



**Statement from the Secretariat
of the
International Network of Engaged Buddhists
Calling for Solidarity and Preserving the Sanctity of Life in Myanmar**

29 July 2022

We are deeply shocked and saddened at the recent executions of four democratic activists Kyaw Min Yu, Phyo Zayar Thaw, Hla Myo Aung and Aung Thura Zaw in Insein Prison, Yangon, Myanmar. We offer our deepest condolences to the mourning families and solidarity to Myanmar people.

We are very concerned, as these executions have further implications to the 76 political prisoners, including 2 children, who were handed death sentences, as of 28 July 2022, according to the Assistance Association of Political Prisoners (AAPP). We urge the State Administration Council (SAC) lead by Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to refrain from violence, and instead to address the political disagreements with compassion and kindness.

Since the military coup d'état in February 2021, 11,859 democratic activists were detained, 2,142 civilians including many children were killed, according to the AAPP. As of 31 July, according to the United Nation's Office of Coordination for the Humanitarian Affairs - OCHA, over 866,000 people are being displaced while 21,000 civilian properties in towns and villages across the country were burned as a result of counter insurgency measures by the SAC. We condemn these acts of violence against innocent civilians perpetrated by the SAC and its security forces.

We are saddened to observe the situation of Rohingya refugees and other internally displaced people across Myanmar deteriorating, while the chance to return to their home is nowhere to be seen. While we commend the courage and resilience of Myanmar people, we are providing regular humanitarian support through our networks as much as possible.

Myanmar people are risking their lives to restore democracy, human rights and rule of Dhamma. We acknowledge the vital roles Sanghas and other religious leaders are playing in restoring democracy through peaceful means, and in providing lifesaving humanitarian aid although they are at risk of losing their very lives. Meanwhile, we ask prominent Sanghas and religious leaders to tactfully intervene with the conflicting parties, using their moral authority to stop the bloodbath and to restore peace and stability.

We have seen the extraordinary sacrifices being made by ordinary young people and women for the future they rightfully belong to. Although INEB firmly disagrees with using armed-resistance and violence as a means used by the democratic forces, we offer our empathetic understanding and compassion, fully acknowledging that Myanmar people have faced unspeakable violence wrought by one of the strongest, well equipped and most violent military forces in Southeast Asia, and that the conflict is unjustly asymmetric.

In the meantime, INEB humbly reminds Myanmar that the cycle of violence, killing and revenge never ends, bringing only more suffering to the society. Moreover, the impact will leave a very deep and destructive trauma that will require time and resources to heal. Therefore, the SAC and the democratic forces both have responsibility to stop the violence, regardless of whichever believable reasons each party can justify.

As a Kalyanamitra of Myanmar people, INEB strongly urges,

SAC to:

1. Immediately stop using violence in addressing political disagreements, including the inhumane four cuts counter-insurgency tactics.
2. Immediately and unconditionally release all the political prisoners, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, U Win Myint and other prominent politicians, activists and those who are under the death row.
3. Urgently convene an all-inclusive political dialogue, inviting the National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC), National Unity Government (NUG), Committee Representing Pyithu Hluttaw (CRPH), National League for Democracy (NLD) and other political parties, Ethnic Armed Organizations, democratic forces and other Civil Society Organizations, being mediated by the Sangha, religious leaders, UN and other relevant independent actors.

Myanmar people to: stay strong, keep your hope alive and refrain, as much as possible from resorting to violence and retaliation! We understand that your struggle is to protect your own lives, your community and your country.

NUCC, NUG and CRPH to: use every possible means including non-violence approaches and political dialogue to restore democracy and human rights.

“Victory creates hatred. Defeat creates suffering. The wise ones wish neither victory nor defeat.”

Phrea Maha Ghosananda

About us: International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) is an independent organization including members from more than 25 countries across Asia, Europe, North America and Australia. INEB's Core Mission is to confront and end suffering using analysis and action guided by Four Noble Truths taught by Gautama Buddha. INEB's core values are compassion, social justice, non-violence, co-existence, and Kalyanamitra - solidarity of spiritual friendship. INEB actively organizes international conferences and collaborations, engages__and stands with some of the most marginalized communities across the world to address structural and cultural taproots of suffering. INEB is being recognized for bringing unique Buddhist perspectives to the global debates and dialogues related to youth, education, child protection, gender, human rights, peacebuilding, agroecological farming and climate change issues.

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