



**Update on the Human Rights Situation in Myanmar**  
**Overview of developments in 2024**

**OHCHR Myanmar Team**

## Key highlights

- **2024 was the deadliest year for civilians as the military ramped up violence amid extensive territorial losses;**
- **At least 6,092 civilians verified as killed since the coup, 28,051 arrested, over 3.5 million displaced, and 20 million in need of humanitarian assistance;**
- **Indiscriminate and targeted retaliatory airstrikes were the key cause of civilian deaths;**
- **Risks of continuation of the 2017 atrocities against Rohingya cause grave concerns;**
- **Forced recruitment forces youth across the country to flee or go into hiding;**
- **Failing economy and military-imposed restrictions caused hardships in all spheres of life, leading to profound protection concerns, including imminent risks of famine in Rakhine;**
- **ICC Prosecutor applied for issuance of an arrest warrant against Min Aung Hlaing concerning alleged deportation and persecution committed against Rohingya.**

## I. Introduction

In 2024, the military-created human rights crisis imposed unprecedented sufferings on the people in Myanmar, as the military's attacks against civilians, denial of humanitarian aid, and systematic violations of human rights further expanded in scope and intensity. Following the Three Brotherhood Alliance's (3BA)<sup>1</sup> launching of Operation 1027 in October 2023, and in the wake of major losses on the ground, military responses have been brutal and without any consideration for protection of civilians. Anti-military armed groups made significant advancements, taking over, for the first time in history, two Regional Commands in Shan and Rakhine, the near entirety of Rakhine, three airports, as well control of border crossing points with Bangladesh, almost all with China, and with Thailand and India.

Following the capture of outposts, bases, and regional headquarters, the ability of anti-military armed groups to implement effective operations and carry out targeted attacks against strategic military infrastructure increased, due to the availability of more sophisticated weapons. This resulted in anti-military armed groups controlling large swathes of territories, with the National Unity Government (NUG) claiming that Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs) and People's Defense Forces (PDFs) fully controlled 48 townships.<sup>2</sup> On the other side, provisional results of the military-led nationwide census suggested a limited territorial control, as they collected data in full in 145 townships of the total 330, partially collected in 127, and lacked access to 58.

Throughout the reporting period, the military responded to losses with indiscriminate attacks in civilian populated areas, as well as airstrikes and artillery shelling targeting civilians, arbitrary arrests and prosecutions, and mass displacement. UN figures<sup>3</sup> reported that over 3.5 million people have been displaced, a third of which are children, although data from civil society organizations suggest that the overall number may be more than double. Bago, Kachin, Kayin, Mandalay, Rakhine, Sagaing, and Tanintharyi were the most affected areas, bringing the total number of civilians in need of humanitarian assistance to 20 million.

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<sup>1</sup> The Three Brotherhood Alliance is composed of the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, the Ta'ang National Liberation Army, and the Arakan Army.

<sup>2</sup> <https://eng.mizzima.com/2025/01/07/18046>

<sup>3</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/myanmar-humanitarian-update-no-43-reflecting-2024-and-preparing-2025>

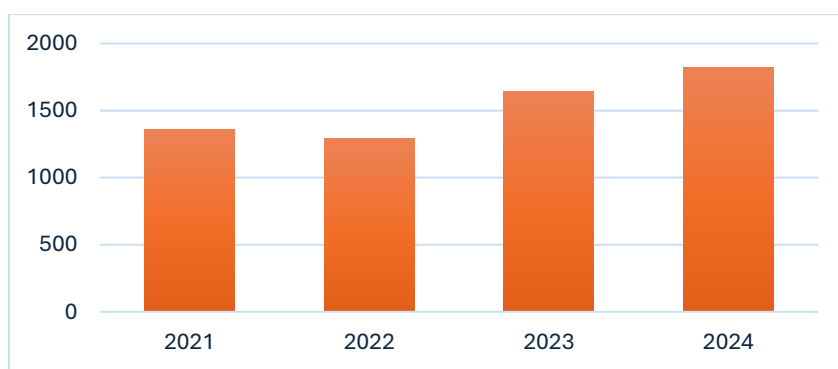
A key human rights concern of 2024 and driver of displacement was the unilateral implementation by the military of the “2010 People’s Military Service Law” that resulted in thousands of individuals being conscripted and forcibly recruited, including members of the Rohingya community. This caused widespread fear and led to tens of thousands of youths to go into hiding or flee abroad creating additional protection concerns due to uncertain legal statuses in foreign countries. It also aggravated the economic crisis, as these military actions targeting people aged between 18 and 35 directly affected the remaining workforce.

