



General Assembly

Distr.: General
9 February 2022

English only

Human Rights Council

Forty-ninth session

28 February–1 April 2022

Agenda item 4

Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Written statement* submitted by Jubilee Campaign, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[3 February 2022]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only. The views expressed in the present document do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations or its officials.



Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of Human Rights in Myanmar

One year after the military coup in Myanmar the deterioration of the human rights situation, and particularly the indiscriminate attacks against and extrajudicial killings of religious and ethnic minority communities, continues. Jubilee Campaign calls on the Human Rights Council to place multilateral targeted sanctions regimes on the military junta to ensure a complete cessation of the indiscriminate attacks against civilians.

At the last Human Rights Council session, Jubilee Campaign raised similar concerns about the Myanmar military's violence against civilians, recording the specified targeting of religious minorities and their houses of worship for attacks, unwarranted searches, and arbitrary arrests of worshippers and leaders. Similar violence continues with equal brutality into the new year.

Extrajudicial killings and torture of religious and ethnic minorities

On 11 December 2021 the Myanmar military killed pastor Om Ki; they had arrested Pastor Ki and kept him overnight before shooting him brutally in the head. Also in December 2021, the military arrested Pastor Salai Ngwe Kyar from Sidoktaya Township while he was traveling from his village. Troops took Pastor Kyar to the local police station and then to the No. 20 Defence Equipment Industry factory for further interrogation. Around four days later, the family of Pastor Kyar was notified that their son had been sent to Magway General Hospital for medical treatment and that he had died the day after he arrived. Individuals close to the pastor suspect the military used torture methods during the interrogation and they have been unable to retrieve his body from the factory. The Myanmar junta has killed at least three pastors extrajudicially in 2021.(1)

Between 8-9 January 2022 the Myanmar military advanced into Yar Thit and Phayar-Kone village using heavy weaponry. In conjunction with the advance, military forces arrested Mg Soe Myin and his friends who were on their way to a monastery. They questioned Mg Soe Myin about his monastic training, regarding where it was received, who administered it, and how many people had been trained. The military tortured Mg Soe Myin, leaving visible bruises on his wrists from being bound with ropes, and burns over his entire body. The military beat him with fists and a metal bar, leaving further bruising on his chest, arms, neck, and legs, with scraped skin on his shins and several internal injuries following blows from the metal bar. The military detained Mg Soe Myin for four days without food. Mg Soe Myin was eventually able to flee after the Karen National Union forced the military to retreat. His sister says he is still recovering from psychosocial trauma and is experiencing complications with insomnia and anxiety.(2)

Indiscriminate killings and attacks

On 28 December 2021 the military burned down 10 houses in Chaungkhuah village; they also set fire to Hakhalay Village in Kalay Township and arrested several people. The attacks forced over 5,000 people to flee the Kalay Township in the west of Myanmar to Webula nearly 16 kilometers away. Among those killed in the indiscriminate gunfire by the Myanmar army was an 80-year old grandmother by the name of Pi Pi Thluai Men.(3)

On the 9th January 2022, mortars fired by the military wounded two farmers and destroyed their homes; there were also reports of aircraft bombs being used. Children are also included in the victims of indiscriminate bombings and gunfire by the military. In Karen state on 13 January 2022, the military killed two farmers and severely wounded a six-year-old boy.(4)

Military attacks also continue to target places of worship, as in December 2021 troops fired 120mm mortars at both a church compound in Kawtari Township and a monastery.(5)

On the 22nd January 2022, Free Burma Rangers (FBR) reported over 27 abandoned villages in Karen state as a result of the violence. The Myanmar military has targeted civilians in their fight against indigenous militant groups. On the 20 January troops set fire to a home under

the pretext that its residents had shot at soldiers. The authorities detained and interrogated villagers who were unable to flee.(6)

