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Agenda items 2 and 4

**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General****Human rights situations that require the Council's attention****Situation of human rights in Myanmar****Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights****Summary*

The present report is submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 55/20, in which the Council requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to, among other things, monitor and assess the overall situation of human rights in Myanmar and to report on pathways to fulfil the aspirations of the people of Myanmar for human rights protection, accountability, democracy and a civilian government. The report, which is based on extensive consultations, presents the main pathways towards achieving this vision and the key constituencies that are working for change on the ground.

* The present report was submitted to the conference services for processing after the deadline so as to include the most recent information.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 55/20, the Human Rights Council requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to monitor and assess the overall situation of human rights in Myanmar and to submit to the Council, at its fifty-ninth session, a comprehensive report thereon, including on pathways to fulfil the aspirations of the people of Myanmar for human rights protection, accountability, democracy and a civilian government.

2. The present report builds on the observations made by the High Commissioner at the fifty-fifth session of the Human Rights Council on the need for a visioning exercise encapsulating the aspirations of the people of Myanmar, particularly youth.

3. The report provides an overview of the dire human rights situation, including the political economy that enables the Myanmar military to continue its repression, and the widening regional impacts of the situation in Myanmar. The report subsequently presents some of the key constituencies that are striving to promote positive changes and build a peaceful, sustainable, democratic and diverse Myanmar grounded in human rights. In the light of the information gathered through extensive consultations with diverse sections of society in Myanmar, the report presents four main pathways towards achieving this vision – accountability, good governance, sustainable development and actions by international and regional stakeholders – and provides positive examples of efforts to that end that are emerging or already under way.

4. Lastly, the report presents recommendations on actionable measures to address the root causes of the crisis, which include the unchecked political and economic power of the military, impunity, the instrumentalization of laws and institutions and an overall system based on racial discrimination and division. The report contains details on how Member States, including States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), can support the free and effective participation of the people of Myanmar in building a new future for the country in which their rights are protected and respected.

5. At the time of writing, Myanmar was still suffering from the devastating effects of the catastrophic earthquake of 28 March 2025 in its central regions, in particular in Mandalay and Sagaing. Thousands died and the destruction of property and infrastructure was widespread. In the period following the earthquake, the military maintained its policy of restrictive control over humanitarian access, including to affected areas, and, notwithstanding ceasefires announced by the military and anti-military armed groups, military operations continued, inflicting further suffering on the civilian population. The High Commissioner expresses the utmost solidarity with the people of Myanmar and reiterates that responses to the overall crisis must uphold human rights principles and address the needs of the civilian population without discrimination.¹

II. Methodology

6. To gather views and recommendations for the drafting of the present report, between September 2024 and March 2025, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) carried out 126 in-person and online consultations with 36 groups and 391 people, including at least 176 women. Those consultations built upon the interviews conducted with hundreds of victims and witnesses of human rights violations in Myanmar that have been reflected in previous reports.²

7. Participants in the consultations included representatives of many different facets of society in Myanmar, including village leaders, students, lawyers, artists, teachers, displaced persons, political prisoners, military defectors and humanitarian, health and media workers. Consultations also involved human rights defenders, representatives of civil society organizations, including organizations promoting the rights of women and LGBTQI+

¹ See www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/myanmar-military-actions-compound-dire-humanitarian-situation-aftermath.

² See <https://bangkok.ohchr.org/myanmar/>.

persons, environmental researchers, members of the civil disobedience movement and trade unionists, among others. The consultations cut across a wide range of religious beliefs, including representatives of Buddhist, Christian, Muslim and Hindu religious communities, as well as other ethnic, linguistic and religious groups, including the Kuki, Lisu, Pa'O and Rohingya communities.

8. In addition, OHCHR submitted questionnaires to duty bearers, including the Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, affiliated with the military, and the Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, affiliated with the National Unity Government. OHCHR also gathered the views of representatives of political entities in Myanmar, including committees of the National Unity Consultative Council, local governance structures, anti-military armed groups and several ethnic armed organizations. OHCHR also consulted with United Nations entities, received written contributions from think tanks, analysts and thematic experts and undertook extensive desk reviews of laws, policies, reports and data from local and international organizations.

III. Current human rights context and political economy of Myanmar

9. In 2011, Myanmar initiated a democratic transition that led to landslide victories for the National League for Democracy during the 2015 and 2020 elections, confirming the aspirations of the people of Myanmar for a fully democratic system. However, in February 2021, that democratic transition ended abruptly when the military launched a coup. Since then, a human rights crisis characterized by violence and atrocities has affected every single aspect of life in Myanmar. According to credible sources,³ as at 31 March 2025, at least 6,473 civilians had been killed at the hands of the military, including 1,487 women and 748 children. Some 28,961 had been arrested, 22,165 remained in detention and 172 had been sentenced to death by military-controlled courts that do not ensure any respect for judicial guarantees and fair trial rights.⁴ Violence has displaced more than 3.5 million people and, while nearly 20 million are in need of assistance,⁵ the military has persistently blocked humanitarian access, even in the wake of natural disasters, including the recent earthquake.⁶ Estimates suggest that more than 1.5 million people have sought safety by crossing international borders by land or by sea, through both regular and irregular channels, creating further regional human rights and humanitarian challenges.⁷ The crisis has made other transnational problems, including health concerns related to cholera or other transmissible illnesses,⁸ transboundary environmental harm and natural disasters, more difficult to manage.

