

6 October 2025

To:

H.E. Shigeru Ishiba, Prime Minister of Japan

H.E. Takeshi Iwaya, Foreign Minister of Japan

Request Letter: The Japanese government should lead international efforts to prevent the junta's sham election and strengthen its support for Myanmar people's struggle to establish a genuine federal democracy

Your Excellencies,

We, the undersigned Myanmar, Japanese, regional and international civil society organizations, welcome the Foreign Minister's [statement](#) of 1 August 2025 on Myanmar, and urge the Japanese government to actively collaborate closely with other democratic nations to ensure the junta's sham election does not occur and to robustly support the Myanmar people's ongoing efforts to build genuine federal democracy. For nearly five years, the people of Myanmar have shown immeasurable courage and sacrifice to resist the military's tyranny. In this crucial moment for Myanmar, it is vital to denounce the Myanmar military junta's attempts to manufacture false legitimacy through a sham election.

We welcome the Foreign Minister's statement expressing grave concern regarding the worsening crisis in Myanmar and the Myanmar military junta's plan to hold a so-called election in December 2025. We appreciate Japan's recognition that any election conducted under current conditions—without the release of political prisoners and continuing violence against civilians, particularly airstrikes—“could only provoke further strong backlash from the people of Myanmar and make a peaceful resolution more difficult.”

This clear statement from Japan sends an important message to the military junta that the international community will not acquiesce, endorse, or be complicit in accepting its fabricated legitimacy. It is well established that the junta has neither the legal right nor the political legitimacy necessary to conduct any election in Myanmar. Furthermore, the junta does not have effective territorial and administrative control over many areas, and therefore cannot hold elections there.

The Foreign Minister's statement also shows the people of Myanmar that Japan is clearly responding to their voices, as the people have repeatedly called for the unequivocal rejection of the junta's sham election by the international community. The junta's lifting of the state of emergency is not a genuine step toward progress, but rather a move to pave the way for its sham election. Despite the formal lifting of the state of emergency, the junta has extended martial law in 63 townships and significantly escalated airstrikes and artillery shelling in various areas where it has lost effective control to the democratic resistance movement. These intensified attacks aim to further devastate civilian populations—who have suffered severe junta attacks, particularly since the earthquake in

March—as well as to suppress resistance forces ahead of the sham election. Likewise, the junta’s corresponding name change from “State Administration Council” to “State Security and Peace Commission” is a calculated attempt intended to disguise the military junta as a civilian institution, circumvent sanctions and deceive the international community. Moreover, the election is anchored in the military-drafted 2008 Constitution—a pseudo “democratic” framework that has long been used by the military to oppress and dominate Myanmar’s politics, which has been firmly rejected by those striving for federal democracy. Placing hope in the military’s sincerity—as expressed in your statement—will not lead to meaningful change.

The Japanese government has had a longstanding relationship with ASEAN and its member states. We welcome Japan’s alignment with [ASEAN’s principled position](#) that the junta’s sham election is not a solution and will only prolong Myanmar’s crisis and deepen the suffering of its people. By reinforcing this unequivocal consensus and working with democratic countries to further this consensus, Japan must take a leadership role within the wider international community to reject the junta’s attempts to manufacture legitimacy as it has continued to commit atrocity crimes against Myanmar’s people with complete impunity.

In the coming months, we expect that Japan will continue to match its strong words with sustained and principled action. To this end, we urge Japan to:

- Actively and closely collaborate with ASEAN and democratic nations to prevent the junta’s sham elections from taking place and to decisively act to support the Myanmar people’s ongoing efforts to establish a genuine federal democracy;
- Take concrete actions to strengthen the international community’s opposition to the junta’s sham election, curb the junta’s capacity to commit atrocity crimes against the Myanmar people, and ensure humanitarian assistance reaches the most vulnerable communities through border-based channels;
- Immediately cease all engagements with and support to the military junta, and instead engage formally and meaningfully with Myanmar’s democratic stakeholders and legitimate representatives in support of the people’s federal democracy efforts.

While the Japanese government’s expression of concern regarding the junta’s sham election plan is a step in the right direction, we remain deeply concerned that the junta may be benefiting from the Japanese government’s other engagements including the provision of Official Development Assistance (ODA) and public funds. The receipt of these funds could further enable the junta’s sham election and its atrocities against the people. We therefore reiterate the [calls](#) of civil society organizations urging the Japanese government to suspend all ongoing yen loan projects.