Finally, the military’s disregard for the population was particularly evident in relation to the denial of humanitarian access to assist those impacted by violence and natural disasters. In September, Typhoon Yagi, massive floods, landslides, and heatwaves further affected the population and exacerbated protection concerns and an already dire humanitarian situation. These natural hazards contributed to widespread displacement, destruction of agricultural fields, shortages of food, clean water, and medicine, and the spread of diseases such as acute watery diarrhoea and cholera. Typhoon Yagi is estimated to have further displaced and pushed about one million people into acute food insecurity. Consistent with its response to Cyclone Mocha in 2023, the military resorted to communication blackouts and the imposition of movement restrictions through checkpoints and roadblocks to prevent the distribution of aid, presumably in retaliation for the perceived support provided to anti-military armed groups.

## II. Protection of Civilians

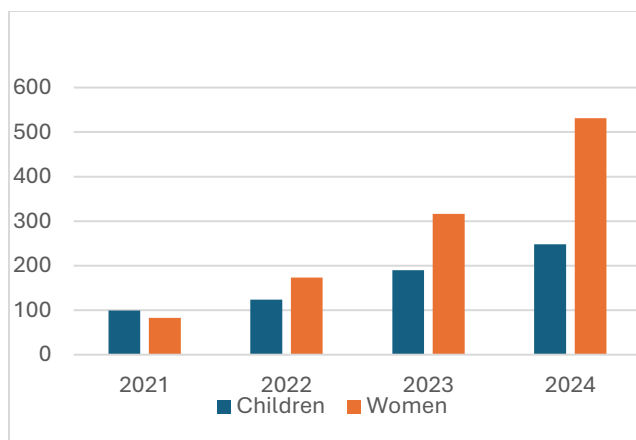
Due to the military’s retaliatory attacks following losses on the battlefield, 2024 was the worst year for civilians since the coup, with increases in casualties recorded in every single sphere. According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), since the coup a total of 6,092 civilians individuals were killed at the hands of the military,<sup>4</sup> including 1,103 women and 695 children. In 2024, at least 1,824 civilians were killed, including 531 women and 248 children. These figures represent a significant increase compared to the previous peak of 1,639 verified deaths in 2023, confirming that without an immediate end to military violence civilian casualties would continue to rise and the overall situation for civilians inevitably continue to deteriorate.

*Table 1: Total number of verified civilian deaths at the hands of the military by year*



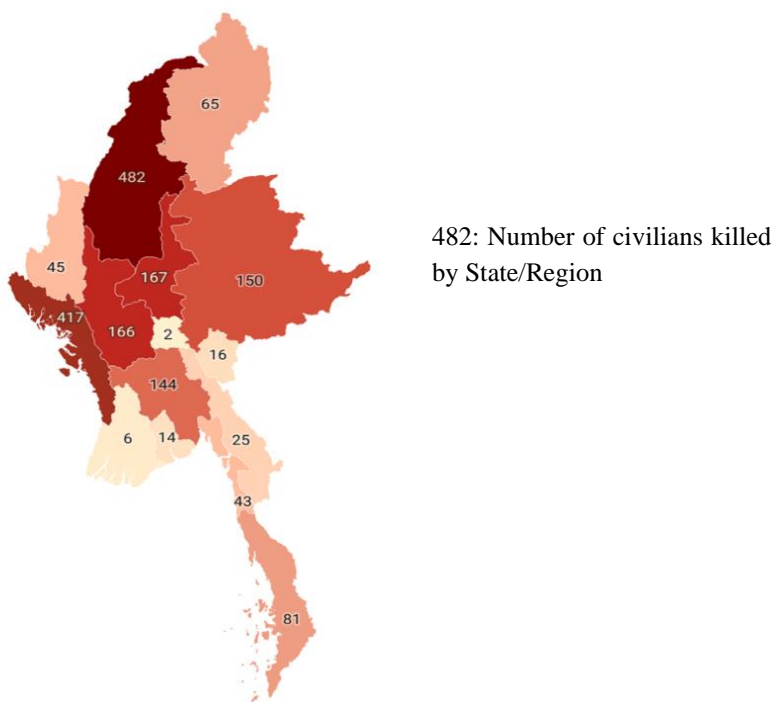
*Table 2: Total number of verified deaths of women and children by year*

<sup>4</sup> Due to military-imposed communication restrictions and other challenges, the figures represent a likely underestimation of the overall impact of the coup and ensuing violence. AAPP indicates that over 2,000 deaths are currently under investigation.



