



Special Advisory Council for MYANMAR

This Year's Summit Make or Break for ASEAN on Myanmar

6 August, 2022

The next annual Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Leaders' Summit in November is critical for the escalating crisis in Myanmar and ASEAN's response to it, following the outcome of this week's ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, says the Special Advisory Council for Myanmar (SAC-M).

Foreign Ministers from nine of the ten ASEAN Member States concluded a three-day meeting in Phnom Penh on Friday 5th August. No representative for Myanmar was present at the meeting. The representative of the illegal military junta in Myanmar was barred from attending the meeting, while ASEAN has not yet recognised the National Unity Government of Myanmar (NUG).

The Foreign Ministers agreed in a Joint Communiqué issued after the meeting to recommend that the ASEAN Summit in November decide on next steps to be taken by ASEAN to address the crisis. Decisions can be made by the ASEAN Summit in situations where consensus between the ten ASEAN Member States cannot be achieved, according to Article 20 of the ASEAN Charter.

"The outcome of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting has put the ball firmly in the court of the ASEAN Leaders in November," said Marzuki Darusman of SAC-M. **"The Summit must be the turning point for ASEAN. The longer ASEAN does nothing the greater the pain and suffering of the Myanmar people. At an absolute minimum, the violence must stop. There must be consequences for the junta's actions and all eyes will be on the Summit to act."**

The Foreign Ministers called on ASEAN Leaders to assess progress towards the implementation of the Five-Point Consensus by the junta between now and the November meeting to guide decision-making. The Five-Point Consensus was reached between junta-leader Min Aung Hlaing and ASEAN Leaders in April 2021. Until now, Min Aung Hlaing has failed to adhere to a single point of the agreement and continues to flout the consensus with impunity. The junta leader has repeatedly and deliberately instrumentalized any attempt by the bloc and its current chair, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, to push forward on the consensus to mislead the international community as to the reality of the situation in Myanmar.

"ASEAN needs to come up with a new formula as the Five-Point Consensus clearly has not worked." said Yanghee Lee of SAC-M. **"ASEAN leaders need to stop**



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waiting in vain for Min Aung Hlaing. His coup failed, his forces are being defeated everywhere across the country, and he has no strategy other than the commission of mass atrocities."

The NUG, People's Defence Forces (PDF) and allied Ethnic Revolutionary Organisations (EROs) hold more of Myanmar's territory than Min Aung Hlaing's military junta and are gaining more ground where junta forces are being pushed back.

The NUG has repeatedly expressed its commitment to working with counterparts in ASEAN towards finding a durable solution to the military junta-crisis.

"ASEAN does not need the consent of Min Aung Hlaing to seek a new solution to the crisis in November, that much is very clear," said Chris Sidoti of SAC-M. **"But ASEAN needs to work with the NUG. The NUG is the legitimate representative of the Myanmar people, increasingly the *de facto* authority in the country as well as the *de jure* government, and the proper party for ASEAN to be engaging with."**