10. Since the previous comprehensive report,⁹ anti-military armed groups have made significant advances, gaining control over large swathes of territory. Retaliation by the military has often been in the form of air strikes and artillery shelling on populated areas, killing more civilians in 2024 than in previous years. Fighting was particularly intense in Rakhine, where the Arakan Army took control of the regional military headquarters and numerous bases, obtaining almost full control of the state. Rohingya civilians were caught between the military and the Arakan Army, regularly facing killings, disappearances, mutilations, arbitrary arrests, torture, destruction of villages and widespread displacement. There are also reports of the involvement of Rohingya armed groups and armed elements in hostilities. At the time of writing, conditions remained uncondusive to the safe and sustainable return of members of the Rohingya community to Rakhine.

³ See www.aappb.org/.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ See www.humanitarianaction.info/plan/1275/document/myanmar-humanitarian-needs-and-response-plan-2025.

⁶ See www.reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/myanmar-earthquake-flash-update-2-31-march-2025.

⁷ See <https://thailand.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11371/files/documents/2024-10/overview-of-myanmar-nationals-in-thailand-october-24.pdf>.

⁸ See www.reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/myanmar-health-cluster-bulletin-february-2025.

⁹ [A/HRC/56/23](#).

11. Myanmar has also been engulfed in a profound economic crisis, further exacerbating the negative impacts of the conflict at both the national and regional levels. Comparative performance analysis showed massive economic losses and the diversion of resources away from development.¹⁰ Gross domestic product estimates suggest a \$93.9 billion loss since the coup,¹¹ with recovery to the pre-pandemic level not expected before 2028.¹² Inflation rose sharply, with further increases to 30 per cent expected in the period 2024–2025, and the kyat depreciated 40 per cent against the United States dollar. Foreign direct investment commitments decreased: data showed a 50 per cent contraction in the first half of 2024 compared with 2023. Military spending was prioritized over investment in civilian infrastructure and services, and public debt increased to 62 per cent in 2024–2025. More than half the population now lives below the poverty line and food insecurity is widespread.¹³ The price of commodities, including rice, vegetables, edible oils, fish, meat and beans, increased significantly: by up to 30 per cent on average nationally in 2024.¹⁴ In addition, restrictions on the import of essential goods, such as cooking oil, medical supplies, pharmaceuticals, seeds and fertilizers, have had a detrimental impact on a population already devastated by poverty.

12. Underpinning the economic crisis is the military's control of the central bank and State-owned enterprises, including in the extractive sector. While targeted international sanctions have slowed some military revenue streams, these institutions remained key sources of revenue, sustaining the military's attempts to consolidate control. In addition, financial measures enabling continued military spending, such as import substitution, foreign exchange controls, forced conversion and taxation of remittances at an artificial rate favouring the military, as well as a crackdown on informal money transfers, have further enriched the military and impoverished the civilian population.¹⁵

13. Under the military, illicit economies have thrived, far outpacing the formal economy. Since 2023, Myanmar has remained the world's largest producer of opium and synthetic drugs.¹⁶ It has become a major hub for transnational criminal activities, including online scamming operations, human trafficking, forced labour and other modern forms of slavery, and the unregulated and illegal exploitation of natural resources. Neighbouring countries have also suffered, with an ever increasing number of their citizens falling prey to scammers and their territories becoming staging grounds for further illicit activities. Under military rule, regional crime groups have exploited the lack of rule of law, expanding their influence and control.¹⁷

14. The economic crisis has had broader negative economic effects, particularly in the region, including disruptions in cross-border trade and investment, disruptions in supply chains and inflationary pressure. Estimates indicate that the region also bears the opportunity costs of the coup: the combined potential loss in gross domestic product of neighbouring countries between 2022 and 2026 is estimated to be \$162.4 billion.¹⁸

IV. Constituencies for change

15. Amid the crisis caused by the military, there have been some positive developments, one of the most significant of which is the emergence of “constituencies for change”. These constituencies have shown steadfast courage and resilience in the face of military violence while advocating for new and transformative visions of the future. As in previous decades of

¹⁰ See www.worldbank.org/en/country/myanmar/publication/myanmar-economic-monitor-reports.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ See www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2025-01/undp_four_year_outlook-myanmar_enduring_polycrisis_jan2025-2.pdf.

¹⁴ See www.wfp.org/news/myanmar-brink-conflict-fuels-hunger.

¹⁵ See www.specialadvisorycouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/SAC-M-The-Military-Money-Myanmar-ENGLISH.pdf.

¹⁶ See www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Myanmar/Myanmar_Opium_Survey_2024.pdf.

¹⁷ See www.interpol.int/en/News-and-Events/News/2023/INTERPOL-issues-global-warning-on-human-trafficking-fueled-fraud.

¹⁸ See <http://www.priceofwar.org>.

military rule, grass-roots and civil society organizations have continued to support the people of Myanmar in countering military repression. Religious institutions and community-based organizations have sought to fill gaps left by failing State services, such as healthcare and education. Human rights defenders and civil society have maintained attention on violations through strengthened cooperation with regional and international advocacy networks. In long-standing conflicts in the border regions of Myanmar, ethnic armed organizations have enabled varying forms of local administration to assist those in need. Over the previous decade, and particularly since the 2021 coup, a new generation of human rights defenders has emerged, promoting new thinking on identity, human rights, the economy and the environment through the innovative use of communication and new technologies, and inspired by the country's history of gradual, if fragile, opening up and democratization.

