



Organization: Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

Item 2: Interactive dialogue on report of Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar

Date: 9 September 2024

Speaker: Renée Mulligan

## **Oral Statement to the 57th Session of the UN Human Rights Council from Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada (LRWC) and the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute, NGOs in special consultative status**

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

Mr. President,

Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada and the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute condemn the escalation of atrocity crimes by the Myanmar junta targeting conflict-affected groups. Over 20,800 people are arbitrarily detained without access to independent courts or adequate legal representation.<sup>1</sup> Lawyers face threats, prosecution, or unlawful detention when representing political detainees.<sup>2</sup> We support the progress and outreach by the Mechanism in the collection and analysis of information related to the violent suppression of protests, torture and other abuses in detention, and unlawful imprisonment of perceived opponents of the junta.

We are alarmed at the rise in airstrikes and the use of landmines by the junta against minorities such as the Karenni, Karen, and others, leading to over 3 million internally displaced people<sup>3</sup> and mass flows of forcibly displaced persons to neighbouring countries without adequate refugee protection. The High Commissioner has noted that human rights defenders are particularly exposed to threats and refoulement.<sup>4</sup> Internally displaced (IDPs) and refugees from minorities such as Karenni, Karen, Chin, Kachin, Shan, and Rohingya peoples, need more international assistance.<sup>5</sup>

The international community and UN bodies must 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>
- Ensure accountability for international human rights atrocities, and
- Provide international protection and humanitarian assistance for vulnerable groups.

Thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, Daily Briefing in Relation to the Military Coup, 4 September 2024, available at: <https://aappb.org/>.

<sup>2</sup> Human Rights Watch, "Our Numbers Are Dwindling": Myanmar's Post-Coup Crackdown on Lawyers, 8 June 2023, available at

<https://www.hrw.org/report/2023/06/08/our-numbers-are-dwindling/myanmars-post-coup-crackdown-lawyers>.

<sup>3</sup> UNHCR, Myanmar UNHCR displacement overview 10 June 2024, available at:

<https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/mmr>. Karenni Human Rights Group, Quarterly Newsletter, Volume 4, Issue 2, available at: [fina knhrhg-QB-v3-i1-1.pdf \(karennihumanrights.org\)](https://www.knhrhg.org/qa/2023/06/08/our-numbers-are-dwindling/myanmars-post-coup-crackdown-lawyers). Mizzima, Karen State situation review for June

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2024 by HUROM, 3 July 2024, available at: [Karen State situation review for June 2024 by HURFOM – ENG.MIZZIMA.COM](#).

<sup>4</sup> OHCHR, Myanmar: a breakneck speed “disintegration of human rights,” says High Commissioner, 18 June 2024 available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2024/06/myanmar-breakneck-speed-disintegration-human-rights-says-high>; OHCHR, UN Human Rights Chief Volker Türk condemns Myanmar attacks 11 April 2023, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2023/04/un-human-rights-chief-volker-turk-condemns-myanmar-attacks>; Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar – Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, A/HRC/56/23, available at: [A HRC 56 23 AdvanceUneditedVersion.docx \(live.com\)](#); Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in Myanmar since 1 February 2021 - Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, A/HRC/53/52, available at: <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/53/52>.

<sup>5</sup> UN OCHA, Myanmar: Humanitarian Update, 1 July 2024, available at: [Myanmar Humanitarian Update No. 39 | 1 July 2024 | OCHA \(unocha.org\)](#).

<sup>6</sup> Special Advisory Council for Myanmar, Briefing Paper: Effective Control in Myanmar – 2024 Update, 30 May 2024, available at: [SAC-M-Effective-Control-in-Myanmar-2024-Update-ENGLISH.pdf \(specialadvisorycouncil.org\)](#).