

Dr. Sasa Address to the German Parliamentarians

**Dr. Sasa, Union Minister of International Cooperation and Spokesperson,
The National Unity Government of Myanmar Address to the German
Parliamentarian Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Needs
May 6, 2021**

Guten Tag und danke,

Thank you to so much for having me here at this critical moment in Myanmar. It is an honor to address the Parliament of Germany through these vital important Committees. I am here to brief you on the deepening catastrophic developments crisis in Myanmar that followed the illegal coup d'etat of 1 February. But I also come with a direct appeal from the people of Myanmar: Please support us in this, our darkest hour. Your solidarity and supports in these difficult times mean to us life.

We are nearing 100 days since that fateful day when Min Aung Hlaing murderer in chief and his henchmen shattered our democratic aspirations in Myanmar. On that day, like many people in Myanmar, I feared for my life but have survived. Many have not been as fortunate. Since that horrible day, the coup leaders' forces have murdered nearly 800 patriots Nation's heroes of Myanmar and detained over 4,700, with 3,700 of my brothers and sisters currently imprisoned including our State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and our President U Win Myint. Please take note: I say the "coup leaders' forces" and not "Myanmar military forces" because the people of Myanmar have made clear they do not recognize these forces as their own. Indeed, the mission of a nation's military is to protect and defend its people. The forces under the command of murderer in chief, Min Aung Hlaing are doing precisely the opposite - murdering, maiming and arbitrarily detaining the people of Myanmar in ever growing numbers.

The people of Myanmar view Min Aung Hlaing and those who report to him as a terrorist organization inflicting devastation on our country and our people. They are detaining people without cause, without explanation, and without hearings. They are beating and murdering on the streets of Myanmar and torturing in prisons. Reports of gender-based violence while in detention are on the rise, with rapes and sexual torture occurring in prisons and on the streets. This should come as no surprise as for decades the Tatmadaw used rape as a weapon against ethnic nationalities in Kachin, Karen, Kayah, Shan, Mon, Rakhine and Chin States.

The junta does not want you to know this and it does not want the people of Myanmar to know this. It is why they are doing their utmost to restrict the flow of information in and out of Myanmar. They have shutdown Internet access for weeks now, abolished free media outlets, illegitimately made free association illegal, and they have harassed and imprisoned journalists. More than 40 journalists remain in detention in Myanmar including a journalist from Japan.

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The violence we are seeing by the junta is both systematic and widespread. In short, they are engaging in crimes against humanity against the people of Myanmar and they must be stopped.

The people of Myanmar are doing all that we can to resist the junta's efforts to take over our country. First led by doctors, nurses, health workers and teachers, educators, the Civil Disobedience Movement now encompasses thousands upon thousands of civil servants and private sector workers. The CDM has helped grind economy to a halt. Make no mistake: this is the people of Myanmar flexing their power to deny the junta the economic resources that they need to succeed.

In the last three months, the CDM has been joined by millions of everyday people throughout Myanmar who have marched for their freedoms. Despite of this reign of terror, day after day, the people of Myanmar demonstrate enormous courage and tenacity in the face of unrestrained brutality and cruelty of the junta because we knew that our non-violence movement is much more powerful than the junta's act of terrorism. Against this backdrop of violence by the junta and bravery by the people, we have formed, and are now developing, our National Unity Government. I'd like to give you some background on this, the people's government of Myanmar.

Days after the coup, Members of Parliament who were prevented from standing up the new government formed the Committee Representing the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (the "CRPH"), or the Committee Representing the Union Parliament of Myanmar. The CRPH's primary objectives included ensuring the unconditional release of those arbitrarily detained, performing the duties of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, and forming a government. I joined the CRPH as Union Parliament of Myanmar's Special Envoy to the United Nations and have been working on international relations and cooperation ever since. On 15 February, the SAC issued arrest warrants for all members of the CRPH. I have been charged with high treason. If I were to be caught, I would face capital punishment. To be honest, I never would have expected to be so proud to be charged with high treason by the junta leaders who are committing high treason daily against the people and the country of Myanmar, because I lay down my life for my people and country, stand up and fight for their freedom and federal democracy.

On April 1 we abolished the 2008 Constitution which was created by junta leaders for themselves and two weeks later announced the formation of Myanmar's National Unity Government. Our priority, indeed our mission, can be found at the center of our name - UNITY. This is because of our belief that the full potential of Myanmar will only be realized through the unity of our nation's great diversity.

We are in the process of forming a government that truly reflects this unity. Our acting President, Vice President H.E. Duwa Lashi La, is Kachin leader. Our Prime Minister is Karen leader H.E. Mahn Win Khaing Than. We have established a new Ministry of Women, Youth and Children, that is led by H.E. Sussana Hla Hla Soe, also Karen. Last week, we announced the establishment of the Ministry of Human Rights, to be led by

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H.E. Aung Myo Min, an outstanding leader and advocate for Myanmar's LGBTQ community.