While civilians across the country suffered from military violence, for the fourth consecutive year Sagaing was the most affected area, marking the highest verified figures for civilian deaths with at least 482. In a shift from 2023 and as a consequence of the resumption of hostilities in November 2023, Rakhine recorded the second highest verified figures for deaths with at least 416 people killed, corroborating findings of significant escalation when compared with the 49 killed in 2023.<sup>5</sup> Combined, Sagaing and Rakhine amounted to nearly half of the total civilian casualties since the coup. However, increases in civilian deaths were verified in several other geographical areas. Among the most concerning, Shan State rose from 95 deaths in 2023 to 150 in 2024; Mandalay almost doubled the 98 deaths of 2023 with the 167 of 2024; Magway Region, moving from 105 deaths in 2023 to 161 in 2024.

*Table 3: Verified deaths by State and Region in 2024*

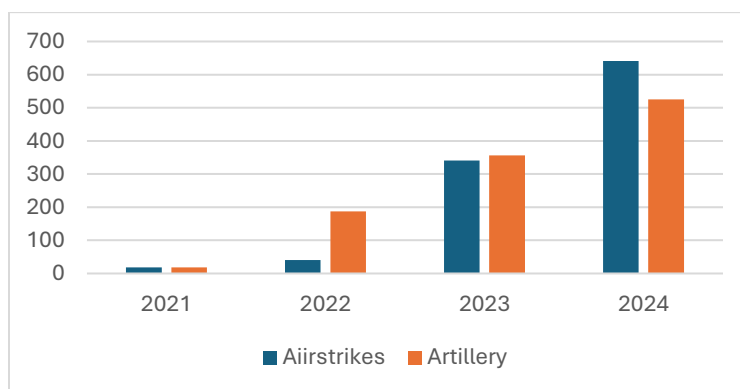


<sup>5</sup> Figures of casualties in Rakhine are likely an underestimation of actual cases. According to the Protection Cluster, since 13 November 2023, at least 1,019 civilians are believed to have been killed.

Consistent with previous year, airstrikes and artillery shelling remained the main reasons for civilian deaths. Although likely representing a fraction of the actual cases, the number of civilians verified as killed by airstrikes nearly doubled in 2024, escalating from the 341 of 2023 to the 641 of 2024. Similarly, deaths by artillery shelling reached 525 in 2024, marking a substantial increase over the 356 of 2023. Among the numerous incidents with civilian casualties, OHCHR’s Myanmar Team verified that in January 17 individuals, including nine children and two women, were killed following a military airstrike on a church during a Sunday celebration in Tamu Township, Sagaing; in February, the military bombed two schools in the villages of Loi Nan Hpa and Daw Si Ei in Demoso, Kayah State, killing at least four students, three teachers, and injuring over 30 people; every subsequent month had similar incidents claiming the lives of hundreds of civilians, including during the last day of the year when the military bombed a Hindu temple in Phyu Township, Bago, killing seven.

Unexploded ordnance (UXOs) from airstrikes and artillery shelling augmented the already grave protection risks represented by landmines. UNICEF recorded 889 casualties in 2024, including 130 killed - of whom 47 were children and 22 women - and 759 wounded in the first nine months.<sup>6</sup> Once final data for the year becomes available, the expectation is that the 1,052 UXO and mine-related casualties suffered in 2023 will be superseded.

