



Special Advisory Council for MYANMAR

ASEAN Five-Point Consensus a Tentative Starting Point

30 April 2021: The Special Advisory Council for Myanmar (SAC-M) says the five-point consensus reached during the ASEAN Leaders Meeting on 24 April is a tentative starting point for a constructive process in response to the crisis in Myanmar. To move forward, the consensus must be followed by concrete action from ASEAN and international engagement with the National Unity Government of Myanmar.

On 24 April, during an ASEAN Leaders Meeting attended by nine ASEAN leaders and Myanmar military Commander-in-Chief Min Aung Hlaing, a five-point consensus on the situation in Myanmar was reached. The consensus includes the immediate cessation of violence, constructive dialogue between all parties, the appointment of an ASEAN Special Envoy and provision of humanitarian assistance.

“The ASEAN five-point consensus is the tentative start of a process to move the situation in Myanmar forward” says Marzuki Darusman of SAC-M. “To move forward, the consensus must be followed by swift action. The priority is to stop the rampant violence and killings being committed by the security forces.”

Myanmar is on the brink of state collapse and an unavoidable humanitarian catastrophe, after the military, or Tatmadaw, attempted and failed to seize control of the country by staging a coup on 1 February. Having been met with massive nationwide resistance, the Tatmadaw responded by launching a systematic campaign of mass killings and other forms of terror against the entire population.

Despite the violent suppression Myanmar’s pro-democracy forces have continued to mobilise and organise in resistance to the junta. On 16 April, a National Unity Government (NUG) was established to succeed the National League for Democracy and represent the interests of the peoples of Myanmar. On 27 April, the Prime Minister of the NUG issued a generous statement

in response to the ASEAN five-point consensus, emphasising his Government's readiness to work with ASEAN.

“The NUG has demonstrated to ASEAN that it is prepared to work with what has been agreed at the ASEAN Leaders Meeting” says Chris Sidoti of SAC-M. “The NUG is both a legitimate representative of the people of Myanmar and a constructive partner for the international community to engage with. The Tatmadaw, on the other hand, is already attempting to backtrack on what was agreed. ASEAN has to back its fine words with firm actions.”

On 26 April, the Tatmadaw issued a press release stating that it would give merely “careful consideration” to the consensus agreed with the ASEAN leaders. Meanwhile, Min Aung Hlaing's troops have continued to commit violence and murder.

“The terrorist junta is already trying to undermine the ASEAN consensus” says Yanghee Lee of SAC-M. “This is the Tatmadaw once again trying to use and manipulate international efforts to engage and delay any attempt to move forward.”

SAC-M notes that the ASEAN Chairman's Statement also included a paragraph on the situation in Rakhine state and the repatriation of “verified displaced persons,” referring to Rohingya refugees currently in Bangladesh who fled persecution and genocidal atrocities at the hands of the Tatmadaw in 2016 and 2017.

“Min Aung Hlaing should be investigated and prosecuted for the crime of genocide for what happened to the Rohingya” says Yanghee Lee. “Under no circumstances can he be party to any plans for their repatriation.”

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