Oral Statement to the 51st 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 junta’s continued access to resources facilitates impunity for atrocities and destruction of the rule of law

Mr. President

Lawyers’ Rights Watch Canada and the International Bar Association’s Human Rights Institute regret that the military coup in Myanmar has continued to preclude an Interactive Dialogue on its 3rd Cycle UPR outcome.¹

The military junta continues to receive funding, trade and weapons² that support its widespread atrocities³ and facilitate its systematic abuse of laws and legal institutions to suppress dissent and secure impunity for its crimes.

Lawyers and human rights defenders are increasingly at grave risk⁴ as the junta suppresses their legitimate reporting of human rights violations through threats, arbitrary detention,⁵ enforced disappearances, torture, and unfair military trials with lack of adequate access to lawyers. Lawyers representing defenders and political prisoners lack adequate access to their clients and are subjected to gag orders, threats, and arbitrary detention.⁶

We call on all States, and this Council, to fulfil recommendations of the Special Rapporteur and the OHCHR,⁷ withdraw from the junta all forms of support or legitimacy, and seek a Security Council arms embargo, targeted economic sanctions, and a referral to the International Criminal Court.

Thank you.

Several States have continued to facilitate supply of, lethal weaponry to the Myanmar military including China, India, and Japan (all members of this Council), as well as Russia and Serbia. OHCHR, Progress made and remaining challenges with regard to the recommendations of the independent international fact-finding mission on Myanmar, A/HRC/51/41, 7 September 2022, para 28, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/regularsession/session51/2022-09-16/A_HRC_51_41_auv.docx. Also see the Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur, infra note 6.

Ibid, OHCHR, para 15.


According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), more than 12,300 civilians are now arbitrarily detained, including jurists, defenders, journalists, parliamentarians, and even children held as proxies for their parents. Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, AAPP, https://aappb.org/?lang=en. Among those detained are 33 lawyers, AAPP, https://airtable.com/shrXiq3K1879QmNNB/tblC5yh720x2FBSJ5. Extrajudicial killings continue, now amounting to more than 2,200 persons. AAPP, https://aappb.org/?lang=en.
