

The Honorable Penny Wong
Minister for Foreign Affairs,
Parliament House,
Canberra ACT 2600

29 June 2022

Open letter to Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong from 688 civil society organisations
Re: Urgent change of course and action needed on Myanmar

Dear Minister Penny Wong,

We, the undersigned 688 Burma/Myanmar, regional and international civil society organisations, welcome your appointment as Foreign Minister and note the Australian Labor Party's [commitment](#) to seek "strong and enduring relations with the people of Myanmar" when in government. We note your past [comments](#) that Australia "cannot be a bystander to a direct attack on Myanmar's democracy" and your [call](#) for the Australian government "to take a stand" for democracy in Myanmar and to impose targeted sanctions. We acknowledge the Australian government's commitment to appoint a Special Envoy for Southeast Asia and for increased aid to the region and to implement a ['First Nations Foreign Policy'](#).

We are writing to urge you to hear our voices, as we struggle for a federal democratic Myanmar that upholds human rights for all and to protect Burma/Myanmar's cultures, livelihoods and fragile ecosystems that are under dire threat by the illegitimate military junta.

Since the illegal coup attempt on February 1, 2021, the illegitimate junta has waged a terror campaign against the people of Myanmar, amid widespread and mass resistance. There have been [more than 10,000 armed clashes](#), which include attacks on civilians through indiscriminate shellings and airstrikes, and over 2,000 people have been [murdered](#) by the junta. Around [440,000 people](#) have been forcibly displaced since the coup attempt, as the junta carries out deliberate attacks, killing, torturing and raping, and destroying houses, villages and food supplies across the country. In Sagaing Region, the junta [torched](#) over 5,600 houses in February to April 2022 alone. The junta's criminal conduct amounts to war crimes and crimes against humanity, which it commits with total impunity.

The junta has devastated the [economy](#), which has shrunk around 30%, causing widespread food insecurity. The junta has [weaponized](#) telecommunications, ordering internet shutdowns in large swaths of the country, blocked access to information through censorship and targeted the people for surveillance. [Journalists](#) have been targeted with murder, arrest and torture, as well as doxing campaigns and the dissemination of hate speech and disinformation.

ASEAN is complicit in the junta's terror campaign. Since the attempted coup, ASEAN has continued to legitimize the junta and ignore the voices of the people. Its failed Five-Point Consensus was agreed with the illegitimate junta alone, which has ignored its own pledge to implement it. ASEAN has repeatedly invited the junta to meetings, events and military training, providing cover for ASEAN members and Australia to engage with war criminals,

emboldening their crimes in Australia's name. The ASEAN Special Envoy on Myanmar defers to the illegitimate military junta and has failed to engage with Myanmar's legitimate government, the National Unity Government (NUG), the National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC), Ethnic Revolutionary Organizations (EROs) and civil society.

The ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management ([AHA Centre](#)), an intergovernmental humanitarian disaster management body supported with Australian taxpayer funds, does not have the capacity to handle humanitarian aid in a conflict setting where the perpetrator and the clear aggressor is the partner in delivering aid. It is rather exacerbating the crisis in Burma/Myanmar by allowing the military to weaponize humanitarian aid, offering tactical and political advantage while lending legitimacy to the military junta who is the main perpetrator of violence that is leading to mass displacement. Civil society strongly rejects the AHA Centre's divide-and-rule approach of meeting with EROs individually, and failure to engage with NUG, NUCC and civil society.

The Morrison Government fell shamefully short to live up to Australia's values of and commitment to democracy and human rights. Your predecessor failed to impose targeted sanctions, failed to join efforts for international accountability, failed to recognize the National Unity Government (NUG) as the legitimate government and NUCC as the highest consultative body of Burma/Myanmar, and continually legitimized the junta through bilateral and multilateral engagement, including with Min Aung Hlaing. Australia's [Future Fund](#) has maintained investments in businesses that provide arms and revenue to the Myanmar military junta, profiting from Myanmar's destruction.

