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Oral Statement

UN Human Rights Council
29th special session: The human rights implications of the crisis in Myanmar

**HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS IN MYANMAR REQUIRES ROBUST
RESPONSE FROM INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY**

12 February 2021

Madam President,

Amnesty International welcomes the convening of this special session on the human rights implications of the current crisis in Myanmar.

Hundreds of thousands of people have taken to the streets to peacefully protest the military coup. The security forces have responded with rubber bullets, tear gas, water cannons¹ and in at least one case live rounds of ammunition and potentially lethal force. In Nay Pyi Taw, one young woman was shot in the head, left fighting for her life.² Over 220 people have been arbitrarily detained by the Military authorities. Many human rights defenders, journalists, activists, and members of political parties are in hiding.

The Military continues to repress criticism and dissent. Shutting down and slowing the internet is a dangerous move in the context of a volatile coup and a pandemic, and a direct violation of the rights of people across the country to access information and exercise freedom of expression. We are deeply concerned about the proposed Cyber Security Law, which would grant sweeping censorship and surveillance powers to the military and have dire consequences for the ability of civil society to engage with the international community and United Nations.

We are alarmed by the potential for further violence and serious human rights violations. Not long ago, the International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar (IFFMM) presented compelling

¹ Amnesty International, Myanmar: Several injured as security forces violently quash peaceful protests 9 February 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/02/myanmar-several-injured-as-security-forces-violently-quash-peaceful-protests/>.

² Amnesty International, Myanmar: Evidence police deployed sub-machine guns against peaceful protesters, despite denials, 11 February 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/02/myanmar-evidence-police-machine-guns-protesters/>.

evidence to this Council that the Military had committed grave crimes under international law, including crimes against humanity, war crimes and possibly genocide.³

We are gravely concerned for ethnic and religious minorities across the country, who have historically been targeted by the Military, including the 600,000 Rohingya, who continue to be denied their rights to citizenship and freedom of movement in Rakhine state and those who wish to return home; and Rakhine, Chin, Shan, Karen, Kachin and other minorities living in conflict-affected areas.

Full, sustained, and unfettered access for humanitarian actors to over 300,000 displaced people across the country, and other at-risk populations is now urgent.

Madam President,

This is a dangerous and volatile situation, and the international community – including this Council and the Security Council – must do all it can to protect the people of Myanmar from harm, to halt and prevent further violations of their rights, and to ensure accountability for crimes under international law.

We urge all states to support the resolution under consideration today, and pledge to take further, more robust, action at the upcoming session should the situation further deteriorate, and the authorities continue to refuse access to the Special Rapporteur, the High Commissioner, and to humanitarian actors.

Thank you, Madam President.

³ Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar (UN FFM), *Report of the detailed findings of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar*, UN Doc: A/HRC/39/CRP.2, 17 September 2018..