



Republic of the Union of Myanmar

National Unity Government

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Statement (19/2022)

Response to the Statement of the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Myanmar

19 August 2022

The National Unity Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar expresses its extreme disappointment at the statement issued by the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General on Myanmar, Ms. Noeleen Heyzer on 17 August 2022.

The statement addressed the Special Envoy's meeting with coup leader Min Aung Hlaing, which Ms. Heyzer pursued despite broad warnings. The meeting's overriding outcome has been to diminish the credibility of the Special Envoy and the UN.

We acknowledged that the Special Envoy has since clarified that the meeting did not “in any way confer legitimacy” on the junta. It is just another call for cessation of violence, respect of human rights, humanitarian access to all those in need. The Special Envoy also call for ending aerial bombings and the burning of civilian houses. We appreciated for those words. However, those repeated calls must be accompanied with specific consequences. A 600-house large village in Magwe Region was burned down by the military, immediately after Special Envoy's call to end the burning of civilian homes. Special Envoy should note that the National Unity Government is the legitimate representative of the Myanmar people, and legitimacy cannot be conferred on a terrorist military junta.

In allowing herself to be photographed shaking hands with a war criminal and his Minister, the Special Envoy has predictably been instrumentalised for junta propaganda.

The Special Envoy in her statement asserts that the “people of Myanmar have the right to democracy and self-determination free from fear and want”. The statement adds that the meeting comprised part

of broader UN efforts to ‘support an effective and peaceful Myanmar-led political pathway to return to civilian rule based on the will and the needs of the people’.

For more than 18 months, the Myanmar people have exercised their self-determination daily through a rights-based revolution for democracy and civilian rule despite junta atrocities and UN inaction.

It is also yet to be confirmed whether the high political cost borne by the Special Envoy secured any concessions from the junta beyond a reported agreement to ‘engage in frank conversations’.

Describing State Counsellor H.E. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi as a ‘critical stakeholder’, the Special Envoy expressed her hope that the State Counsellor “can return home soon” from “her current situation”. This ignored that the State Counsellor continues to be held in solitary confinement and had six years added to her political imprisonment by the junta on the same day that the Special Envoy’s visit was announced.

On the junta’s recent extrajudicial execution of four democracy activists, the Special Envoy called for ‘a moratorium on all future executions’ but made no mention of the unlawful closed-door military tribunals behind these spurious convictions, let alone that the executions constituted murder.

The Special Envoy has claimed that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss ‘pragmatic steps’ with the junta. Pragmatism must see the UN direct all of its efforts to supporting the people’s revolution and ending the junta’s violence, its weaponisation of aid, its persecution of political prisoners, and its impunity. Anything short of this is appeasement of a terrorist junta.

And to have any chance of recovering the people’s trust, the Special Envoy must publicly strengthen partnership with the National Unity Government, Ethnic Resistance Organizations and civil society, and truly listen and respect to the aspirations of the Myanmar people.

National Unity Government