



For immediate release

17 July 2023

Review of Five-Point Consensus must lead to ASEAN and UN's concerted actions against Myanmar military junta

Only meaningful inclusion of legitimate stakeholders will bring about way forward

ASEAN and the UN Security Council (UNSC) must immediately join forces to move beyond the current Five-Point Consensus (5PC) and coordinate effective actions to cease the Myanmar military junta's escalating atrocity crimes, said Progressive Voice (PV), Alternative ASEAN Network on Burma (ALTSEAN-Burma), and the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA).

While ASEAN continues to bar junta representatives from Summits and Foreign Ministers' Meetings (AFMM) and AFMM has made a pledge in the Joint Communique issued on 13 July to a long-overdue comprehensive review of the 5PC prior to the ASEAN Summit on 4 – 7 September, the 5PC and ASEAN's overall approach remain disappointingly ineffective and unenforceable without a pivot to more decisive and concerted actions, the groups said today.

The review on the 5PC must focus on decisive steps to halt the illegal junta's atrocity crimes and threats to human security. ASEAN and the international community, particularly the UN and Myanmar's neighboring countries, must exclude the junta from meetings at all levels unless they risk lending false legitimacy to the illegal military and thus being complicit in the military's atrocity crimes. Only the National Unity Government (NUG) legitimately represents the Myanmar people and must be included at regional and international stages.

Reconstruction of the 5PC and ASEAN's overarching approach must be top priority. It should be rooted in civil society's [Five Counter Points](#). The review on the 5PC would ring hollow and only further undermine ASEAN's credibility absent formal and meaningful inclusion of Myanmar's legitimate stakeholders, including the NUG and Ethnic Revolutionary Organizations (EROs). ASEAN must further ensure any engagements with Myanmar stakeholders are substantial and transparent, particularly the ASEAN Chair's [claim](#) of 110 engagements.

Concerted actions among ASEAN and the international community are urgently needed to stop the junta-initiated pilot project to forcibly return 7,000 Rohingyas to the killing fields. In addition, ASEAN must stop channeling humanitarian aid through the junta, and instead partner with the NUG and EROs. It must shift support towards local civil society and community-based organizations and local humanitarian responders, who have been effectively providing assistance to the most vulnerable communities.

Khin Ohmar, Founder and Chairperson of Progressive Voice, stated: “Over the past two years, we have stressed the failure of the Five-Point Consensus, especially since it was implemented without consultation with or consent by the Myanmar people. While the bloc’s decision to review the Consensus is a step in the right direction, ASEAN must ensure that this process is rectified and upholds democratic principles. ASEAN must include voices of legitimate representatives of Myanmar and the Spring Revolution. Otherwise, it will face immediate dismissal and condemnation by the Myanmar people.

“This decision alone is however not enough. Together with the UN Security Council, ASEAN must take a more assertive approach to cease the junta’s atrocity crimes, reject its claim to legitimacy, and reflect the people’s aspiration to topple military tyranny and establish a federal democratic Myanmar.”

Debbie Stothard, Founder and Coordinator of ALTSEAN-Burma, stated: “The magnitude and the severity of atrocities in Myanmar require the UN Security Council to impose a global arms embargo and targeted economic sanctions. Without the back-up from the Council, regional leadership continues to fail and the junta will continue to be a threat to regional peace and stability.

“Local humanitarian networks have been effectively providing life-saving aid to communities in direst needs in the face of the junta’s terror campaign. ASEAN and the international community must increase practical resources with flexible funding to further their essential work.”

Mary Aileen Diez-Bacalso, Executive Director of FORUM-ASIA, stated: “Civil society — at the regional and international levels — has been constantly calling for ASEAN to review the Five-Point Consensus, to make it more aligned with the will of the people of Myanmar and the ongoing efforts at the UN level. From this point, ASEAN should no longer be working in silos. It must work with the National Unity Government — Myanmar’s legitimate government — and the international community in its responses.

“As the Chair of ASEAN 2023 until this December, Indonesia must lay down its legacy to bring the ASEAN response for Myanmar to a more robust, meaningful, and tangible action. Failure to do so will only reaffirm that ASEAN is irrelevant to the Myanmar people’s struggle and to everyone calling for a better promotion and protection of human rights in the region.”

– END –

For more information, please contact:

- Khin Ohmar, Progressive Voice, info@progressive-voice.org
- Debbie Stothard, ALTSEAN Burma, debbie@altsean.org
- Communication and Media Programme, FORUM-ASIA, communication@forum-asia.org

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.

progressivevoicemyanmar.org

Alternative ASEAN Network on Burma (ALTSEAN-Burma) is an NGO working to support national and grassroots movements of Burma/Myanmar working for human rights and democracy. We were formed in October 1996 by a diverse network of ASEAN-based organizations and individuals at the Alternative ASEAN Meeting on Burma held in Bangkok to strengthen connections and solidarity between activists from Burma and those struggling against repressive regimes in ASEAN. www.altsean.org

The Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA) is a network of 85 member organizations across 23 countries, mainly in Asia. Founded in 1991, FORUM-ASIA works to strengthen movements for human rights and sustainable development through research, advocacy, capacity development and solidarity actions in Asia and beyond. It has a consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, and a consultative relationship with the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights. The FORUM-ASIA Secretariat is based in Bangkok, with offices in Jakarta, Geneva and Kathmandu. www.forum-asia.org

Related materials:

- Civil Society [Position Paper](#) Reviewing and Reframing the ASEAN's Five-Point Consensus, 5 May 2023
- [Open letter](#) to ASEAN leaders: Move beyond the Five-Point Consensus to immediately address the crisis in Myanmar, 3 May 2023
- [Press release](#): Concerted actions needed from ASEAN and UN lest Myanmar military junta remains regional stability threat, 22 November 2022