



Special Advisory Council for MYANMAR

ASEAN Must Clearly Reject the Myanmar Junta's Absurd Fake Elections

13 January 2026

The second phase of the Myanmar military junta's fake elections concluded on Sunday, once again marked by widespread voter boycotts and public rejection.

Refusing to be cowed by junta threats, intimidation and violence, the Myanmar people's brave boycott of the junta's sham elections continued across phase two constituencies. Polling stations in Myanmar's most populous city, Yangon, and elsewhere remained largely [deserted](#) for much of the day—scenes almost identical to those observed two weeks earlier during phase one.

"Phase two of these confected elections has been another humiliation for the junta," said Ben Lee, Executive Director of the Special Advisory Council for Myanmar (SAC-M). **"This charade was engineered by the junta and its backers in a desperate bid for legitimacy. By refusing to vote, the Myanmar people have in fact cast a clear vote against the junta. Phase by phase, they are exposing the junta's lie."**

Vast segments of the population were excluded from voting in both phases, and polling was confined only to limited areas under the junta's territorial control. Myanmar's most popular political parties were barred from participating, while many of Myanmar's democratic leaders languish in junta arbitrary detention.

The junta's sham elections are also a cynical ploy to distract the international community from its escalating atrocities. They are being conducted at the end of a barrel of a gun and under a hail of missiles.

The junta is using vague and draconian "laws" to silence free expression and to coerce people to vote. Hundreds have already been arrested for opposing the elections. At least [22,705](#) people remain in junta arbitrary detention where they face torture, sexual violence and other grave violations.

And in December alone, the junta launched [119 airstrikes](#), killed at least 176 civilians,



info@specialadvisorycouncil.org



www.specialadvisorycouncil.org



[@SpecialCouncil](#)



[special-council.bsky.social](#)



Special Advisory Council for MYANMAR

and wounded 325 others, according to independent research organisation the Myanmar Defense and Security Institute.

Even under the [standards](#) articulated by [ASEAN](#), the sham elections lack all credibility and are entirely illegitimate. ASEAN leaders must now outright condemn this façade and take action against the junta for its atrocities and abuses.

Ben Lee, in an [interview with Channel News Asia](#) on Sunday, called on ASEAN to initiate a series of graduating punitive steps against the junta for its continued rejection of the Five-Point Consensus.

“We need to see ASEAN say: we utterly reject this outcome, and we will not recognise or engage with the military junta,” he said. **“We also need to think about the message that an ASEAN failure sends to the region – what does this say to every military strongman with ambitions and an autocratic streak about what happens if they attempt a military coup?”**

“But most importantly, ASEAN needs to double down in its support for legitimate pro-democracy actors—ethnic organisations, minority communities, the National Unity Government and Myanmar civil society.”

