

Time for the emergence of a new national human rights commission representing the people of Myanmar

Date: August 7, 2022

In recognition of the 34th anniversary of the 8888 Revolution Day on 8 August 2022, the CSO Working Group on Independent National Human Rights Institution (Burma/Myanmar)¹ (abbreviation “Working Group”) and 32 Myanmar civil society organizations signing below pay tribute to and honor people of different religious communities, ethnicities, and classes who sacrificed their lives for federal democracy and human rights in Myanmar, and it is time to establish a new human rights commission that will uphold, protect and promote human rights in line with international standards.

The military junta has systematically and deliberately committed violent offensives and mass human rights violations against the people across the country every day since its coup attempt on 1 February 2021. Within 551 days of the attempted coup, over 2,000 innocent people, including children, have been [killed](#) by the military, with the actual number is likely to be higher. Likewise, the junta [murdered](#) four democracy activists who had been unjustly sentenced to death by its puppet court. More than 11,900 civilians have been [detained](#) by the junta for opposing the attempted coup. At the same time, residents of ethnic minority areas and central Myanmar are living in psychological and physical insecurity as a result of the junta's airstrikes, indiscriminate shelling, unlawful arrests, unlawful killings, massacres, plunder, destruction and arson of their villages with severe violations of their right to life, right to livelihood, right to movement and right to safety. Under the junta's control, Myanmar's judicial system is void of independence and justice, and people need independent and fair mechanisms to inform and report rights violations.

Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC) was established as a national human rights institution under the quasi-civilian government led by U Thein Sein in 2011. Due to its failure to align with international standards, including the Paris Principles which guides national human rights institutions, and its lack of independence, the MNHRC has lost the trust of international and local human rights organizations as well as the public. Despite repeated [demands](#) by civil society organizations to denounce the military's attempted coup since 11 February 2021, the MNHRC has ignored the demands and continues to stand with the military junta, which has committed grave human rights violations. Even worse, the MNHRC members have extorted money from the detainees during their pretentious military approved prison inspections.

¹ Working Group was formerly known as the CSO Working Group on Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Reform, founded in 2019. The Working Group currently consists of 20 civil society organizations from diverse backgrounds to reflect the new mission of establishing a new national human rights institution that is in line with the Paris Principles.

The MNHRC shamelessly [attends](#) regional and international human rights forums and conferences, representing Myanmar to the international community as a propaganda tool of the junta.

In its stance, activities, and existence, the MNHRC undermines the federal democratic revolution in Myanmar. There is clearly a dire need to replace the MNHRC with a new national human rights commission that can promote and protect human rights independently and fairly in accordance with international standards. Only then a newly established national human rights commission can represent Myanmar people's desire for human rights and federal democracy on the international stage.

A human rights commission bill was drafted by the Working Group and submitted to the National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC), Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH), and National Unity Government (NUG) on December 6, 2021 in order to fulfill this necessity. The members of the Working Group will continue to strive towards the establishment of the Union Human Rights Commission.

We, the undersigned civil society organizations, jointly call for the MNHRC to be dissolved and for a new Union Human Rights Commission to be established by the NUG. We call on the people of Myanmar to participate in condemning the MNHRC, one of the supporting pillars of the military junta, in order to achieve a new national human rights commission that respects and follows human rights standards.

For more information please contact:

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The Statement was initiated by CSO Working Group on Independent National Human Rights Institution (Burma/Myanmar) which consists of 20 civil society organizations from diverse backgrounds. Following 32 Myanmar civil society organizations endorsed the statement.

Endorsed by

1. Active Youths (Kalay Myo)
2. All Arakan Students and Youths' Congress
3. Back Pack Health Workers Team
4. Bama Youth Network
5. Basic Education Students and Youths Association
6. Burma Medical Association
7. Burmese Women's Union
8. Democracy for Ethnic Minorities Organization
9. Democracy, Peace and Women's Organization
10. Dhanu youth organization
11. Future ThanLwin
12. India For Myanmar
13. Kayan Women's Organization

14. Keng Tung Youth
15. Kyaukse Students' Union
16. Let's Help Each Other
17. LGBT Alliance Myanmar
18. LGBT Community Yangon
19. LGBT Union Mandalay
20. Mandalay Regional Youth Association
21. Network for Human Rights Documentation Burma (ND-Burma)
22. OCTOPUS (Youth Organization)
23. Olive organization
24. Oway Institute
25. Pa-O Women's Union
26. Save and Care Organization for Women at Border Areas
27. Second Tap Root
28. Shan MATA
29. Sister 2 Sister
30. Southern Youth Development Organization
31. Tanintharyi MATA
32. ပညာနှင့်တော်ကိုယ်ပိုင်ကျောင်း ကျောင်းသားများသမဂ္ဂ(သီးခြားအကသ