*Table 4: Verified deaths by airstrikes and artillery shelling by year*

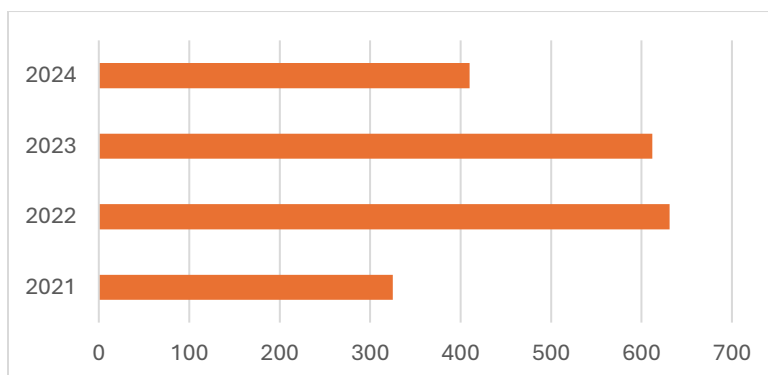


Another key human rights concern linked to tactics used by the military is that of deaths of individuals while in custody. At the end of 2024, credible sources verified 1,979 deaths in detention since the coup, out of which 410, including 36 women and 13 children, were recorded in 2024, equivalent to more than one person every day. Analysis of testimonies and data indicate that most deaths occurred in the form of summary executions during ground operations, or as a result of torture, and denial or inadequate access to healthcare. Of the 410 people, 58 died in formal places of detention, including police stations, military interrogation centers, and prisons. In many cases, families were reportedly unable to retrieve bodies of those deceased in a likely attempt to conceal or destroy evidence. Although indicative of the complete disregard by the military of any principle of human rights, these figures represent a decrease when compared to the 612 of 2023 and 631 of 2022. A key reason for this change is believed to relate to the evolution of conflict

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/myanmar/reports/myanmar-landmineerw-incidents-information-32>

dynamics following “Operation 1027”, with the military having to reduce village raids due to increasing challenges in protecting its own movements. This change is likely to have contributed to this decrease.

*Table 5: Deaths in custody by year*



A persistent component in any operation by the military, whether on the battlefield or not, was the attempt at instilling fear in the civilian population in order to discourage opposing military rules. In particular, the retaliatory nature of attacks against civilians across the country for their perceived support to anti-military armed groups stood out as a constant in efforts to control, intimidate and punish the population. Acts of extreme brutality, including beheadings, burnings, mutilations, executions, torture, the use of human shields and indiscriminate aerial bombing campaigns, were carried out against civilians with absolute impunity. In many townships, soldiers attacked villages in the absence of active fighting, likely in retaliation for anti-military armed group advances in other areas. Deliberate targeting of civilian infrastructure, schools, places of worship, healthcare facilities, IDP camps and public gatherings led to mass civilian casualties and displacement, and the interruption of essential services such as education and healthcare.

In a particularly gruesome incident in October, the military conducted at least 13 airstrikes, burned up to 1,000 houses and killed at least 25 civilians across several villages in Budalin Township, Sagaing in one day. On 17 October in Si Par village, military troops beheaded, dismembered, sexually violated, and burned six civilians, before impaling several bodies on fences. Similarly in May, in Sittwe, Rakhine, the military carried out a raid in Byaing Phyu and killed 48 people, accusing them of supporting the Arakan Army (AA). Soldiers forced villagers out under the sun for two days, subjected them to torture and ill-treatment, and burned the village to the ground. Men with tattoos, perceived as AA-related, were specifically treated brutally, reportedly having their skin cut and burned. Military-controlled courts subsequently convicted over 300 people arrested during the raid for alleged association with the AA.

Although not comparable to military violence and scope, violence by anti-military armed groups also caused protection concerns for civilians. In 2024, the targeted killing of ward administrators, local politicians, military-affiliated individuals, and, at times, their family members continued and possibly increased, although no credible and exhaustive figures were available. Combining claims of responsibilities and open source information, the estimated number of individuals killed by anti-military armed groups is 235, of which 150 were civilians killed in attacks against administrators and 85 were informants and others with alleged affiliations to the military. According to interviewees and analysts, killings of administrators

were mostly linked to their proactive role in the conscription and forced recruitment drive of the military. Additionally, OHCHR received allegations of torture, extrajudicial killings, sexual violence, forced recruitment and other abuses committed by anti-military armed groups against civilians in areas under their control and against recruits, including during military training. Despite the setting up of a new task force by NUG to combat rights abuses by PDFs in May 2023, OHCHR received information about only a few specific cases of accountability for human rights abuses.