We therefore earnestly appeal to you to change course:

1. Impose targeted sanctions against the Myanmar military junta, its businesses and all those responsible for grave human rights violations.
2. Recognize and support the NUG as the legitimate government of Burma/Myanmar, and NUCC as the highest consultative body.
3. Reject the illegitimate junta's appointment of ambassador to Australia and accept appointments made by the NUG
4. Do more to support the humanitarian crisis in Myanmar by delivering Australian aid cross-border through trusted local humanitarian and community-based organisations, in consultation with NUG, NUCC and EROs.
5. Intervene in the International Court of Justice case against Myanmar to fully support accountability for the crime of genocide against the Rohingya.
6. Take action to prevent Australian mining companies from continuing to explore and extract minerals, which are a source of revenue for the junta, and threaten ethnic communities and the environment.
7. Put an advisory in place for Australian businesses and investors to avoid any business with the Myanmar military junta and its cronies.
8. Ensure the Future Fund divests from all businesses that are providing arms and revenue to the military junta.
9. Urge the UN Security Council to impose a global arms embargo on the Myanmar military junta and to refer the Myanmar situation to the ICC.
10. Stop hiding behind ASEAN as an excuse for inaction on Burma/Myanmar.

11. Urge ASEAN to exclude the Myanmar military junta from all meetings, programs and [military exercises](#), and to recognize NUG and NUCC. Boycott all meetings that include junta representatives.
12. Urge ASEAN to move beyond the Five-Point Consensus and work with NUG, NUCC, EROs and civil society to find an alternative and durable solution to the crisis in Burma/Myanmar that upholds human rights and democratic principles.
13. Urge ASEAN to revoke the decision reached during the [Consultative Meeting on ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance to Myanmar](#) that places the military junta in control of aid delivery. Ensure the AHA Centre ceases its divide-and-rule approach and begins inclusive consultation with NUG, NUCC, EROs and civil society. If ASEAN fails to do so, stop providing aid and technical support to the AHA Centre for Myanmar.
14. Commission Australia's Special Envoy on Southeast Asia to engage with the ASEAN Special Envoy and UN Special Envoys on Myanmar to ensure joint effort by the UN and ASEAN to address the human rights and humanitarian crisis in Burma/Myanmar, in coordination with NUG, NUC, EROs and civil society.
15. Urge Quad members Japan and India to immediately end business with the junta, impose an arms embargo and end all military support for the junta. The Quad must recognise and support the NUG as the legitimate government and NUCC as the highest consultative body of Burma/Myanmar.

For further information, please contact:

- Khin Ohmar, Progressive Voice, info@progressive-voice.org
- James Thangman, Ethnic Myanmar Communities' Council of Australia, zotmtuang@gmail.com
- Salai Za Uk Ling, Chin Human Rights Organization, zauk@chinhumanrights.org

List of Signatories

List of signatories include the following 298 Myanmar, regional and international organisations and 390 Myanmar civil society organisations that have chosen not to disclose their names.

Signed by:

1. 8888 Generation (New Zealand)
2. Active Youths (Kalay Myo)
3. Ah Nah podcast- conversation with Myanmar
4. Ah. La. Ka (12) Hta Khwe. Primary Education Student Union
5. All Burma Democratic Face in New Zealand
6. All Burma Federation of Trade Unions-ABFTU
7. All Burma Indigenous People Alliance (APIBA)
8. All Religions Strike Column
9. All Sagaing Township Basic Education Students' Union
10. All Schools of Aungmyaythazan Township Strike
11. Alternative Solutions for Rural Communities (ASORCOM)