16. Meanwhile, various political actors and ethnic organizations have begun to embrace new ideas shaped by their experience in local governance, democracy and military-led peace negotiations. These new ideas have included a growing recognition of past mistakes and unrealized opportunities, the importance of partnership with civil society, the nature and scale of past human rights violations, the need for genuine accountability and a vision that is inclusive of all ethnic communities. Changing narratives on members of the Rohingya community, in which the Rohingya are acknowledged as being part of Myanmar and there is recognition of the need for profound legal reforms, including laws on citizenship, race and religion, have been encouraging.

17. The following sections identify some of the key constituencies that are creating the conditions for an inclusive and democratic future for Myanmar. These constituencies for change have made enormous sacrifices and commitments, individually and collectively, to preserve civic space and advance democracy and human rights. They provide a shining example of hope for what a peaceful and democratic future can be.

1. Women

18. Women from diverse communities and backgrounds, including women from urban and rural communities, grass-roots activists, academics, industry workers, doctors, nurses, teachers, politicians and advocates have been at the forefront of pro-democracy campaigns, in living fulfilment of the women and peace and security agenda.¹⁹ They have staged various forms of protest to express peaceful dissent. More than 4,200 women remain deprived of liberty for their opposition to military rule and there are widespread and systematic reports of sexual violence against women in detention.²⁰

19. Women's groups, organizations and networks, notwithstanding enormous constraints and personal security risks, have emerged alongside existing networks and have been critical in ensuring that the civilian population receives life-saving assistance and has access to healthcare, essential services and economic opportunities. Women's groups have continued to be a key resource for the civilian population, alleviating their suffering by providing conflict-affected communities with food, water, medicine, hygiene kits and mental health assistance. They have supported families of political prisoners and participants in the civil disobedience movement. Women's groups have also played a critical role in documenting and reporting on human rights violations and in supporting survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, including domestic and intimate partner violence.

20. Although women in Myanmar have played crucial societal and political roles for decades, the coup brought into sharp focus the need to change the patriarchal fabric of Myanmar and promote women to leadership roles. By working as fighters, drone operators and medics on the front line, women have rejected patriarchal norms, challenged exclusion and advocated against the maintenance of traditional gender roles, including through the establishment of effective mechanisms to prevent and address violence.

21. Women have demanded inclusion in decision-making and representation in new governance charters and systems, propelling bottom-up and inclusive local governance mechanisms. In Kayah, for example, women have played a pivotal role in the Karenni State

¹⁹ See dppa.un.org/en/women-peace-and-security.

²⁰ See www.aappb.org/.

Interim Executive Council since its establishment, as underscored by the election in June 2023 of the second Joint General Secretary of the Burmese Women's Union to the post of First Secretary of the Executive Council. In addition, the terms of the interim arrangement for reestablishing the foundations of Kayah State provide for a minimum of 30 per cent women's representation in public administration.

2. Youth

22. The group most affected by the military coup has been the youth of Myanmar, who are defined as individuals between 18 and 35 years of age. These people came of age during a period of political and economic opening up and rapid social change in Myanmar that was brutally interrupted by the military coup. Once the peaceful expression of dissent became too dangerous, many young people left family, education and employment behind and joined armed resistance with little or no training or equipment. Military violence, killings, arrests, torture, disappearances, conscription and forced recruitment, restrictions on movement and access to online information, and displacement within and outside Myanmar have disproportionately affected the younger generation. Loss of educational and livelihood opportunities will have longer-term generational impacts, exacerbating poverty and instability.

23. Meanwhile, youth have played key roles such as establishing alert and reporting networks for protection, contributing to humanitarian efforts, supporting communities in resisting unlawful evictions and addressing the adverse environmental effects of mining activities. Youth have also contributed to the formation and development of local governance structures, including by providing financial support and expertise from abroad. This generation is shaping a new political vision for Myanmar by overcoming racial barriers, challenging norms of gender identity and empowering one another through advocacy and political participation. As to the future of Myanmar, youth remain the country's single most precious resource and every effort must be made to sustain and harness their energy and secure their life opportunities.

3. Civil society organizations and grass-roots networks

24. Notwithstanding limited resources, crippling financial cuts, challenges in receiving funds and the direct dangers posed by the military, local organizations and community-led initiatives have contributed massively to strengthening resilience and saving lives by taking action to effectively meet the humanitarian, health, education, food, hygiene and shelter needs of the violence-affected population, including in the aftermath of natural disasters such as the recent earthquake. As highlighted in a previous report, persons with disabilities and organizations working to protect their rights, including in relation to mental health, will continue to have vital roles to address the massive needs caused by military violence.²¹

25. Civil society organizations have also continued to play an essential role in building trust among communities and promoting social cohesion, including by undertaking advocacy, documenting and reporting on human rights violations and abuses and countering disinformation and military propaganda. They have also assumed the role of intermediary between international actors and local communities and have been instrumental in grounding emerging governance systems in human rights. Civil society voices, from those at the grass-roots level to the policymakers, must therefore be heard and included in decision-making while rebuilding Myanmar.

4. Pro-democracy actors

26. Resolute rejection of military rule was clearly expressed by civil servants from across public institutions who resigned en masse to join the civil disobedience movement. Sacrificing their jobs, homes and life security, many protested against the military seizure of power and are now helping to organize alternative governance mechanisms. Persons with specialized skills, including doctors, lawyers, teachers and engineers, have applied their knowledge and expertise in areas outside military control. Trade unionists have been forced

²¹ [A/HRC/57/56](#).

underground but have continued their advocacy and support for workers in Myanmar and have maintained links with international trade union networks.

