



**United  
Nations**

**Secretary-  
General**

**Nay Pyi Taw**

**17 August 2022**

## **Note to Correspondents: Statement by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Myanmar, Noeleen Heyzer**

**In first meeting in Nay Pyi Taw, Special Envoy Heyzer states steps State Administration Council must take to de-escalate conflict and reduce suffering of Myanmar people**

NAY PYI TAW, 17 August 2022 – Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar Noeleen Heyzer met with State Administration Council (SAC) Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in Nay Pyi Taw today, in her first visit to Myanmar as Special Envoy, to communicate in person the pragmatic steps to de-escalate the violence, address the multidimensional crisis and advance unfettered humanitarian assistance free of discrimination to all people in need.

The Special Envoy's meeting with the Senior General and his senior advisers is part of broader efforts by the United Nations to urgently support an effective and peaceful Myanmar-led political pathway to return to civilian rule based on the will and the needs of the people. The Special Envoy's mandate as an impartial actor is to engage with all stakeholders in Myanmar, the region and globally consistent with the principles of the United Nations. The Special Envoy's visit follows her extensive consultations with actors from across the political spectrum, civil society and as communities affected by the conflict.

"The United Nations Secretary-General is extremely concerned about the humanitarian, security, economic and political crisis," Special Envoy Heyzer said. "My visit is to convey the concern of the United Nations and propose concrete steps needed to reduce the conflict and suffering of the people. UN engagement does not in any way confer legitimacy. The people of Myanmar have the right to democracy and self-determination free from fear and want, which will only be possible by the good will and efforts of all stakeholders in an inclusive process." She added that the United Nations was focused on providing support to women in Myanmar, the protection and empowerment of whom is key to achieving peace and any economic and social transformation.

The Special Envoy stated that any progress in Myanmar depended on an end to the violence and visible and significant improvements in the lives of people on the ground. Following the recent death sentences carried out against pro-democracy activists that the United Nations has strongly condemned, the Special Envoy directly urged the Senior General to impose a moratorium on all future executions. She also

reiterated the United Nations Secretary-General's call for the release of all political prisoners.

"I urged the SAC to implement the Secretary-General's appeal," the Special Envoy said. "I also conveyed a specific request from the Australian Government that has asked for the release of Australian economist Sean Turnell. Personally, I call for the release of all children who are being detained in prisons or other facilities."

The Special Envoy amplified the latest call from the Security Council for an immediate cessation of all forms of violence, full respect for human rights and the rule of law, and full, safe and unfettered humanitarian access to all those in need. She called for immediate and specific de-escalation steps including ending aerial bombing and the burning of civilian houses and infrastructure.

The Special Envoy stated her deep concern about civilian displacement across communities and the need for greater space for humanitarian actors to reach those affected with lifesaving support. She underlined that all parties must facilitate the unimpeded and immediate delivery of humanitarian assistance to all people in need without discrimination and free from instrumentalization. She highlighted the importance of delivery through all channels and raised the issue of an inclusive forum for humanitarian engagement, which several key ethnic armed organizations and other actors have asked her to establish, focusing on the emergency that is a direct result of the political crisis.

The Special Envoy raised her request for a meeting with State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi following her latest sentencing. "I'm deeply concerned about Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's health and well-being in her current situation, and request that she can return home soon," Special Envoy Heyzer said. "I want to have an opportunity to meet with her as soon as possible, both because I care about her personally and I believe she is a critical stakeholder for my dialogue with all parties concerned."

Ahead of her mission to Bangladesh later this month, the Special Envoy told the Senior General she plans to consult with the Government and visit the refugee camps in Cox's Bazaar that host about 1 million Rohingya and other forcibly displaced people. She highlighted Myanmar's responsibility for conducive conditions for the voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable return of refugees as well as to ensure that the Rohingya's rights and well-being are integral to the future of a peaceful and prosperous Myanmar.

The Special Envoy presented the Senior General with a copy of the UN Charter, on which the ASEAN Charter is based, and emphasized that sovereignty must come with development for all, leaving no one behind, and the promise that every individual in every country has an equal claim to dignity, respect and freedom from want or fear. The UN Charter is the foundation of the rule-based world order, the Special Envoy told the Senior General, adding that these norms and standards must be met if peace and stability are to be achieved.

The Special Envoy emphasized the strong commitment of the United Nations to continue making all

efforts to provide humanitarian assistance and community-based resilience support and protection services to people in need, guided by the internationally recognized principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence, and asked the Senior General to respect and support these efforts. She highlighted her continued resolve to act in a bridging role and leverage her convening power to address the protection needs and suffering of the most vulnerable and to end the conflict.

Going forward, the Special Envoy and the Senior General agreed to engage in frank conversations, focusing on the need for inclusive solutions to a peaceful and democratic Myanmar, reflective of the will of the people.

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