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Progressive Voice condemns execution of Myanmar democracy activists, calls for urgent international action

The world must urgently act to condemn the cruel execution of four democracy activists in Myanmar and stop the Myanmar military's deplorable acts of terror, said Progressive Voice today. The UN Security Council members must immediately respond to this cruelty by imposing targeted sanctions and a global arms embargo against the Myanmar military junta and refer the situation of Myanmar to the International Criminal Court or establish an ad hoc tribunal.

Well-known democracy activists Kyaw Min Yu, known as "Ko Jimmy," and Phyo Zeya Thaw who was also a former lawmaker, as well as two other men, Hla Myo Aung and Aung Thura Zaw, were [sentenced](#) to death in June 2022 after a sham military trial by the illegitimate military junta that charged them under the Counterterrorism Law of 2014 and Penal Code. Today, the Myanmar military's propaganda publications, including the Global New Light of Myanmar, [reported](#) that they have carried out the punishment, executing the four men.

Khin Ohmar, Chairperson of Progressive Voice said: "We are outraged and deeply saddened by the horrendous news of the murder of four democracy activists. This demonstrates the military's blanket impunity over its campaign of terror against the people of Myanmar.

"The murder of the four men amount to crimes against humanity, yet again committed by this terrorist junta. The impotence of the international community is largely to blame, with the UN Security Council repeatedly failing to act to stop the junta from committing these horrendous crimes. We are appalled by the lack of effective concrete actions from the UN and ASEAN since the attempted coup in February 2021.

"The UN Security Council members must immediately respond to this cruelty by imposing targeted sanctions and a global arms embargo against this junta and refer the situation of Myanmar to the International Criminal Court or set up an ad hoc tribunal. Governments must impose further sanctions against the military, including jet fuel and Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise to cut the financial flow to this murderous junta.

"These executions demonstrates the utter failure of ASEAN's Five Point Consensus. The international community can no longer ignore the fact that ASEAN's approach to resolving the crisis in Myanmar is a sham. Governments and the UN must stop deflecting responsibility onto a regional body that has only shielded the military from coordinated international action."

The executions come following the ASEAN Special Envoy's visit to Myanmar earlier this month, where he touted achieving "some progress" during his mission. Cambodia currently holds the ASEAN Chairmanship. Cambodia's Prime Minister, Hun Sen, previously [called](#) on Senior General Min Aung Hlaing not to execute the four men.

These are the first known judicial [executions](#) in Myanmar in over three decades.

The sham military tribunals of the four men took place in secret proceedings, violating basic principles of a fair trial. The military has [sentenced](#) 117 people to death including 2 children and 41 *in absentia* since 1 February 2021 attempted coup, according to Assistance Association for Political Prisoner (AAPP).

The Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar (IIMM) [stated](#) that imposing a death sentence under these circumstances “could constitute crimes against humanity or war crimes.”

Khin Ohmar stated: “The recent notice that Japan sent to the terrorist military, effectively inviting the military junta to Japan’s state funeral for former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in September is just one example of the international community further emboldening the military to continue to commit war crimes and crimes against humanity. Japan must stop aiding and abetting the Myanmar military’s atrocity crimes.”

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Progressive Voice is a participatory rights-based policy research and advocacy organization rooted in civil society, that maintains strong networks and relationships with grassroots organizations and community-based organizations throughout Myanmar. <https://progressivevoicemyanmar.org/>