to Allegations in UN Special Rapporteur's Report**

On June 26, 2024, the UN Special Rapporteur's report alleged that international banks, state-owned banks, and certain local private banks in Myanmar were engaged in transactions that contravene human rights. The report called for these financial institutions to take corrective measures. In response, Myanmar Banking sector has expressed following clarification through a statement released on 28 June 2024:

- 1. Compliance with Due Diligence:** All local banks, including state-owned institutions, strictly adhere to customer due diligence procedures as mandated by the Central Bank of Myanmar. Furthermore, international correspondent banks have implemented Enhanced Due Diligence (EDD) measures for all business relationships and transactions, ensuring rigorous scrutiny of documents provided by Myanmar banks.
- 2. Recent Developments:** On June 9, 2024, the Central Bank of Myanmar issued a press release announcing that the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Asia Pacific Joint Group (APJG) have acknowledged significant progress in implementing the Action Plan. This has led to an upgrade in Myanmar's ratings, reflecting the country's commitment to addressing previously identified deficiencies.
- 3. Focus on Essential Goods:** Financial transactions facilitated by banks are exclusively for the importation of essential goods and basic necessities for Myanmar's civilians, including medicines, medical supplies, agricultural and livestock products, fertilizers, edible oil, and fuels. Banks rigorously review documentation and evidence for transactions related to these critical imports.

4. In light of these clarifications, banking sector in Myanmar has made strong objection against to the UN Special Rapporteur's report. The accusations undermine the interests of Myanmar's civilians and negatively impact Myanmar's relations with other nations.

### **Myanmar's Position at the 56th Human Rights Council Session**

During the 56th Session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva (June 18 – July 12, 2024), discussions on Myanmar were conducted without the country's participation, contrary to the principles of constructive dialogue. The Council adopted a draft resolution on Myanmar.

Myanmar's government provided the requested information, but the High Commissioner's report and presentation disproportionately highlighted narratives from armed groups, distorting findings and undermining the report's credibility. The report did not adequately address violations by armed groups such as the AA and downplayed terrorist actions by other factions opposing the government.

The Special Rapporteur's presentation appeared to aim at isolating Myanmar from the international community, echoing allegations from subversive media and armed insurgent groups associated with the National Unity Government (NUG) and the PDF. These groups have caused significant civilian casualties. Rather than condemning these groups, the Special Rapporteur encouraged international engagement with them, undermining Myanmar's efforts to maintain peace and security. The Special Rapporteur's papers mischaracterized legitimate banking transactions as supporting military activities and called for unilateral sanctions, overlooking their potential severe impact on Myanmar's population.

Recent resolutions have failed to address the root causes of issues in northern Rakhine State from 2017 and contain unsubstantiated claims. Myanmar is committed to peace, stability, and preparations for democratic elections in

2025. The government has facilitated UN agency operations and opposes resolutions and dialogues that do not support constructive engagement. Myanmar calls on the Human Rights Council to uphold impartiality and respect national sovereignty while supporting genuine efforts toward peace and democratization.

### **Response to Joint Press Statement on Humanitarian Situation in Myanmar**

On July 15, 2024, a joint press statement on Myanmar's humanitarian situation was delivered by US Ambassador Robert Wood, Alternative Representative for Special Political Affairs, on behalf of the EU and several other countries at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

Myanmar firmly rejects the allegations and fraudulent elements presented in this joint press statement, which do not accurately reflect the situation on the ground. The Myanmar government is committed to ensuring that humanitarian aid reaches those in need without discrimination, in close cooperation with the United Nations and genuinely supportive countries. Humanitarian assistance for the affected populations is being managed through the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre).

The government has facilitated travel access and the delivery of humanitarian aid requested by the UN and international organizations, subject to security conditions. Myanmar has taken necessary security measures to protect its people and property with utmost restraint. However, the joint press statement fails to acknowledge the tragic loss of over 7,880 innocent lives due to attacks by terrorist groups in Myanmar. Myanmar also criticizes Security Council Resolution 2669 as being overly politicized.

The government reaffirms its commitment to the 2008 Constitution, existing laws, and fundamental principles as the guiding norms for national tasks. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs strongly rejects the baseless accusations in the politically motivated joint press statement from the EU and other countries, emphasizing that it does not accurately represent the situation in Myanmar.

## **Crimes committed by PDF groups and terrorist's attack on 100-bed military hospital in Lashio**

On June 30, 2024, eight commercial buses from various transportation companies were targeted with improvised explosive devices (IEDs) by the so-called People's Defense Forces (PDF) while en route from Yangon, Myanmar's commercial capital, to the Sagaing Region. The attacks resulted in one passenger fatality and 23 injuries. Additionally, law enforcement personnel who responded to the scene to provide medical assistance were ambushed by PDF members. Myanmar security forces also discovered and neutralized another 30 IEDs in the surrounding areas.

A similar incident occurred on July 2, 2024, in Taungthar Township, Mandalay Region, where members of the People's Defense Forces (PDF) targeted 11 vehicles belonging to TTA Transportation and Cargo Services on the Taungthar-Nantogyi highway. Following the attack, Myanmar security forces conducted an operation, recovered the vehicles, and subsequently returned them to TTA Transportation and Cargo Services.

The PDF has also disrupted public infrastructure and government projects, attacked villages, and engaged in arson. They recently targeted a natural gas pipeline near Mingan village on August 12, 2024, leading to a security response. Additionally, they vandalized and set fire to the Ministry of Industry's Taungtha vest factory, causing injuries and theft. In response, security measures have been increased in Taungtha Township.

On August 4, 2024, 25 political parties and other social organizations in Myanmar released a statement condemning the violent actions committed by the MNDAA, AA, TNLA, and their allies in Lashio Township, Shan State (North). The statement highlighted a recent attack on No. 9 Tatmadaw Hospital on August 2, where armed groups used heavy weapons, rockets, drones, and small arms. The assault targeted civilians, including doctors, nurses, patients, and children, some of whom were abducted, including pregnant women.

The political parties denounced these acts as inhumane and a violation of both Myanmar's Counter-Terrorism Law and international human rights standards as

indicated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They called for domestic and international legal measures against the perpetrators, including potential sanctions and designation as terrorists by other governments.

### **Terrorist's attack on Bengalis Villagers in Rakhine State**

On August 5, 2024, it was reported that AA terrorists attacked on a prawn pond west of Phawyazi Village in Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State. They massacred Bengali villagers, including children. The victims were fleeing from the villages when the AA killed them to cover up their other brutal acts in the area. The video footage of this massacre went viral on social media and the advocacy groups from abroad have blamed AA for the attacks. Despite abundant evidence of war crimes being committed by these terrorist groups, some countries and international organizations are reluctant to condemn their crimes and atrocities.

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