



16 March 2015
Index: ASA 16/1212/2015

UN Human Rights Council
Twenty-eighth session, 2-27 March 2015

Item 4: Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar

Mr. President,

Amnesty International has submitted two written statements on Myanmar to this Council's session, one of which focuses on extractive industries.¹

Ms. Lee, we welcome your report and share your concerns with regard to the human rights situation in the country, which remains serious.

The following incidents that took place around the Monywa copper mining project, demonstrate the unwillingness of the government of Myanmar to monitor and regulate companies and to provide remedies to people who have experienced severe human rights abuses by companies and officials.

On 22 December 2014, Khin Win was killed by shots fired by Myanmar police while villagers tried to stop Myanmar Wanbao, the mine operator, from bulldozing crops and fencing farm lands for the Letpadaung mine.

Naw Ohn Hla, Sein Htwe, Nay Myo Zin, Tin Htut Paing, San San Win, Mya Nyunt, and Thant Zin, were charged with a series of offences on 30 December 2014 for protesting against the death of Khin Win. They are currently in detention and face up to nine years' imprisonment.

¹ *Myanmar: Human rights reforms under threat* (Index: ASA 16/010/2015). This statement provides an overview of concerns and recommendations on the serious human rights situation in the country. It stresses that Myanmar's backsliding on human rights reforms – only a few months before general elections – underscores the necessity for the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) to adopt a strong resolution on the situation of human rights on the country and to extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa16/0010/2015/en/>

Myanmar: Human Rights Council should address the need for stronger safeguards to ensure business respects human rights (Index: ASA 16/011/2015). This statement is one of the two statements we have submitted on Myanmar to HRC28 and is based on the recently published report Amnesty International, *Open for business? Corporate crime and abuses at Myanmar copper mine*.

Foreign investment in the country has been increasing since 2012, after political and economic reforms by the Myanmar government led Western States to ease sanctions that had previously been imposed on the country. In this statement we note how while such investment can improve the lives of the people of Myanmar, Amnesty International and other civil society groups have major concerns that basic legal safeguards are not yet in place to ensure that investment projects – especially large extractive projects – do not infringe on the human rights of persons living in communities in the vicinity. <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA16/0011/2015/en>

No one has been held accountable for the police's use of white phosphorus munitions on 29 November 2012 against monks and villagers protesting peacefully against the Letpadaung mine.

People from 29 villages are still at risk of forced eviction while many farmers who were forcibly evicted between 1996 and December 2014 for the Monywa project are still waiting for remedies. Myanmar lacks adequate safeguards to protect people against forced evictions and environmental damage from extractive projects.

Ms. Lee, do you have plans to examine corporate human rights abuses and the government's failure to adopt safeguards to ensure extractive and other large projects do not infringe on human rights?

Mr. President,

Amnesty International urges the Human Rights Council to:

- raise concerns over the abuses at the Monywa copper mining project and call for all victims to have access to effective remedies;
- urge the Myanmar government to enact and enforce legislation prohibiting forced evictions and strengthening environmental safeguards, in particular environmental quality standards and a comprehensive environmental impact assessment framework; and
- extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar.

Thank you Mr. President.