27. The Federal Democratic Charter, proclaimed in March 2021,²² has provided a common framework for the democratic movement and created the basis for institutions such as the National Unity Government and the National Unity Consultative Council. The Council is a positive example of cooperation between civilian and military actors towards the development of democratic institutions, even if additional efforts are needed to ensure the effective representation and participation of diverse communities.

5. Media

28. Without the courageous work of those endeavouring to shine a spotlight on the situation inside Myanmar, the crisis could have been forgotten. These people include human rights defenders, documenters, journalists, photographers, social media professionals, editors and all media workers. Since the coup, 15 media outlets have had their licences suspended,²³ 221 media workers have been arrested, of whom at least 48 remain languishing in detention,²⁴ and many journalists, including women and professionals from ethnic communities, have been forced to relocate abroad. At great personal risk, and notwithstanding restrictions, Internet shutdowns and surveillance, the media in Myanmar have continued to provide communities with life-saving information, including during natural disasters. The reporting by independent media on violations and abuses committed by all parties has laid the basis for future accountability.

29. During the process of shaping post-crisis Myanmar, a robust civic space with independent media will be of primary importance to democracy, transparency and accountability at all levels. Contributions by the media will be essential both to overcome narratives that have been imposed by the military and that foster ethnic and religious divisions, discord and discrimination, and to promote rights, equality and inclusion. Strong independent media will strengthen democracy and justice, promote reconciliation and play an important role in healing society from decades of disinformation spread by the military.

V. Pathways to change

30. In the following section, ideas and recommendations gathered through consultations conducted by OHCHR on key pathways to fulfil the aspirations of the people of Myanmar are summarized under four broad pathways: accountability, good governance, sustainable development, and international and regional action.

1. Accountability

31. Having suffered decades of military violations, interlocutors resoundingly centred their vision for the future democratic transformation of Myanmar around accountability and justice. Given that impunity has been a defining feature of military rule, interlocutors unanimously underscored the fact that peace requires accountability and reconciliation. Freeing all political prisoners, including Aung San Suu Kyi, was consistently indicated as necessary. Interlocutors adamantly stressed that perpetrators from all sides must be brought to justice and emphasized the importance of criminal accountability, whether through domestic, international or hybrid legal systems. Examples of progress at the international level include an application for an arrest warrant in November 2024 by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court,²⁵ which, at the time of writing, was pending before the Pre-Trial Chamber, and the conclusion of written proceedings in the contentious case before the International Court of Justice between the Gambia and Myanmar. Furthermore, a court in

²² See <https://mofua.nugmyanmar.org/uploads/publications/WmSsxrT486Vd6jGq2o6CJ7XzUL7mAXp32rGrAGoq.pdf>.

²³ See www.bnionline.net/en/news/myanmars-internet-freedom-and-press-freedom-worsen.

²⁴ See <http://www.icnl.org/wp-content/uploads/Myanmar-journalists-report-updated-April-2025.pdf>.

²⁵ See www.icc-cpi.int/bangladesh-myanmar.

Argentina²⁶ issued arrest warrants under the principle of universal jurisdiction. Many interlocutors called for broader and more incisive efforts, including the referral of the entire situation in Myanmar to the International Criminal Court.

32. Interlocutors highlighted the fact that human rights defenders, anti-military armed groups and pro-democratic actors are already seeking knowledge and further resources to lay the foundation for transitional justice initiatives. While the development of comprehensive transitional justice processes may require time, it is clear that there is a rising level of openness within society in Myanmar to truth-telling, the recognition of crimes, including past violations against ethnic groups such as the Rohingya, Rakhine, Kachin, Chin and Karen, and the development of new narratives free of ethnic chauvinism. Interlocutors also emphasized the compelling needs for reparation, return to places of origin, respect for cultural rights, including minority language rights, and an end to discrimination as central guarantees of non-recurrence. These processes will need to be owned and led by the people of Myanmar and ensure full inclusion of victims and all communities.

33. Former political prisoners emphasized the role of the judiciary in human rights violations, with judges systematically failing to exercise independent authority, sentencing individuals without evidence and imprisoning tens of thousands of innocent civilians on political grounds. During consultations, lawyers unanimously denounced the judicial system as having become entirely subsumed by the military, where defence counsel have to work under the constant fear of being arrested and in the absence of any fair trial guarantees. Therefore, following the end of the crisis, it will be paramount to ensure the reconstitution of a judiciary based on the principles of human rights and rule of law.²⁷ Pathways to judicial independence will require cultural and institutional changes, including new laws, full vetting of judicial actors, the recruitment of new professionals, representation of diversity and the introduction of procedures to ensure the fair administration of justice in accordance with international standards.

34. While the National Unity Government has taken steps towards accountability, including establishing a complaints mechanism for human rights violations committed by its combatants and administrators, OHCHR regularly received calls for enhanced efforts towards transparency across all sectors and levels of government. Interlocutors shared concerns related to the collection and distribution of revenue, status of court proceedings and complaints of human rights violations, sexual and gender-based violence and decision-making on political appointments. Anti-military armed groups have also been responsible for abuses, including forced recruitment, arrests, killings, extortion, gender-based violence and the imposition of limitations on the rights of other minority communities, including freedom of movement.²⁸ As duty bearers, they must fully uphold their human rights obligations and their actions must be focused on supporting civilian institutions in enhancing protection of civilians and meeting the essential needs of the population in their areas of control.

