

**PRESS RELEASE: “Turn your eye to what is happening in Myanmar,” says former ASEAN human rights reps**  
**30 April 2024**

The former representatives of the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) has called upon the UN, ASEAN, and key governments to take immediate and concrete measures in resolving the ongoing crisis in Myanmar.

“We strongly condemn the ongoing human rights catastrophe in Myanmar. Attacks against schools, churches, and especially children are a grave violation of children’s rights and international humanitarian law,” said the former ACWC representatives in their recent statement last April 30.

Myanmar is still marred by intensified conflict between the military and ethnic armed groups, leaving thousands of civilians killed, seriously injured, detained and displaced from their homes and communities. Just recently, an airstrike on a school in Myanmar’s Karenni state killed four children and injured at least 15 others.<sup>1</sup> Another airstrike by the military also killed civilians, including nine children, as they gathered to attend church last January.<sup>2</sup> The attacks on civilians show no signs of stopping.

“The international community must turn its eye to what is happening in Myanmar. The violence and horrendous attacks on civilians clearly violate the principles in the ASEAN Charter to which Myanmar is a signatory including the adherence to the rule of law, good governance, and respect for and protection of human rights,” said the former ACWC representatives.

As of February 2024, more than 2.7 million people have been internally displaced in Myanmar and are living in unwarranted conditions. More than 18.6 million people, including six million children, are in need of humanitarian aid in 2024 more than 18 times the number before the military takeover in 2021.<sup>3</sup> As a result, the number of children living in poverty has doubled from 4.7 million in 2017 to 9.9 million in 2022.

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<sup>1</sup> The Guardian. 2024. Myanmar: airstrike on school killed four children, witnesses say.

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2024/feb/07/myanmar-military-airstrike-karenni-state-school-daw-si-ei-village>

<sup>2</sup> Amnesty International. 2024. Military air strikes that killed 17 civilians ‘must be investigated as war crimes.’

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/02/myanmar-military-air-strikes-that-killed-17-civilians-must-be-investigated-as-war-crimes/>

<sup>3</sup> UNICEF. 2024. UNICEF Myanmar Humanitarian Situation Report No. 1.

<https://www.unicef.org/myanmar/reports/unicef-myanmar-humanitarian-situation-report-no-1>

“We reiterate the call to hold the Myanmar military accountable for the violence in Myanmar, to comply with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), to facilitate continuous dialogue among all concerned parties, and ultimately save and protect the children at all costs,” said the representatives.

Read the full statement here: <https://www.crcasia.org/statement-of-former-representatives-of-the-asean-commission-on-the-promotion-and-protection-of-the-rights-of-women-and-children-acwc-on-the-child-rights-situation-in-myanmar/>

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