As we fill out our new government and formalize its positions and priorities, we will be addressing a range of important issues including protecting and promoting the rights, dignity and quality of life of our many ethnic communities that include our Rohingya brothers and Sisters. While we will be announcing and discussing the formal positions of our National Unity Government in the coming days and weeks, I can tell you today that I am proud to call the Rohingya my brothers and sisters and that I look forward to working hand-in-hand with them all to build a new Myanmar where justice will be serve for ALL, the rights of ALL will be protected and respected regardless the race, culture, gender, ethnicities and religious.

I am very proud of our many young people who are on the front lines of the movement to liberate our nation from a brutal military junta. Many of them have publicly expressed their regret for not standing up and speaking out for ethnic Nationalities, including the Rohingya, as they were being attacked by the junta. Their commitment to the human rights of ALL and their courageous fight for freedom, is why I have great optimism for the new future of our country, Myanmar. But while the fate of Myanmar is in the hands of the people of Myanmar, we need your help to succeed. This brings me to my plea to you, your great country, Germany and to the European Union. I have three core requests:

- 1) Engage with the National Unity Government. We are comprised of leaders elected in Myanmar's November elections as well as leaders of ethnic states. The people of Myanmar broadly recognize us as the legitimate government and our hope is that you would recognize us as the legitimate government of Myanmar as well. Please also continue to use us a source of information, analysis and recommendations, exactly as you are now.
- 2) Help us in addressing a growing humanitarian crisis which is direct result of coup leaders' actions. WFP analysis has shown that more than 3 million people in Myanmar are going to hunger in coming months. The National Unity Government has great experience getting aid to where it needs to go, be it providing funding to striking workers to meet their basic needs or coordinating cross border in concert with civil society organizations. We are currently coordinating cross border aid. Our people and Country are great in need of your support in the areas of Health and Education. We are working hard to ensure that the children of Myanmar have some access to education materials and the people of Myanmar get covid 19 vaccination which in on massive scales of rise in the region, but the junta did nothing to protect the people of Myanmar from covid 19 instead killing more and more people of Myanmar by their battlefield weapons that they have been discharging across the country.

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- 3) Help us put financial pressure on the junta. As I said, the Civil Disobedience Movement has established strong citizen sanctions on the junta through strikes and other acts of civil disobedience. We are boycotting junta produced goods and a large percentage of civil servants are refusing to support the junta's work. The sanctions the European Union has imposed so far have been a helpful start to supporting our domestic efforts. A junta lobbyist recently told a New York Times reporter that revenue was particularly important for the junta as they "don't have many revenue streams right now."

By far the largest source of revenue to the junta, the oil and gas sector, remains unscathed by the international community. The National Unity Government has been advocating directly with Total, a European energy company that, of course, falls under EU jurisdiction. We have asked them to divert revenue that is now flowing to the junta into an escrow account or trust. Over 400 members of Myanmar civil society publicly announced their strong support for such this critically important step. Total has expressed concerns about their contractual obligations. We respect these concerns. But, in point of fact, they are not dealing with a legitimate government that would use the proceeds for legitimate purposes. The junta is anything but legitimate and instead of using the proceeds to benefit the people of Myanmar, they are using the proceeds to destroy the people of Myanmar. Government sanctions would provide a measure of assurance to Total and other members of this energy consortium. With sanctions, they would have a clear legal obligation to stop the flow of this revenue to the junta.

So I am asking Germany to help push the EU towards sanctions against Myanmar Oil and Gas and all state-owned enterprises. We must not let this illegal junta gain access to or spend the wealth of the people of Myanmar on more weapons only to destroy the country, kill brave people of Myanmar and for the junta to continue to reign of terror. I am also seeking your support for an international arms embargo, including the transfer of dual use technology. We greatly appreciate the arms embargo that Germany, via the EU, currently has in place. In addition to these actions, we would also ask that the Germany and the EU take the lead in both encouraging stronger sanctions from other nations and, critically, to coordinate these sanctions into a coherent whole. Linking these sanctions together will generate the strongest possible impact on the junta.

Mark my words: we, the courageous people of Myanmar, people's Government of Myanmar, the National Unity Government, will win in our struggle to liberate Myanmar from these terrorist forces. And on the other end of this fight will emerge an inclusive Myanmar that is committed to democracy, human rights, and to being a responsible partner in the International- the global community. With your help, our vision, our dream will become a powerful reality and a glorious future for generations of Myanmar people to come.

Thank you very much.