2. Good governance

35. Interlocutors across all demographics highlighted the continued aspiration of the people of Myanmar for a civilian-led federal democratic society based on strong local institutions with representatives elected in free and fair electoral processes. These institutions should be transparent and based on inclusiveness and respect for diversity, equality and human rights. Interlocutors emphasized that this would require a profound transformation in State structures, with some calling for the complete dismantling of the current system and the establishment of a fully civilian government with no decision-making roles for the military or armed actors.

36. Broad and meaningful public consultations that inform the drafting processes of a federal constitution, as well as state and regional constitutions granting local autonomy and rights, are, in general, considered as foundational steps towards democratic progress. Legal

²⁶ See www.legalactionworldwide.org/accountability-rule-of-law/argentina-court-issues-arrest-warrants-for-genocide-and-crimes-against-humanity-committed-against-the-rohingya-community/.

²⁷ A/HRC/57/56.

²⁸ See bangkok.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/2025-02/AnnualUpdateontheHumanRightsSituationinMyanmar2024v.final_.pdf.

professionals also stressed the need for comprehensive legislative review processes to enhance compliance with human rights obligations, in particular by removing the decades-long discriminatory approaches based on race, religion and sex, including the 1982 Citizenship Law, which had a detrimental impact on the Rohingya and other minority communities. They highlighted the need to end the practice of instrumentalizing laws - for example, laws on defamation - to silence dissenting opinions.

37. All interlocutors stressed that any future governance system must promote and protect civic space and fundamental freedoms as essential components for accountability and democracy. Media, human rights groups, women's groups, student unions and strike committees are some of the actors that are essential to hold duty bearers, including armed groups, accountable. Interlocutors stressed the importance of peaceful protests in holding duty bearers to account, including in relation to environmental protection and natural resources management.

38. Many of those consulted identified the long-standing top-down and centralized system of governance as a decisive factor that has contributed to instability. Therefore, many favoured a bottom-up approach with an emphasis on decentralization and local autonomy. Although some interlocutors expressed concerns that this could result in further fragmentation and even violence, others recognized that the realization of democratic aspirations would require time, significant international assistance and adaptability. By way of example, they stressed that the ethnic states in Myanmar had a long history of political organization and, over decades of responding to the needs of their communities arising from the military's violence and repression, had developed important capacities for governance.

39. The following examples highlight some of the emerging forms of governance at the local level, which represent promising possibilities for the future. Some are highly decentralized and emphasize community governance, while others prioritize stronger hierarchies with more centralized decision-making. In general, they are focussed on basic service delivery, including education and healthcare, with some introducing multilingual learning, ethnic-based curricula and health services improvements. Some have set up legal systems and specialized institutions, such as the judiciary and the police, while others have promoted localized economic activities, such as trade and agriculture.

40. In some areas under its control, the National Unity Government reported having established administrative structures focused on law enforcement, justice, education and healthcare, thereby emphasizing a firm commitment to the principles of inclusiveness and transparency. Courts reportedly functioned under civilian control, processing 788 criminal and 350 civil cases in 2024. In the health sector, 106 hospitals, 808 fixed clinics and 192 mobile clinics were reported as operational in 2024, offering emergency and long-term treatments. Basic education is reportedly offered to more than 800,000 students in 5,700 schools employing more than 62,000 teachers. In the higher education sector, degree courses are being offered under 198 interim university councils. However, consultations with students and researchers revealed that, at the time of writing, educational certifications issued by the National Unity Government were often not recognized abroad, limiting graduates' opportunities for further learning and employment.

41. As previously reported,²⁹ the Karenni State Interim Executive Council has developed a collective leadership model by which seven political, military and civilian leaders, of whom two are women, share executive functions. Governance is divided into 10 departments, each led by three or four leaders, with representatives from ethnic armed organizations, civil servants, members of parliament and activists. The Council reported that, by reorganizing and extending administration to 16 townships, it was able to provide healthcare services through more than 100 clinics in towns and villages. It also stated that it had local judicial systems with nine courts, ensuring civilian-led justice, and a reformed police service, with more than one dozen police stations committed to democratic policing principles.

42. The Palaung State Liberation Front, the political wing of the Ta'ang National Liberation Army, reported that it strived to establish governance and administrative structures in recently acquired territories in Shan and Mandalay. The Front established a

²⁹ A/HRC/56/23.

centralized administration with 13 departments, including departments of defence, health, education, revenue, the judiciary and economic development. Women and youth were reportedly more prominently involved in public administration, with youth comprising 80 per cent of staff in the education and health sectors being youth and women comprising 40 per cent. Women accounted for nearly half of the participants in the basic police training programme, a statistic that shows the progress that can be made towards gender equality in the security sector. The Front organized a judiciary system with 4 district courts and 12 township courts handling criminal, narcotics and civil cases. Since the coup, the Front has reportedly sought to expand access to education, increasing the number of schools from 374 in 2022 to more than 650 by 2024 and with plans to further increase the number of schools to 700. However, concerns were shared about the fact that education in the Ta'ang language is the only available option.

