

# Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

Organization: Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

Item 2: Enhanced interactive dialogue on the High Commissioner's report and oral update of the Special Rapporteur on Myanmar

Date: 27 June 2025

Speaker: Renée Mulligan

## **Oral Statement to the 59<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Human Rights Council from Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada (LRWC), NGO in special consultative status.**

### **Myanmar: Escalating human rights violations and atrocity crimes by junta**

Mr. President,

Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada appreciates the High Commissioner's report on the dire human rights situation in Myanmar, and pathways for positive changes.<sup>1</sup>

Four years into the military coup, an unabated rise in indiscriminate and systematic attacks on ethnic minorities by the military junta has caused mass displacement, with 3.5 million displaced and over 20 million in humanitarian need across Myanmar.<sup>2</sup> Internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees from minority communities such as Karenni, Karen, Chin, Kachin, Shan, and Rohingya peoples, need more international attention and assistance.<sup>3</sup>

The primary root cause of the violations is the unbridled impunity of Myanmar's military, including laws that violate international law, implemented by courts subsumed by the junta. Absent the rule of law and independent courts, most crimes committed by the junta are unreported. More than 22,000 are unlawfully detained without access to independent courts or adequate legal representation.<sup>4</sup> Torture, ill-treatment and extra-judicial killings are routine, along with arrests of lawyers.<sup>5</sup> At least 53 lawyers have been arrested since the coup.

What more must be done to persuade all States and UN bodies to urgently:

- halt all engagement with the junta and stop the flow of weapons;
- engage with the National Unity Government, ethnic communities and civil society to strengthen local governance systems;<sup>6</sup> and
- ensure adequate international protection and humanitarian assistance for vulnerable groups.

Thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> Human Rights Council, Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General, A/HRC/59/57, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/ahrc5957-situation-human-rights-myanmar-report-united-nations-high>.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Ethnic minorities are a disproportionate number of these statistics. See Karenni Human Rights Group, "Running Out of Time: The Escalation of Human Rights Violations in Karenni State in 2024, available at: [https://karennihumanrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/final\\_running-out-of-time.pdf](https://karennihumanrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/final_running-out-of-time.pdf). See also Mizzima,

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KHRG: International community should support Myanmar displaced, 22 June 2024, available at: <https://eng.mizzima.com/2024/06/22/11041>.

<sup>3</sup> UN OCHA, Myanmar: Humanitarian Update No. 44, 19 February 2025, available at: <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/myanmar/myanmar-humanitarian-update-no-44-19-february-2025>.

<sup>4</sup> Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, Daily Briefing in Relation to the Military Coup, 18 June 2025, available at: <https://aappb.org/>.

<sup>5</sup> At least 53 lawyers have been arrested since the coup: Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar- Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, 12 October 2023, A/78/527, available at: <https://undocs.org/A/78/527>.

<sup>6</sup> Special Advisory Council for Myanmar, Briefing Paper: Effective Control in Myanmar – 2024 Update, 30 May 2024, available at: <https://specialadvisorycouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/SAC-M-Effective-Control-in-Myanmar-2024-Update-ENGLISH.pdf>. .