### **III. Rohingya**

This reporting period was characterized by the resurgence of grave protection risks for the Rohingya population, seven years after the 2017 atrocities. However, unlike 2017 when the Myanmar military was the main perpetrator, dynamics shifted as the AA took control of northern Rakhine, where the majority of the country's Rohingya population lives, and became key perpetrators of violence.

In early 2024, Rohingya found themselves trapped between the warring AA and the military, primarily due to the AA strategically positioning itself in or around Rohingya villages to attack the military, particularly in Buthidaung Township. For its part, the military responded with indiscriminate attacks on the villages, with artillery shelling undertaken without any concern for the respect of international law, including the principles of distinction and proportionality, resulting in hundreds of Rohingya deaths and displacement. In one emblematic incident, on 26 January, the military responded to an AA attack launched from Hpon Nyo Leik, killing at least 12 Rohingya civilians and wounding over 30. In the following days, approximately 15,000 Rohingya fled in fear of further attacks.

A further deterioration of the situation of Rohingya occurred in February 2024, due to the military's conscription and forced recruitment of community members to deploy them to the battlefield to fight the AA, resulting in deaths of dozens of Rohingyas. In an unexpected development, Rohingya armed groups started collaborating with the military to fight the AA resulting in an increased targeting of members of the Rohingya by the AA. Disinformation, propaganda, and hate speech grew on social media, exacerbating tensions.

Additionally, following reports of mass killings, abductions, mass displacements, and severe lack of medical services and medicines, protection concerns grew significantly as the AA gained further territorial control. On 17 April, after capturing the Ah Bu Gyar village in Maungdaw Township, the AA reportedly abducted five Rohingya and later their bodies were found badly mutilated, with four of them having been beheaded. While interviewees consistently held the AA responsible, the AA denied the allegations, blaming instead the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA).

Despite AA's denial of allegations against it, Rohingya continued to face violence in AA-controlled territories, including denial of humanitarian access, killings, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, enforced disappearances and mass displacement. Reports of AA soldiers perpetrating sexual violence against Rohingya in Maungdaw and Buthidaung emerged, although verification remains challenging. In June, while attempting to capture Maungdaw, the AA released a statement urging all people in town to leave, providing a very short time and no alternative place to go for safety. This impacted negatively on Rohingya who had nowhere to flee and came under AA attacks with drones and artillery, resulting in daily reports of Rohingya deaths. This escalation culminated on 5 August, when thousands of Rohingya seeking to flee fighting between the AA and the military in Maungdaw town were targeted by airstrikes conducted by drones and

artillery shelling on the Naf River, while trying to cross into Bangladesh. Dozens of Rohingya, including women and children, were killed in the attacks, with some sources reporting more than 200 deaths. Restrictions on communication and movement in northern Rakhine, as well as internet shutdowns, created challenges in the corroboration of these events. However, survivors and witnesses consistently attributed responsibility for this mass killing to the AA, which denied its own involvement in the attack.

To flee the escalating violence and AA persecution, over 65,000 Rohingya crossed into Bangladesh in 2024, despite the border being formally closed. Newly-arrived Rohingya faced severe hardships in Bangladesh, unable to register in refugee camps and struggling to access food, medical aid, and other necessities. Many live without any protection or assistance, constantly fearing arrest and deportation by local authorities. Conditions at the moment continue to remain not conducive for any safe return to Myanmar. With persisting violence and lack of access to critical services in both Rakhine and the camps in Bangladesh, many Rohingya sought refuge elsewhere and undertook dangerous oversea journeys towards Malaysia and Indonesia. UNHCR reported a significant increase with more than 7,800 Rohingya attempting to flee by boat, an 80 per cent increase compared to 2023.<sup>7</sup> At least 650 Rohingya have died at sea, with children accounting for 44 per cent of the total.

#### **IV. Rule of law**

##### **- Conscription and forced recruitment**

As in previous years, the military continued to instrumentalize the law, including by extending the State of Emergency for the sixth time, imposing martial law on at least 65 townships, and unilaterally amending the Counter-Terrorism Law, targeting anyone deemed associated with or acting in support of anti-military armed groups. In one of the most relevant developments of 2024, the military embarked on a program of conscription and forced recruitment. On 10 February, the military announced the unilateral activation of the “2010 People’s Military Service Law”, with the aim of forcibly adding 60,000 people - men aged 18 to 35 and women aged 18 to 27 – to its forces in the first year. Reports of mass arrests and coercive recruitment of young people across several regions and states mounted immediately after the announcement, despite the declared activation from April.