43. In Chin, the Chinland Council established a highly decentralized structure of 18 local governments across 900 villages that are based on localized decision-making involving women, youth and ethnic communities. These local governments reportedly deal with matters relating to education, health, the judiciary, law enforcement and economic development and apply laws on taxation, civil society and the judiciary. In line with their strategic education plan, education is reportedly being delivered to more than 60,000 students in more than 600 schools that are employing 4,000 teachers, and there are plans to open the Chin National University in 2025. In relation to healthcare, the Council aims to achieve universal health coverage by operating 18 hospitals, more than 50 primary health centres and 12 mobile medical teams providing services in remote areas.

44. In Mon, the New Mon State Party has organized local structures into three main departments – political, administrative and military – that cover 3 districts and 11 townships and exercise direct governance over special administrative regions. Judicial structures grew from community-based mechanisms to address disputes and handle local civil and criminal cases. Significant progress was reported in education, healthcare and the administration of justice. A total of 143 Mon national schools serve more than 14,000 students and employ more than 900 teachers, while seeking to provide multilingual education in Mon, Burmese and English. Interlocutors identified challenges faced by students studying at, and graduates with degrees from, non-accredited schools and universities. Healthcare coverage was reportedly provided to more than 118,000 people across 157 villages, with doctors, nurses and field supervisors delivering primary healthcare, vaccinations and maternal health services.

45. Economic instability, lack of investment in strengthening and repairing infrastructure and limited taxation capacities were identified during consultations as additional barriers to the sustainable provision of public services and to economic and social development. In many cases, the structures that provide those services and foster that development are affiliated with or dependent on non-State armed groups that have also committed human rights abuses, including forced recruitment and extortion, or are sometimes involved in illicit economies or resource extraction. It will therefore be important to ensure that such structures are civilian in nature and entirely separate from any armed groups controlling the territory in which the structures have been established, and to ensure that those groups are held accountable for their human rights obligations.

3. Sustainable development

46. The military's decades-long domination and exploitation of the economy and natural resources of Myanmar have concentrated wealth in a very small segment of the population, namely, the military and its patronage networks. This domination has been exerted through the control of national institutions, the expropriation of land and natural resources and the entrenchment of corruption and cronyism favouring military-affiliated business networks. Ingrained societal, legal and economic discrimination against religious and ethnic communities limited their economic opportunities. Since the coup, the military has prioritized a war economy structured around the extraction, production and allocation of resources to support military efforts over infrastructural and economic development.

47. Interlocutors stressed that pathways to democracy will require a radical departure from this predatory form of economy towards a people-centred approach based on policies

aligned with human rights obligations and prioritizing equality, social justice and sustainable development. This would require investment in infrastructure, education, health and social protection and the development of sustainable and inclusive policies on the administration of land and natural resources.

48. Priority should be given to ending the military's economic dominance. Lifting the fiscal burden of military spending, ensuring parliamentary oversight, dismantling military-controlled businesses and banks, ending all forms of forced conscription and labour and enacting legislation preventing the military from re-engaging in business activities are some of the measures necessary to reorient the current war economy towards peaceful and sustainable economic development. Experts argued that the nationalization of military-controlled conglomerates is essential and that military-owned assets abroad could be used to fund reconstruction and development. Setting up independent anti-corruption and public finance transparency bodies would contribute to ending decades of malpractice.

49. This economic transformation will require multilayered and multisectoral interventions. In reforming the banking and financial sectors, the current system will need to be restructured and recapitalized to restore public trust and ensure financial stability. Such measures would include restoring consumers' full access to their own bank accounts, replacing fixed foreign exchange rates with a floating rate and lifting import restrictions. Budgetary decision-making should be overseen by a civilian parliament and based on consistent fiscal rules that guarantee debt sustainability. A comprehensive tax reform should be broad-based, simple and transparent, while avoiding regressive taxes, including on food and fuel, that burden the most disadvantaged. In a future context free of widespread surveillance, digital financial services should also be strengthened to increase access to the formal banking system, transparency and accountability.

50. Respondents stated that just and transparent economic regulation is equally important in areas currently governed by non-State actors, underlining the critical importance of reforming taxation and natural resources management at all levels. While new duty bearers are developing and implementing taxation policies, interlocutors emphasized that a lack of consistent practice was allowing for the arbitrary imposition of fees and discriminatory approaches against the most vulnerable. The nexus between non-State armed groups and the illicit and extractive economy will need to be brought to an end.

51. Private international investors and businesses will also play a critical role in recovering from the current economic crisis. When conditions allow, investment, job creation, fair wages and respect for workers' rights will all support democracy and help the economy to flourish. By encouraging an environment where the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights³⁰ are respected, the private sector can help to transform Myanmar. In the short term, international businesses and investors must apply heightened due diligence in any transactions with Myanmar. Unionists expressed concerns about the possibility that foreign businesses that have continued to operate in Myanmar, in the absence of any rule of law or respect for workers' rights, could inadvertently enable labour exploitation. Experts stressed that foreign investment should be contingent on the respect and protection of labour rights and the ability of unions to operate freely, including setting minimum wages commensurate with dignified living conditions and adopting anti-discrimination policies to protect workers who are women and workers from minority communities.

52. Interlocutors also stressed the importance of enhancing environmental governance, including the sustainable management of natural resources. Adopting policies and measures that promote green energy, climate-resilient agriculture and disaster-resilient infrastructure to prevent and mitigate the negative impact of natural disasters could also produce sustainable results for future generations.

³⁰ See www.ohchr.org/en/publications/reference-publications/guiding-principles-business-and-human-rights.

