

Human Rights Groups Call on Governments to End Burma/Myanmar Military's Access to Jet Fuel and Weapons Ahead of ASEAN Summit

Governments participating in the upcoming ASEAN Summit in Jakarta must take coordinated actions to resolve the crisis in Myanmar, human rights groups said in an [open letter](#) to government leaders. The 149 organizations called on ASEAN members and dialogue partners, who are meeting in Indonesia September 5 - 7, to ban the Myanmar military's access to jet fuel and urge the UN Security Council to implement an arms embargo.

"The Summit is an opportunity for ASEAN governments and ASEAN dialogue partners, including the US, the EU, Japan, and others, to address the crisis with the seriousness and urgency that the people of Burma deserve," said Myra Dahgaypaw, Senior Partnership Officer for International Justice and Accountability, UUSC.

"ASEAN governments and dialogue partners must unite in a coordinated approach to the crisis that moves beyond the bloc," Dahgaypaw said. "Individual governments must restrict the junta's access to funding and weapons, better enforce existing sanctions, and work with the UN Security Council to pass a resolution calling for an arms embargo. The people of Burma need more than half measures and statements of concern. Governments must demonstrate the political will to confront a murderous regime that bombs civilians."

Human rights groups have urged governments to end the junta's access to aviation fuel, which the military has used to conduct airstrikes that have resulted in mass displacement and civilian casualties. On November 3, 2022, Amnesty International published a [report](#) on the country's aviation fuel supply chain that links national, regional and global companies to the Myanmar military. In the following months, governments including the [US](#), [UK](#), and [Canada](#) implemented sanctions targeting the aviation fuel supply chain.

The ongoing air assaults, however, attest to the urgent need for other governments and multilateral institutions to follow suit. The Myanmar military conducted [442 airstrikes](#) between January and April 2023, attacks that claimed the lives of 693 civilians. Airstrikes have terrorized the population, decimated critical infrastructure, and prevented communities from rebuilding.

A Karen villager who spoke to Karen Human Rights Group described her family's struggles following the death of her husband: "After my husband was killed by the airstrike conducted in my village, I have faced many difficulties to support my family, as I have become the sole breadwinner. My children are still very young so I have to take care of them and it prevents me from going out and working to make ends meet for my family."

In another interview with Karen Human Rights Group, a Karenni IDP said, "This July, there was a bombing of the Taungtagoo IDP camp. After this attack, we faced many challenges. The main challenges are related to accessing education, health, food and water, shelter, and supporting our livelihoods. The residents of the camp are also mentally affected by these challenges. Due to the aerial bombings, IDPs, [including] children, elderly, and some youth, have mental health

problems, and have extreme fear and anxiety about relocating and resettling again in different areas.”

Recent action by the US government has paved the way for a more concerted approach to ending the military’s access to aviation fuel. On August 23, 2023, the US Department of Treasury made a regulatory determination declaring that operating in Myanmar’s aviation fuel sector - meaning selling, transporting, or facilitating the junta’s acquisition of fuel - is a sanctionable offense. This applies to non-Myanmar individuals and companies as well as those located in Myanmar. The US also designated two individuals and three companies, including Shoon Energy, for sanctions.

“Recent action by the United States to interrupt the junta’s access to foreign currency and aviation fuel have created new momentum in efforts to stop the military’s abuses,” said Banya Khung Aung, Executive Director, Karenni Human Rights Group. “The ASEAN Summit must capitalize on this momentum.”

“To maximize the impact of the US sanctions, the EU needs to step up and issue matching designations targeting aviation fuel suppliers. The US and EU must both also ban companies from providing financial services like shipping insurance to companies selling or transporting fuel to Myanmar,” said Keel Dietz, an independent Burma policy analyst. “Other governments – especially Singapore – should classify jet fuel as a dual-use good and implement additional restrictions on its sale, shipment, transshipment, financing, or the provision of any related services. The Summit is an opportunity for governments to coordinate their Myanmar policy so that these sanctions and other efforts will have real impact on the ground.”

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