Fears for personal security and restrictions on communication prevented the collection of accurate independent data on the scale of actions by the military. According to NUG figures, over 20,000 people have been conscripted and forcibly recruited since February. Arbitrary arrests - often at gunpoint - and enforced disappearances linked to these practices took place in rural and urban areas, IDP camps, during targeted raids, and at checkpoints. In December, the military reportedly arrested 250 youths in Yangon, Mandalay, Naypyitaw and Bago alone. Village administrators played an important role in the often locally-enforced recruitment, which were reported to be accompanied by abductions of family members of military-aged men, extortion, and other violations. To meet recruitment targets, the military has also used arrests at checkpoints and at night and swept up migrant workers deported from neighboring countries. These tactics also pushed many young people to join resistance groups or to seek safety abroad, often irregularly crossing the border and exacerbating the regional impact of the military-created crisis. Those fleeing remained vulnerable to trafficking, exploitation, and extortion due to their precarious legal status, while those

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.unhcr.org/asia/news/press-releases/focus-saving-lives-urges-unhcr-more-rohingya-flee-sea>



remaining faced heightened risks of conscription and forced recruitment as the military imposed further restrictions on movement, including through sectorial travel bans for labor purposes.

In a particularly disturbing development, the military resorted to forcible recruitment of Rohingya in Rakhine. Whether under threat or under the false promise of citizenship and rights, the military took at least hundreds of Rohingya youth from villages, briefly trained them, and sent them to face the AA at the frontline. Furthering their militarization of the country, on 16 August, the military established the People's security and counter-terrorism central scrutinizing committee, led by senior commanders and all 14 regional commanders, with the task of organizing and overseeing "People's Security and Anti-terrorism Groups" at village and ward levels. According to military rules, civilians aged between 35 and 60, should serve in their respective areas as militia groups. This use of the civilian population escalated social tensions and pushed further away possibilities for an end to the crisis and reconciliation. From a legal perspective, it further blurred the distinction between military and civilians, thus putting civilians at further risk of harm.

#### - Arrests and Detentions

As documented in the High Commissioner's report to the 56<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council,<sup>8</sup> the military continued to use arrests and prosecutions to silence opposition and punish those perceived to oppose their attempt at imposing their rule. According to credible sources, since the coup, the military arrested 28,028 individuals, including 5,840 women and girls, and 21,485, including 4,110 women and girls, remain in detention. By the end of the year, military-controlled courts that did not respect fundamental principles of rule of law or guarantees of due process and fair trial sentenced to death 171 individuals, of which 44 sentences were issued in absentia. There were no reports of execution of death sentences reported in 2024. Despite the regular issuance of pardons and amnesties, political prisoners amount to less than 10 percent of those released. The immediate re-arrest of freed political prisoners was also reported in 2024.

In April 2024, President Win Myint and State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, who are serving eight-year and 27-year prison terms, respectively, were reportedly moved from prison to house arrest amid reports of a heatwave. Their current location remains unknown and gag orders on their lawyers remain in place. This development coincided with mounting concerns over Aung San Suu Kyi's deteriorating health condition in detention, for which she has reportedly not been receiving adequate medical care.

Human rights violations, torture and ill-treatment, including sexual violence, and deaths in custody continued to be systematically reported from formal places of detention, including police stations, military interrogation centers, and prisons, with absolute impunity for the perpetrators. Moreover, the military continued to utilize prisoner transfers to often remote detention facilities to punish individuals perceived to be leading or participating in protests against abuses of prisoners' rights. These transfers also appeared to serve the purpose of further isolating prisoners from their families and legal representatives. Incidents also continued to be reported in which military officials detained or threatened to arrest family members, including children, of persons they wished to arrest for opposition to the coup. Individuals reported that the military threatened family members and communities with arrest if chosen individuals did not report for duty or fled the country.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://bangkok.ohchr.org/myanmar/>