12. ALTSEAN-Burma
13. Anti-Junta Forces Coordination Committee (AFCC)
14. Arakan CSO Network
15. Arakan Humanitarian Coordination Team-AHCT
16. Asia Justice and Rights (AJAR)
17. Association for Human Rights Defenders and Promoters
18. Athan - Freedom of Expression Activist Organization
19. Auckland Kachin Community NZ
20. Auckland Zomi Community
21. Aung Myay Thar Zan Education School
22. Aung Myay Tharzan Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
23. Aung Pin Lae Main Strike Column
24. Australia Chin Communities' Council Inc.
25. Australia Karen Organization (AKO)
26. Australian Burmese Muslim Organization
27. Australian Burmese Rohingya Organization (ABRO)
28. Ayeyarwaddy Youth Network
29. Bago Basic Education Students' Union
30. Bago MATA
31. Bago Women Group
32. Bank Trade Unions Federation of Myanmar - BTUFM
33. BEHS-1, Hpa-An Basic Education Students' Union
34. BEHS-1, Mandalay Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
35. BEHS-11, Aungmyethazan Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
36. BEHS-24, Mahaangmyay Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
37. BEHS-4, Mandalay Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
38. BEHS-8, Aungmyethazan Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
39. Blood Money Campaign
40. Burma Action Ireland
41. Burma Environmental Working Group
42. Burma River Network
43. Burma suomalaiset, Finland
44. Burmese American Millennials
45. Burmese Canadian Network
46. Burmese Community Group (Manawatu, NZ)
47. Burmese Community in France
48. Burmese Rohingya Welfare Organisation New Zealand
49. Burmese Women's Union
50. Campaign for a New Myanmar
51. CDM Support Team Mandalay
52. Chan Mya Thar Si Township People Strike Column
53. Chanayetharsan Basic Education Students' Union
54. Check us for Safety (Ahlone)
55. Chin Community of Auckland
56. Chin Human Right Organization (CHRO)
57. Chin Leaders
58. Chin MATA
59. Chin Resources Center
60. Citizen of Burma Award - New Zealand
61. Coalition of Mandalay Engineers
62. Columns Coordination Committee

63. Committee Representing Mandalay Region Hluttaw
64. Cooperative University Student Strike Column
65. CRPH & NUG Supporters Ireland
66. CRPH Funding Ireland
67. Daik-U Basic Education Students' Union
68. Daung Sit Thi
69. Dawei Basic Education Students' Union
70. Dawei Development Association
71. Delta News Agency
72. Democracy for Ethnic Minorities Organization
73. Democracy for Myanmar - Working Group (NZ)
74. Democratic Youth Council
75. Demoso Basic Education Students' Union
76. Dhanu Youth Organization
77. Doh Atu - Ensemble pour le Myanmar
78. Education Family (Anti - Fascists Education Strike)
79. Educational Initiatives Prague
80. Equality Myanmar
81. Ethnic Myanmar Communities' Council of Australia
82. Ethnic Youth General Strike Committee (Mandalay)
83. Family Private School Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
84. Federal Myanmar Benevolence Group (NZ)
85. Federal Trade Union of Kawthoolei (FTUK)
86. Free Rohingya Coalition
87. Freedom for Burma
88. Future Light Center
89. Future Thanlwin
90. Generation Wave
91. Global Movement for Myanmar Democracy (GM4MD)
92. Helping Hands for Burma (H2B)
93. Hinthada Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
94. Hlaing Thar Yar Basic Education Students' Union
95. Hopin Basic Education Students' Union
96. HTY Scout Channel
97. Human Rights Educators Network
98. Human Rights Foundation of Monland
99. Information & Scout News (Hlaing)
100. Insein Scout Channel
101. Inter-Faith Strike Column
102. Interfaith Youth Coalition on Aids in Myanmar (IYCA-Myanmar)
103. International Association, Myanmar-Switzerland (IAMS)
104. Justice For Myanmar
105. Kachin State Women Network
106. Kachin Women's Association Thailand
107. Kachin Women's Union
108. Kadu Youth Development Association (KYDA)
109. Kamayut Scout Channel
110. Karen Environment and Social Action Network (KESAN)
111. Karen Human Rights Group
112. Karen Office of Relief and Development (KORD)
113. Karen Rivers Watch