Attacks on IDP camps and Torture used against Minorities

On 14-15 December 2021, military troops entered Lay Kay Kaw IDP resettlement village south of Mywaddy in search of people involved with the pro-democracy resistance movement and People's Defense Force (PDF). Free Burma Rangers reported that the military started arresting villagers and torturing them by tying them up, beating them, and then dunking their heads into water. This continued for two days and when the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) intervened, fighting between the two armed groups began. The military reinforced its troops and began to shell the village indiscriminately, targeting civilians. Similar airstrikes have been conducted by the Myanmar military across Central Karen State along the Myanmar-Thai border, displacing over 10,000 people.(7)

Myanmar Military Violence's Short and Long-term Implications

The indiscriminate attacks and bombings in Myanmar have both direct and long-term implications on the ethnic and religious minorities of Myanmar. There are the current pressing needs of emergency medical aid, food, clean water, and healthcare; there are also the long-term effects of the trauma of witnessing and being victim to the military's violence, the lack of education for children, and the absence of a stable home.

There have also arisen concerns of food security as the military has been targeting farmers, with reports of troops shooting at villagers while they are sowing in their rice fields.(8) Increased militarization in Northern Karen state, for example, hinders villagers from harvesting their crops, and thus they have been forced out of their villages, leaving their cultivation plots unharvested.(9) The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs recorded that around 13 million people, a quarter of Myanmar's population, face moderate or severe levels of food insecurity.(10) The military coup on 1 February 2021 has severely worsened conditions with conflict-border areas, emptying entire towns or villages. The military regularly denies foreign aid groups access to provide humanitarian relief, and local organisations face risky military checkpoints.(11) The director of Karen Office of Relief and Development shared that many IDPs were not able to return to their paddy fields to harvest, leaving the crop to spoil, resulting in "lost [...] food for the whole year."(12)

Recommendations

Jubilee Campaign urges members and observer states of the Human Rights Council to:

1. Urgently adopt the recommendations made by the UN experts and issue strong, focused, and coordinated actions including targeted economic sanctions and an arms embargo, to ensure no private or public funds go to the military junta's criminal enterprise.
2. Ensure the Myanmar military cease its targeting of civilian populations, noting that the attacks are creating food insecurity in Myanmar.
3. Ensure that a humanitarian corridor is created to grant access for foreign and local humanitarian agencies to displacement sites in Myanmar to conduct needs assessments and deliver lifesaving aid including food, water, and health care.
4. Ensure safe passage for civilians to return to their homes to harvest their crops.
5. Re-establish the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar to investigate and collect data on the ongoing atrocities carried out by the military to ensure the perpetrators are held accountable.
6. Continue to support the important mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Myanmar and to adopt his recommendations.

- (1) International Christian Concern, "Myanmar Junta Kills Two Chin Pastors Last Week", 13 December 2021. ; Khin Yi Yi Zaw, "Chin Pastor from Magway Region Killed during Military Interrogation", Myanmar NOW, 13 December 2021.
- (2) Free Burma Rangers, "Burma Army Uses Mortars and Aircraft to Terrorize Villagers in Dooplaya District, Karen State", 25 January 2022.
- (3) Free Burma Rangers, "Burma Army Soldiers Capture and Kill Chin Pastor during Attacks; Thousands More Fleeing into Hiding", 3 January 2022.
- (4) Free Burma Rangers, "Burma Airstrike Killed Three Villagers and Severely Wounds Two Including Young Boy", 17 January 2022.
- (5) Supra note 2.
- (6) Ibid.
- (7) Free Burma Rangers, "Burma Army Air and Ground Displace Over 10,000 People in Central Karen State along the Burma-Thai Border", 28 December 2021.
- (8) Free Burma Rangers, "Machine Guns, a Widow, and Changed Hearts: Followup Report to 'Planting Rice Under Fire'", 31 January 2022.
- (9) Karen News, "Displaced Karen Villagers Unable to Harvest Their Crops, Because of Burma Army Militarization, Now Face Food Shortages", 9 December 2021.
- (10) Irwin Loy, "Multiple Crises spiral in Myanmar one year after coup", The New Humanitarian, 1 February 2022.
- (11) Ibid.
- (12) Ibid.