



Special Advisory Council for MYANMAR

Massacre of Myanmar Children Continues: China Can Stop the Junta's Atrocities

15 May 2025

The Special Advisory Council for Myanmar (SAC-M) is deeply shocked and appalled by the horrific Myanmar military junta airstrikes which killed 20 children in Depayin Township on Monday. SAC-M calls on China to use its significant influence over the junta to immediately halt its barbaric attacks on children.

At least 20 schoolchildren, including some as young as seven, and two teachers were killed, and as many as 50 civilians were injured when a junta fighter jet bombed O Htein Twin village school in Depayin Township, Sagaing Region on the morning of May. As many as 200 children were sitting exams when at least two bombs, believed to be cluster munitions, tore through their classrooms. Survivors and residents have confirmed that there was no military activity near the site at the time.

Monday's attack is part of a series of repeated and deliberate attacks targeting children and schools. On 16 September 2022, in what is now known as the Let Yet Kone massacre, at least 12 people were killed, including seven children, in a brutal air and ground attack by junta forces on another school in Depayin Township, located inside a monastery compound. Junta troops reportedly removed a number of bodies and wounded children in an attempt to destroy evidence.

The junta's latest mass killing of children comes less than a month after China's unprecedented intervention to coerce the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) into surrendering control of Lashio city to the junta. This move demonstrates China's willingness to violate Myanmar's sovereignty in pursuit of what it considers its own strategic interests and has confirmed the extent to which it is able to use the junta as a subcontracted mercenary force to achieve them.

China has long provided significant political and military support to the Myanmar military, including fighter jets and aerial bombs used to sustain its devastating attacks on civilians following the junta's failed coup in February 2021. As a forthcoming investigation by SAC-M will show, China has also played a critical role in helping the Myanmar military to establish and sustain the domestic production of aerial bombs at weapon factories in Myanmar.



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After four years of nationwide revolution in Myanmar, the junta is now entirely dependent on foreign intervention and support—particularly from China—to stave off its collapse and to continue inflicting extreme suffering on the civilian population.

And yet, China consistently claims that it does not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries. Its own actions in Myanmar have exposed this lie. China also claims that it supports peace and stability in Myanmar. It now has the opportunity to show the Myanmar people that it acts on its words—by reining in the junta and acting to prevent the death of even one more child at its hands.

SAC-M therefore calls on China to use the considerable influence it now wields to put an immediate end to the junta's barbaric atrocities against children, including by ending its provision to the junta of:

- combat aircraft, including jets and drones
- aerial bombs
- dual use goods and technology
- aviation fuel, and
- other materials and support essential for the domestic production of aerial bombs in Myanmar.

