



# Women's Peace Network

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## **Statement on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women | November 25, 2023**

On the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, we, Women's Peace Network, reaffirm our efforts to end gender-based violence, reaffirm our solidarity with the brave victims and survivors of this horrific crime, and call for the speedy delivery of their justice.

In Myanmar, violence continues to be wielded against women with virtual impunity. In prisons, the Burmese military is still endangering over [3,600](#) whom it arbitrarily arrested and detained with rape threats, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and gang rape. In the country's growing areas of armed conflict, the military is still wielding [rape as a weapon of war](#) against women and girls as they attempt to flee both indiscriminate and targeted gunfire and airstrikes, unexploded ordnances, scorched-earth campaigns, and mass killings. Reports have also recently [emerged](#) of violence against women by some armed groups and their affiliates, who are acting in blatant contrast to the values and principles of the resilient pro-democracy movement.

And as many more of these victims and survivors become forcibly displaced, their trauma haunts them in their life-threatening escape for safety and protection. For Rohingya women survivors, they are also [forced](#) to protect themselves from targeted violence by militant groups and gangs in the deteriorating, inhuman camps in Bangladesh, genocide by the Burmese military in their homes in Myanmar, and rape by traffickers in their escape over land and sea.

We remind the world that the decades-long denial of access to justice for women in Myanmar is what is fueling such a crisis today. Access to justice continues to be denied to ethnic and religious minority women, who, for generations, have been [subjected](#) to the military's sexual violence in its attempts to subjugate them and destroy their identity; this justice is still being denied to Myanmar women refugees and asylum seekers in countries including Thailand and Bangladesh. We are seeing violence against women being committed, again and again, because the perpetrators know from their history that they will not face any consequences – and the society who sees this reality learns that they can get away with it too.



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Therefore, we, once again, urge the international community to bring justice to all victims and survivors of violence against women. For the women of Myanmar, countries must hold all perpetrators of such violence accountable with actions including referring the situation of Myanmar to the International Criminal Court and using Universal Jurisdiction to prosecute the Burmese military for international crimes. In line with its [Women, Peace, and Security agenda](#) and its related obligations, the UN Security Council should pursue comprehensive actions to address the dire situation in Myanmar.

At the same time, women victims and survivors of violence need comprehensive international assistance for their path towards rehabilitation and recovery. Governments, the United Nations, and aid organizations must ensure the direct provision of material and financial assistance to civil society, including women's groups, working with the victim and survivor community in Myanmar. They must also guarantee asylum and resettlement for victims and survivors who become refugees, as well as access to witness protection to those who engage with international justice mechanisms.

Governments, world leaders, the UN, and all other international actors must honor this year's International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women with actions in line with its purpose. Words of solidarity are the bare minimum.