114. Karen Student Network Group (KSNG)
115. Karen Women's Organization
116. Karen Youth Organization (KYO)
117. Karenni Civil Society Network
118. Karenni Community Geelong
119. Karenni Human Rights Group
120. Karenni National Women's Organization
121. Karenni Society Finland
122. Karenni Society New Zealand
123. Katha Basic Education Students' Union
124. Kayah Liphu Youth (KLY)
125. Kayan Internally Displacement Supervising Committee (KIDSC)
126. Keng Tung Youth
127. Kyaikhto Basic Education Students' Union – KBESU
128. Kyaikhto Students' Union - KSU
129. Kyaukse Basic Education Students' Union
130. Kyaukse University Interim Administrative Council
131. Kyauktada Strike Committee (KSC)
132. Kyause University Students' Union
133. Kyimyindaing Scout Channel
134. Labor Union Federation
135. Labutta Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
136. Langkho Basic Education Students' Union
137. Lanmadaw,Latha & Pabedan Scout Channel
138. Lashio Basic Education Students' Union
139. Launglon Basic Education Students' Union
140. League of Labour Union
141. Let's Help Each Other
142. Letpadan Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
143. LGBT Union Mandalay (LGBTIQ Strike of Mandalay)
144. Maha Aung Myay Township People Collective Strike Column
145. Mahaaungmyay Township People Strike
146. Mandalay College Students Strike
147. Mandalay University Student Strike Column
148. Mandalay University Student Union (Mandalay Poets' Union)
149. Mandalay University Students Union
150. Mandalay Alliance Coalition Strike
151. Mandalay Based People Strike Column
152. Mandalay Civil Society Organization
153. Mandalay Engineer United Force
154. Mandalay Engineers Group
155. Mandalay People Strike
156. Mandalay Poets' Union
157. Mandalay Private Universities Students Union
158. Mandalay Technology University (MTU) Students Union
159. Mandalay Universities, Degree and College Teachers and Staffs Strike
160. Mandalay University Alumni Strike
161. Mandalay University of Foreign Languages Students Union
162. Mandalay Wholesale Centers Strike
163. Mandalay Wholesale Strike Column
164. Mandalay Women Strike

165. Mandalay Youth Association
166. Mandalay Youth Strike Column
167. Mawkmai Basic Education Students' Union
168. Mawlamyine Basic Education Students' Union
169. Mayangone News
170. Medical Family Mandalay (MFM)
171. Medical University (Mandalay) Student Union
172. Meikhtila Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
173. Metta Campaign Mandalay
174. Midwives Training School (Mandalay) Students' Union
175. MIIT Student Strike Column
176. Minbu Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
177. Minhla Youth Center
178. Mogaung Basic Education Students' Union
179. Mohnyin Basic Education Students' Union
180. Monywa Basic Education Students' Union - ABFSU
181. Mudon Basic Education Students' Union
182. Muslim Youth Network
183. Muslim Youth Union
184. Mya Taung Strike Column
185. Myanmar Alliance for Transparency and Accountability
186. Myanmar Canadian Network
187. Myanmar Diaspora Group Finland
188. Myanmar Emergency Fund - Canada
189. Myanmar Engineers - New Zealand
190. Myanmar Gonye (New Zealand)
191. Myanmar Institute of Information Technology Students' Union
192. Myanmar Labour News
193. Myanmar People Alliance (Shan State)
194. Myanmar People from Ireland
195. Myanmar Railway, Region (3) CDM Strike Column
196. Myanmar Students' Union in New Zealand
197. National Support Team (NST)
198. National University of Arts and Culture (Mandalay) Students' Union
199. Network for Human Rights Documentation Burma (ND-Burma)
200. New Zealand Doctors for NUG
201. New Zealand Karen Association
202. New Zealand Zo Community Inc.
203. No (12) Basic Education Middle School Student Union
204. No (7) Basic Education High School Alumni Strike
205. No.12 Basic Education Middle School (High Branch) Basic Education Students' Union
206. NOK Information & Scout Echo
207. North Dagon & East Dagon News
208. NRFF - New Rehmonnya Federated Force
209. Nursing Training School Students Union (Mandalay)
210. Nyaunglebin Basic Education Students' Union
211. Overseas Mon Association - New Zealand
212. Oway Institute
213. Padaung Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
214. Pan Pa Wati People Strike Column
215. Pa-O Youth Organization

