



BURMA: Letter to Mr. President “Urgent & Immediate Actions to stop atrocities crimes in Chin State, Burma”



Mr. Joseph R. Biden, The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W
Washington, DC 20500.

30 October 2021

Dear Mr. President,

Re: Call for Urgent & Immediate Actions to stop atrocities crimes in Chin State, Burma

As you are aware, the military regime has been carrying out atrocities crimes across Burma since the illegitimate coup on 1 February 2021. Recently, they have increased in intensity, particularly in **Thantlang, Chin State**. Local people have reported burned down more than **160 houses** have been burned down in a single night¹.

This is happening as we, **GMSR (Global Myanmar Spring Revolution)** and **BMC (Blood Money Campaign)** together with **international Civil Society Organisations** and **international labour and student Unions** are staging a **Global Day of Action** in **40 cities, 20 countries**, on 30-31 October **against international oil and gas companies** who continue to fund **the Burmese military junta** despite ongoing and continuous human rights abuses within the country.

While we note and appreciate the action that the U.S. has taken for Burma so far, the U.S. must do more to protect the people of Myanmar from crimes against humanity committed by the Burmese military. Therefore, we appeal to you as a President of the United States to take action to stop the Burmese military regime carrying out further atrocities like those in Chin State, Burma and the killing of innocent people across the country.

Since the illegal coup on 1 February, Burmese citizens have staged nationwide protests and strikes. The Burmese military has terrorised the nation in a brutal crackdown. Over **1,200 civilians** have been killed and over **9,200 have been arbitrarily arrested**². Grotesque displays of violence, including forced disappearances and airstrikes on villages and towns, are used to instil fear in the population.

Oil and gas joint ventures which are vital revenue and source of foreign currency for the junta. There are direct links between the sales proceeds from oil and gas productions and the Burmese military expansion³. Burma's offshore gas sale proceeds alone are forecast to be **US 1.54 billion** for 2021-2022⁴. Under the military rule during 2008, the

¹ <https://globalnews.ca/news/8337567/160-homes-ablaze-myanmar/>

² <https://aappb.org/>

³ <https://www.pwyp.org.au/publications/who-benefits-from-myanmar-gas>

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<https://www.pwyp.org.au/publications/1162021shwe-gas-project-companies-must-stop-the-flow-of-wealth-to-the-myanmar-military>

spending on health and education for the people in Burma was only **1% of the GDP (\$0.70 per person per annum)**, one of the lowest budgets in the world whereas the sales proceeds from oil and gas productions were estimated to be **\$150 million monthly**⁵.

All international oil and gas companies are in joint venture agreements with Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE), a state-owned enterprise (SOE). MOGE has a long history of links with the military, and since the failed coup, is now under the junta's control. There are also past examples where the payments from the sales of oil and gas productions are used to pay for the Burmese military expansion⁶. The U.S. Treasury Department has stated that SOEs in the extractive sector fund the military, and yet your administration has not sanctioned MOGE.

Military generals, through their self-appointed State Administration Council (SAC) have seized full control of Burma's state-owned enterprises (SOEs) including Chevron's "business partner" the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE). Dealing with state-owned enterprises and financial institutions which are now fully controlled by the illegal junta, expose companies to (i) **project risks**, (ii) **financial risks**, (iii) **security risks**, and most importantly (iv) **complicity and human rights abuses**.

We appeal to you Mr. President and call on **the United States federal government** to act now to support the people in Burma given the Burmese's military's unrelenting violence. Immediately impose targeted economic sanctions on:

1. State-owned economic enterprises including – (a) **Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE)**, (b) **Myanmar Foreign Trade Bank (MFTB)**, and (c) **Myanmar Investment and Commercial Bank (MICB)**.
2. **The Central Bank of Myanmar.**
3. **All military coup leaders.**

Furthermore, we seek justice and accountability for the atrocity crimes committed against the Rohingya and other Burmese ethnic groups and the continuing atrocity crimes perpetrated since 1 February. The **United States federal government** must take **immediate, strong measures** to stem the growing human rights, humanitarian, and COVID-19 crisis in Burma, and **to ensure the restoration of a democratically elected civilian government and support Burma's transition to democracy**.

We further call on:

1. you to **support the Burma Act** which will showcase U.S. leadership in alleviating an increasingly dire situation and hold the Burmese military accountable for its illegal seizure of power;
2. to work to immediately impose **arms embargo** against the Burmese military; and
3. for **the United States federal government** to give recognition to the NUG as a legitimate government of the people of Burma.

Most respectfully,

Global Myanmar Spring Revolution and Blood Money Campaign on behalf of the people in **Burma**, the **Burmese diasporas communities**, **Civil Society Organisations** and **International Labour and Student Unions** and their **allies all over the world**.

⁵ Turnell, Sean. "Burma's Economy 2008: Current Situation and Prospects for Reform," Burma Economic Watch, Macquarie University, Australia, May 2008. See also, The Gathering Storm: Infectious Diseases and Human Rights in Burma, the University of California Berkeley and John Hopkins University, July 2007.

⁶ "Capitalizing on Conflict", EarthRights International. 2003