Moral leadership and principled diplomacy from Japan will be critical in preventing the illegal junta from advancing its sham election that would only deepen violence and instability in Myanmar and the region.

Today, the people of Myanmar are making immeasurable efforts and sacrifices to build a genuine federal democracy and sustainable peace from the ground up. As such, we sincerely appreciate Japan’s recognition of the Myanmar people’s democratic aspirations in the face of the junta’s relentless violence against them. Going forward, we trust that Japan will sustain a principled approach and firm commitment to democracy, human rights, and peace in Myanmar by heeding the

Myanmar people's calls and supporting their efforts to end military tyranny and establish a genuine federal democracy.

Yours sincerely,

The Undersigned:

ayus:Network of Buddhists Volunteers on International Cooperation
Pacific Asia Resource Center (PARC)
Friends of the Earth Japan
Japan International Volunteer Center (JVC)
Network Against Japan Arms Trade (NAJAT)
Mekong Watch
Progressive Voice

Endorsing Organizations (172 Organizations):

Addition of one organization on October 7, 2025 (173 Organizations):

8888 Generation (New Zealand)
A New Burma (ANB)
Action Committee for Democracy Development (ACDD)
Africa Japan Forum
All Burma Democratic Front in New Zealand
Alternative People's Linkage in Asia (APLA)
ALTSEAN-Burma
Anti Dictatorship in Burma - DMVPA Area
Anti-junta Forces Coordination Committee – Mandalay
Anti-Poverty Network
Asia-Pacific Human Rights Information Center (HURIGHTS OSAKA)
Asian Cultural Forum on Development (ACFOD)
Asian Health Institute (AHI)
ASIAN PEOPLE'S FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY
Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP)
Association of Human Rights Defenders and Promoters (HRDP)
Association of Spring Rainbow (ASR)
Association Suisse-Birmanie (ASB)
Athan – Freedom of Expression Activist Organization
Auckland Kachin Community NZ
Auckland Zomi Community
Aung San Suu Kyi Park Norway
Australia Karen Organization (AKO)
Ayeyarwaddy West Development Organisation (AWDO), Magway
Ayeyarwaddy West Development Organisation (AWDO), Nagphe
Barefoot Gen Fan Club
Blood Money Campaign (BMC)

Burma Action Ireland
Burma Canadian Network
Burma Human Rights Network (BHRN)
Burmese Community Group (Manawatu, NZ)
Burmese Relief Center Japan
Burmese Rohingya Organisation UK (BROUK)
Burmese Rohingya Welfare Organisation (New Zealand)
Chin Community in Norway
Chin Community of Auckland
Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO)
CRPH Support Group, Norway and members organizations
Defend Myanmar Democracy (DMD)
Democracy Youth of Myanmar
Democratic Party for a New Society, Norway
Earth Tree
Educational Initiatives Prague
Equality Myanmar (EQMM)
European Karen Network (EKN)
Federal Corner
Federal Myanmar Benevolence Group (New Zealand)
Federation of Workers' Union of the Burmese Citizen in Japan
Free Burma Campaign (South Africa) (FBC(SA))
Fukuoka NGO forum on ADB
General Strike Committee of Nationalities – GSCN
Generation Wave (GW)
Heiwa Wo Tsukuridasu Shyukyosha net
Human Rights Educators Network (HREN)
Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM)
Human Rights Now
International Association Myanmar-Switzerland (IAMS)
International Karen Organization (IKO)
Japan Campaign to Ban Landmines
Japan Catholic Council for Justice and Peace
Japan Center for a Sustainable Environment and Society (JACSES)
Japan Overseas Christian Medical Cooperative Service
Japan Tropical Forest Action Network (JATAN)
Justice & Equality Focus (JEF)
Justice For Myanmar (JFM)
Justice Movement for Community – Innlay
K'cho Ethnic Association (Europe)
Kachin Association Norway
Kachin Human Rights Watch
Kachin Women's Association Thailand (KWAT)
Karen Community Association – UK (KCA-UK)
Karen Community in Norway
Karen Community of Canada (KCC)

Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG)
Karen Organization of America (KOA)
Karen Peace Support Network (KPSN)
Karen Swedish Community (KSC)
Karen Women's Organization (KWO)
Karenni Human Rights Group
Karenni National Women's Organization (KNWO)
Karenni Society New Zealand
Kayan Rescue Committee (KRC)
Keng Tung Youth
Kenpo wo Ikasu-kai
kurume overseas volunteer circle
Kyae Lak Myay
Kyauktada Strike Committee (KSC)
Let's Help Each Other (LHEO)
Magway Region Human Rights Network (MHRN)
MATA Sagaing Region
Meeting to Hear the Appeals of Myanmar (Burma) Citizens
Metta Campaign Mandalay
Music Dream Creation
Muslim Youth Network
Myanmar Accountability Project (MAP)
Myanmar Anti-military Coup Movement in New Zealand
Myanmar Campaign Network
Myanmar Catholic Community In Norway
Myanmar Community Group Christchurch New Zealand
Myanmar Community Group Dunedin New Zealand
Myanmar Community in Norway
Myanmar Emergency Fund-Canada
Myanmar Engineers - New Zealand
Myanmar Gonye (New Zealand)
Myanmar Hindu Union
Myanmar International Assistance Organization
Myanmar People Alliance (Shan State)
Myanmar Students' Union in New Zealand
myannma-monndaiwokanngaerukai
MyaYar Knowledge Tree
NAGOYA NGO CENTER
Nelson Myanmar Community Group New Zealand
Network for Human Rights Documentation - Burma (ND-Burma)
New Myanmar Foundation (NMF)
New Zealand Campaign for Myanmar
New Zealand Doctors for NUG
New Zealand Karen Association
New Zealand Zo Community Inc.
NIPPONZAN MYOHOJI

NLD Organization Committee (International) Norway
Norway Matu Community
Norway Rvwang Community
Nyan Lynn Thit Analytica (NLTA)
Olive Organization
Overseas Mon Association (New Zealand)
Political Prisoners Network Myanmar – PPNM
Progressive Muslim Youth Association – PMYA
Pwintphyu Development Organisation (PDO)
Pyithu Gonye (New Zealand)
Rohingya Community in Norway
Rohingya Ma'iyafu'inor Collaborative Network (RMCN)
Rvwang Community Association New Zealand
Save Myanmar - USA
Save Myanmar Fundraising Group (New Zealand)
Services for the Health in Asian and African Regions (SHARE)
Shan Community (New Zealand)
Shan MATA
Shiminnohiroba kenpounokai
Sisters 2 Sisters
Sitt Nyein Pann Foundation
Southern Initiatives (SI)
Southern Youth Development Organization (SYDO)
Sujata Sisters Group (NZ)
Ta'ang Students and Youth Union (TSYU)
Ta'ang Women's Organization (TWO)
Terra Renaissance
Thai Action Committee for Democracy in Burma (TACDB)
The Ladies Organization
Thint Myat Lo Thu Myar Organization
U.S. Campaign for Burma
Union of Karenni State Youth – UKSY
Volunteers in Myanmar
WE21JAPAN
Women Advocacy Coalition – Myanmar (WAC-M)
Women Lead Resource Center
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB, Femin
Yain Nweh Par (Rainbow Win The Storm - RIS)
Yangon Deaf Group
Youth Empowerment
Youth for Democratization of Myanmar (UDM)
Zomi Christian Fellowship of Norway
Zomi Community Norway
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အညာလွင်ပြင်ရပ်ဝန်း

The Takaki Fund for Citizen Science

and 6 other organizations

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Notes:

1. “The Situation in Myanmar Following the Lifting of the State of Emergency” (Statement by Foreign Minister IWAYA Takeshi), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (August 1, 2025) https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/pressite_000001_01507.html
2. “Open letter: Myanmar civil society welcomes Japan’s rejection of junta’s sham election, urges further principled action”, six Myanmar and Japanese civil society organizations (September 9, 2025) http://www.mekongwatch.org/PDF/rq_20250901_Eng.pdf
3. “Press Statement: ASEAN’s Denouncement of the Junta’s Sham Election and Admission of Timor-Leste Are Principled, Critical Steps Forward”, 237 Civil Society Organizations (July 31, 2025) <https://progressivevoicemyanmar.org/2025/07/31/press-statement-aseans-denouncement-of-the-juntas-sham-election-and-admission-of-timor-leste-are-principled-critical-steps-forward/>
4. “Statement calling on the Japanese government to stop ODA and publicly-funded projects benefiting the Myanmar military”, six Myanmar and Japanese civil society organizations, endorsed by 85 organizations (December 1, 2023) http://www.mekongwatch.org/PDF/rq_20231201.pdf