



# Special Advisory Council for MYANMAR

## ARREST OF FORMER PHILIPPINES PRESIDENT RODRIGO DUTERTE A GAME-CHANGING MOMENT

12 March 2025

The Special Advisory Council for Myanmar (SAC-M) lauds the Philippine Government's swift enforcement of the International Criminal Court's (ICC) arrest warrant for former President Rodrigo Duterte for the alleged crime against humanity of murder. Mr Duterte was arrested by Philippine authorities on 11 March 2025 and transferred to The Hague.

**"This is a major boost for accountability at a time when international law and the ICC are under assault",** said SAC-M founding member Yanghee Lee. **"For the Philippine Government to take such decisive action after having withdrawn from the Rome Statute in 2019 makes it all the more momentous."**

Mr Duterte's arrest sends a strong message to the region, particularly on Myanmar. In November 2024 the ICC Prosecutor filed an application for an arrest warrant for Commander-in-Chief of the Myanmar military Senior General Min Aung Hlaing for the crimes against humanity of deportation and persecution of the Rohingya in 2017. Soon after in February 2025, an Argentine court exercising universal jurisdiction issued arrest warrants for 25 persons who occupied senior military and government positions in Myanmar for their alleged roles in genocide and crimes against humanity committed against the Rohingya.

The ICC's Pre-Trial Chamber I is expected to issue the arrest warrant for Min Aung Hlaing, with the ICC Prosecutor having already indicated that more applications will follow. And the Argentine Government is expected to request INTERPOL members to cooperate in the arrest and extradition of the 25 persons named in its warrants.

SAC-M urges the National Unity Government, Ethnic Organisations and other Myanmar authorities to make coordinated efforts to secure the arrest and transfer of the persons named in arrest warrants.

We also call on ASEAN to help secure justice for the people of Myanmar by enforcing international arrest warrants and cooperating with relevant authorities in facilitating the extradition of those named to stand trial. **"Duterte's arrest is a very strong statement",** said SAC-M founding member Marzuki Darusman. **"An influential ASEAN member has declared that it respects the ICC and INTERPOL and supports international**



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accountability. This will serve clear notice to Min Aung Hlaing that his time in the dock will surely come.”

“At a time when the people of Myanmar have lost all faith in the United Nations, the international human rights system and the promise of justice, this offers a glimmer of hope”, added SAC-M founding member Chris Sidoti.

Mr Duterte's arrest comes as the Philippines prepares for its term as ASEAN Chair in 2026. The Philippines is also a member of ASEAN's Troika mechanism on Myanmar (comprising the former, current and incoming ASEAN Chairs) which was established to ensure continuity in ASEAN's handling of the crisis in Myanmar.



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