4. Actions by international and regional stakeholders

53. During OHCHR consultations, there was a consistent expression of appreciation for action taken by the international community, including the imposition of targeted sanctions on individuals, the non-recognition of military representation in international and regional forums, calls for the referral of the situation to international accountability mechanisms, and the provision of humanitarian support. However, the expectations of the people of Myanmar are much higher. People felt that the support they had received to sustain their democratic aspirations had not been commensurate with their sacrifices in the face of brutality. Owing to perceptions of inactivity, appeasement of the military and failure to substantiate statements with action, trust in the United Nations and ASEAN is low. However, their support is still considered vital to realizing the future goals of the people of Myanmar.

54. A global arms embargo, including on jet fuel, drones and dual-use equipment, to hinder the military's reliance on air power and improve civilian protection, is an urgent priority. The reliance of the military on aerial weaponry and its use of drones and paramotors have steadily risen over the years, leading to a near doubling of civilians killed by air strikes in 2024 compared with 2023,³¹ underscoring the need to continually update controls on the transfer of such equipment. Sanctions should also apply to the military-controlled central bank to curtail the ability of financial institutions to make and receive international payments. At the same time, fledgling financial institutions created by pro-democracy actors should be exempted from international sanctions and assistance provided for their institutional development and regulation.³²

55. There is also a need to enhance international engagement and cooperation with the National Unity Government, ethnic armed organizations and other democratic actors. Challenges and divergent interests will continue to characterize the situation in Myanmar, which requires thinking beyond the traditional State/non-State binary and applying flexible, creative and adaptive approaches. Alternatives to military governance emerging in areas outside military control, some of which have been identified in the present report, should be encouraged and supported. Efforts by civil society organizations to assist the civilian population should be acknowledged and provided with strong support to ensure that their democratic voices continue to shape the country. Small but tangible steps, such as removing the mandatory registration requirement for organizations in Myanmar to apply for funding opportunities or adapting to the use of traditional money transfer mechanisms, can result in life-saving impacts. The provision of core and long-term funding with flexible reporting requirements can also produce significant impacts.

56. Violence, persecution and risks of forced recruitment have caused tens of thousands of people – in addition to more than 1 million Rohingya refugees already in Bangladesh – to flee the country and seek protection abroad, mostly within the region. However, interlocutors nearly unanimously indicated their intention to return home once it was safe to do so in order to contribute to the establishment of a just and democratic society. At the time of writing, many individuals were unable to return to Myanmar or apply for personal documentation in military-controlled embassies owing to security concerns for themselves and for relatives still living in Myanmar. Repatriations can lead to violations of the non-refoulement principle because individuals are at risk of irreparable harm.³³ A practical way to support these individuals is to provide valid long-term legal status under which they can gain access to healthcare, education and employment. Ensuring protection and humanitarian assistance to individuals seeking refuge abroad and preventing pushback and refoulement are also crucial.

57. This particularly applies to Rohingya refugees, for whom the preconditions of safety, citizenship and rights necessary for any sustainable return do not exist. Owing to deepening food insecurity in Rakhine State and the drastic cuts to humanitarian aid in Bangladesh, it is imperative that support be maintained and increased. ASEAN and international stakeholders should explore options for cross-border assistance to alleviate the suffering of the Rohingya.

³¹ See bangkok.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/2025-02/AnnualUpdateontheHumanRightsSituationinMyanmar2024v.final_.pdf.

³² See www.specialadvisorycouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/SAC-M-The-Military-Money-Myanmar-ENGLISH.pdf.

³³ [A/HRC/57/56](https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/02/a-hrc-57-56).

The forthcoming international conference on the situation of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar, in the form of a high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly, should focus on new strategies to achieve comprehensive and durable solutions for the Rohingya community, both inside and outside the country.³⁴

58. In the longer term, the international community can also provide technical assistance for institutional and legal reforms, as well as critical support for transitional justice, reconciliation and social cohesion processes. Under regional leadership, such support will be essential to a Myanmar-led political transition and institutional transformation.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

59. The extensive consultations conducted for the present report support a resounding conclusion: the people of Myanmar have sacrificed their lives, their livelihoods and, in many respects, their futures in the name of rejecting the power grab by the military in 2021 and are demanding a new future. In the face of years of suffering and abuse, the vast majority of people have remained united in their defiance of military authoritarianism and violence. Once again, at a level not seen in previous decades of military rule, they are demanding genuine and inclusive democracy, civilian oversight over the military and civilian control over the country, an end to discrimination, federalism and autonomy at the local level and a people-centred and sustainable economy. Since 2021, those voices have only grown louder, given that the military coup has cemented the desire for a profound and irreversible change grounded in accountability, human rights, inclusion and non-discrimination and the rule of law. Dismantling military-controlled institutions and economic structures is a necessary precondition for bringing about and sustaining such a change. The fact that local administrations are emerging across the country demonstrates that the people are already invested in and committed to a bottom-up form of governance and the possibilities of decentralization and participatory decision-making.

60. The people of Myanmar recognize justice and accountability for past and ongoing human rights violations and abuses by all parties as central to the country's democratic transformation. There is a growing recognition of past human rights violations and abuses, including against the Rohingya and other marginalized communities. Breaking the entrenched patterns of impunity will be necessary to strengthen the rule of law, establish independent and credible State institutions and prevent future crises.