216. Paramedical Technical University (Mandalay) Student Union
217. PEC Private School Basic Education Students' Union
218. Pharmacy University (Mandalay) Students' Union
219. Phayagyi Peace Strike Column
220. Private pre-school Teachers' Association
221. Progressive Voice
222. Pyay Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
223. Pyigyidagon Strike
224. Pyin Nyar Nan Daw Private School Basic Education Students' Union
225. Pyin Oo Lwin Basic Education Students' Union
226. Pyinmana Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
227. Pyithu Gonye (New Zealand)
228. Reliable Organization
229. Rvwang Community Association New Zealand
230. Sagaing MATA
231. Sangha Samaga Strike Column
232. Sangha Union Strike
233. Save and Care Organization for Women at Ethnic Border Areas
234. Save Myanmar Fundraising Group (New Zealand)
235. Save the Salween Network
236. Sein Pan Strike Column
237. Shan Community (New Zealand)
238. Shan MATA
239. Sintgaing Basic Education Students' Union
240. Sisters 2 Sisters
241. Sitt Nyein Pann Foundation
242. Social Garden
243. SOS MYANMAR (ရုန်းကန်သံအဖွဲ့)
244. South Dagon Scouting Infos (SDG)
245. Southern Youth Development Organization
246. Strike Column of Representatives of Arbitrarily Arrested People
247. Strike Column of Teachers from Universities and Degree Colleges of Mandalay
248. Students for Free Burma (SFB)
249. Support Group for Democracy in Myanmar (the Netherlands)
250. Swedish Myanmar Supporting Community
251. Synergy - Social Harmony Organization
252. Ta'ang Women's Organization
253. Taekwando Sport Association
254. Taekwondo Federation
255. Taiwan Alliance for Myanmar
256. Tampawadi People Strike
257. Tamwe Nway Oo Channel
258. Tanintharyi Nationalities Congress
259. Tanitharyi MATA
260. Taunggyi Basic Education Students' Union
261. Technical University (Mandalay) Student Union
262. Technological University (Yadanabon Cyber City) Students' Union
263. Technological University Mandalay (TUM) Students Union
264. Tha Pyay Nyo Newsletter
265. Thaketa & Dawbon Scout Channel
266. Thaton Basic Education Students' Union

267. Thint Myart Lo Thu Myar Organization
268. Traditional Medicine (Mandalay) Students' Union
269. Union of Karenni State Youth
270. University of Computer (Mandalay) Students' Union
271. University of Computer Studies (Mandalay) Students' Union
272. University of Dental Medicine (Mandalay) Students' Union
273. University of Medicine (Mandalay) Students' Union
274. University of Nursing (Mandalay) Students' Union
275. University of Pharmacy (Mandalay) Students' Union
276. University of Traditional Medicine (Mandalay) Students' Union
277. US Advocacy Coalition for Myanmar (USACM)
278. VEC Private School Basic Education Students' Union
279. Way Way Nay
280. Wetlet Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
281. Women's League of Burma
282. Wundwin Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
283. Yadanabon University Students' Union
284. Yadanapone University Student Union (Ya. Ta. Ka. Tha)
285. Yangon Revolution Force - YRF (Soft Strike Community)
286. Yedashe Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
287. Youth Poets' Union
288. Youth Scout For Democracy (YSD)
289. Youths Union
290. Youths Union - Pathein
291. Z Fighter News
292. Zabuthiri Basic Education Students' Union-ABFSU
293. Zeegwat News
294. Zo Community Australia Inc.
295. တော်လှန်သွေးမကုန် တောင်ဒဂုံသပိတ်အင်အားစု
296. ဒို့မြေကွန်ရက် (LIOH)
297. ပွင့်ဖြူလယ်ယာမြေကွန်ရက်
298. မျိုးဆက်-Generations