

Organization: Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada  
Item 4: Interactive dialogue on the situation of human rights in  
Myanmar – Report of the High Commissioner  
Date: 23 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: Deliberate campaign to commit human rights abuses and atrocity crimes by Myanmar junta**

Mr. President,

Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada and the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute condemn the deliberate campaign to commit atrocity crimes against civilians and conflict-affected groups by the Myanmar junta. Total disregard of any semblance of protection or respect of domestic law or international norms renders any improvements by the military unlikely.

The rule of law is absent from Myanmar's legal system. There is a lack of fair trial guarantees and an absence of independence and impartiality of the judiciary.<sup>1</sup> Lawyers face threats, prosecution, or unlawful detention when representing political detainees.<sup>2</sup> Systematic enforced disappearances of human rights defenders have gone unpunished.<sup>3</sup> Further, human rights defenders who flee to neighbouring countries often face refoulement.<sup>4</sup>

International ignorance and indifference have fostered the impunity of the junta who have carried out a rise in human rights abuses against the Rohingya<sup>5</sup> and minorities such as the Karenni, Karen, and others, leading to over 3 million internally displaced people<sup>6</sup> and mass flows of forcibly displaced to neighbouring countries without adequate refugee protection.

The international community and UN bodies must act now to:

- Stop the flow of arms,
- Strengthen local governance systems,<sup>7</sup>
- Continue to focus on accountability for human rights atrocities, and
- Provide protection and humanitarian assistance for vulnerable groups.

Thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in Myanmar - Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 4 September 2024, A/HRC/57/56, available at: [A/HRC/57/56: Situation of human rights in Myanmar - Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights - Advance unedited version | OHCHR](#).

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<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> Karen Human Rights Group, “In the Dark – The crime of enforced disappearance and its impacts on the rural communities of Southeast Burma since the 2021 coup,” 8 November 2023, available at: <https://www.khrg.org/2023/11/23-1-tmt/dark-crime-enforced-disappearance-and-its-impacts-rural-communities-southeast-burma>.

<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>;

<sup>5</sup> OHCHR, Seven years after genocidal attacks, world must act to stop new atrocities against the Rohingya: Special Rapporteur, 26 August 2024, available at: [Seven years after genocidal attacks, world must act to stop new atrocities against the Rohingya: Special Rapporteur | OHCHR](#).

<sup>6</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: [final\\_knhrg-QB-v3-i1-1.pdf \(karennihumanrights.org\)](#); Karenni Human Rights Group, The Karenni Human Rights Group Condemns the Airstrike on Bangkok IDP Camp in Pekon Township, southern Shan State, 9 September 2024, available at: [KnHRG-Statement-Condemning-Airstrike-in-Pekon-1](#); Mizzima, Karen State situation review for June 2024 by HURFOM, 3 July 2024, available at: [Karen State situation review for June 2024 by HURFOM – ENG.MIZZIMA.COM](#).

<sup>7</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 \(specialadvisorycouncil.org\)](#).