61. The people of Myanmar call for a more effective and decisive approach by the international community, including through targeted sanctions against members of the military and military-controlled entities and political engagement with democratic forces and emerging governance structures. They call upon the international community to address the country's immediate humanitarian needs and support those working for long-term systemic reforms through Myanmar-led processes to invest in the country's future.

62. In the light of these findings, the High Commissioner reiterates his previous calls for a full referral of the situation in Myanmar to the International Criminal Court by the Security Council and calls upon the military:

(a) To respect the demands and the democratic aspirations of the people of Myanmar and act to implement, in particular, civilian oversight of the military;

(b) To end violence perpetrated against the civilian population, including Rohingya civilians, and attacks on civilian objects, in line with relevant human rights obligations and international humanitarian law and in compliance with Security Council resolution 2669 (2022) and the provisional measures ordered by the International Court of Justice;

³⁴ See General Assembly resolution 79/278.

(c) To commit to fundamental security sector reforms to ensure that the post-crisis military will respect human rights;

(d) To take all measures necessary, including removing obstacles to free movement and lifting restrictions on the import of goods and supplies, to guarantee that people in need receive and have access to humanitarian aid, both within the country and through cross-border assistance.

63. The High Commissioner recommends that the National Unity Government and ethnic armed organizations:

(a) Ensure that their governance structures are inclusive, participatory, transparent and non-discriminatory and that they meet the demands of the people for equitable sharing of resources;

(b) Meticulously document human rights violations and abuses and initiate appropriate proceedings with a view to holding perpetrators to account and breaking the cycle of impunity, and impose sanctions to those found responsible commensurate with the violations and abuses committed, providing justice and redress to victims;

(c) Proactively involve women, youth and representatives of ethnic communities in decision-making, including appointing them to leadership roles, in governance structures that formulate policies and provide services to the public;

(d) Maintain efforts to ensure that local governance structures comply with international human rights law, including through the exchange of information and sharing of good practices;

(e) Hold frequent and open consultations with local communities, including the Rohingya and other minority groups, to develop a new social contract serving all the people of Myanmar, regardless of their ethnicity or religion, as the basis for a new constitution and political framework;

(f) Take urgent steps to remove obstacles to safe, sustainable and dignified return, in particular in situations of long-term displacement, such as for members of the Rohingya community.

64. In addition, the High Commissioner urges ASEAN member States:

(a) To demand that the military immediately end violence against civilians, release all political prisoners and authorize unhindered humanitarian access, including through the establishment of cross-border operations;

(b) To protect the people of Myanmar who are fleeing violence and seeking safety in the region, including by undertaking rescues at sea, granting international protection, providing solutions for long-term legal status and providing access to fundamental services, including education, healthcare and employment opportunities;

(c) To ensure that procedures for the issuance of personal documents, permits to stay, residency documents and work permits are clear, affordable and implemented without discrimination in order to address the legal and protection concerns of displaced persons from Myanmar and grant them access to public services and the employment market to enable them to sustain themselves and their families with dignity and rights;

(d) To take timely and concrete action to allow displaced students from Myanmar to have access to educational opportunities abroad and to ensure that professionals, including medical doctors, teachers, legal professionals and engineers, receive accreditation and permits to continue to work and to assist members of the Myanmar community;

(e) To engage with the National Unity Government and other relevant democratic actors, including representatives of emerging local governance structures, to support the democratic aspirations of the people of Myanmar and to contribute to the creation of the conditions necessary for sustainable peace, stability and development;

(f) To proactively implement ASEAN plans of action on common concerns, including the ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crimes and the ASEAN Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, to strengthen compliance with human rights, promote accountability and prevent a recurrence of crimes.

65. Furthermore, the High Commissioner urges Member States and the United Nations system:

(a) To support the democratic aspirations of the people of Myanmar by exerting pressure to ensure that the military respects and implements Security Council resolution 2669 (2022) and the relevant General Assembly and Human Rights Council resolutions;

(b) To ensure the protection of civilians fleeing violence in Myanmar and seeking safety abroad by granting international protection, providing solutions for long-term legal status and ensuring access to fundamental services, including education, healthcare and employment opportunities;

(c) To take timely and concrete action to support youth from Myanmar in contributing to the future democratic development of their country by providing displaced youth with access to educational opportunities abroad, and displaced professionals, including medical doctors, teachers, legal professionals and engineers, with the accreditation and permits necessary to continue to work and to assist members of the Myanmar community;

(d) To engage with new duty bearers and democratic actors, including the National Unity Government, as an essential part of advancing democracy and contributing to the creation and development of conditions for sustainable peace, stability and development;

(e) To consult with civil society organizations to understand the technical, financial, humanitarian and protection needs of the civilian population and to co-design and implement programmes that effectively address their needs;

(f) To plan for future support necessary to sustain the institutional transformation of Myanmar into a democracy, including the provision of expert assistance on processes such as local governance, transitional justice and institution-building;

(g) To provide critical food and non-food assistance to members of the Rohingya community in Myanmar and in Bangladesh to ensure their survival and protection;

(h) To increase efforts to identify sustainable solutions for members of the Rohingya community, including resettlement to third countries, while working with democratic actors to create the conditions necessary for voluntary return to Myanmar in safety and dignity, with rights and citizenship and on the basis of a free and informed choice;

(i) To ensure that the Human Rights Council and other relevant international bodies and mechanisms remain seized of developments in Myanmar and regularly monitor the implementation of the present recommendations.