Military-controlled courts systematically violated the rights of detainees. Frequent hearing postponements and access restrictions to detainees and prison grounds created regular time delays, resulting in prolonged periods of pre-trial detention. Defence counsel faced severe restrictions, including bans on confidential communications, with client interactions being limited in many cases to brief conversations outside the courtroom. Many defendants were denied the right to appeal after initial conviction and sentencing. Interviewees described proceedings as chaotic, with few lawyers handling many defendants amid intimidation. In some cases, military authorities reportedly arrested, and tortured or ill-treated lawyers. Counsel also consistently described conditions of detention as deplorable in many places of deprivation of liberty, with squalid facilities, cells being badly-lit, poorly ventilated, and overcrowded, often at double capacity. They described situations of prolonged confinement without the ability to maintain personal hygiene, physical exercise, or religious observance. Ingestion of and exposure to spoiled food and dirty water resulted in rampant spread of waterborne diseases. Numerous interviewees described having to eat rotten or half-cooked food, and drink contaminated water, including from toilets containing faeces and insects. Interviewees confirmed that prisons lacked medical supplies, qualified staff, and only stocked basic medicines such as paracetamol, which often could only be obtained through payments or bribes to guards.

#### - **Fundamental freedoms**

In contempt of the right to meaningfully participate in public affairs and while attempting to provide a veneer of legitimacy to its actions, the military announced that elections would be held towards the end of 2025 under its close control. Despite the risks of escalating violence and serious human rights concerns, the military took preparatory steps, including attempting to replace the traditional first-past-the-post voting system with proportional representation based on gerrymandering, and conducting a military-run nationwide population census in October and November to compile voter lists.<sup>9</sup> However, as noted above, the military's own data indicated that it could only fully administer such exercises in 43 percent of townships, and non-military aligned parties remain excluded.

Notwithstanding the military's ongoing crackdown on fundamental freedoms throughout the year, people continued to show defiance through protest actions on key dates, such as silent strikes on the third anniversary of the coup on 1 February or flower-themed protests on the birthday of Aung San Suu Kyi on 21 June, leading to further arbitrary arrests in military-controlled areas.

Military-imposed internet and phone service shutdowns and internet censorship and surveillance across the country continued to curtail freedom of expression and access to information, and evolved, using increasingly sophisticated control measures. While the ongoing ban of several social media platforms since February 2021 pushed people to rely on virtual private networks (VPNs) to access restricted information, reports of disruptions to the use of VPNs emerged since 30 May. As a result, for example, traffic on Facebook, reportedly the main news source for most of the Myanmar population, decreased by half in the immediate aftermath. Local digital groups reported that VPN access varied from platform to platform, both paid and free, as well as regionally, and that conditions shifted every day. Simultaneously, during random searches, the military began checking for VPNs on civilians' phones. On 15 July, the military blocked the last locally available encrypted messaging app Signal, which included the app's unique feature for its users

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<sup>9</sup> Unsubstantiated allegations of fraud by the military and affiliated parties in the 2020 elections centered around the inaccuracy of voters lists.

to operate the app without a VPN. This restriction further constrained people’s ability to communicate free from arbitrary surveillance and interference. Small-scale networks using Starlink or similar satellite-enabled technology increasingly provided an alternative to the military controlled internet services, but could only really be used in “liberated” areas due to the risk of detection by the military.

In parallel, the military aggressively resumed the implementation of a so-called “e-ID” system that was initiated prior to the coup, in violation of the right to privacy, and took steps to compel people to have their biometric data collected, for example by making the e-ID compulsory for accessing various public services, such as obtaining “border passes” for cross-border travel, renewal of identity documents, including passports, or local worker identification cards (for example in special economic zones), in turn a precondition for access to certain social security benefits. If people are provided their e-ID, the military effectively has a means of unmistakably identifying them, leading to concerns that the new e-ID scheme could be used to enforce mandatory military service, to track down political dissidents and for other abusive purposes. This led to people, in particular young people, crossing borders irregularly without valid travel documents, heightening their vulnerability to exploitation in neighboring countries.

Key groups of civil society, such as journalists and media workers, along with teachers and other members of the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), continued to face intimidation and the risk of arrest under repressive legislation, especially the Counter-Terrorism Law, which carries high penalties. In August, a military-aligned court sentenced two journalists to life and 20 years in prison respectively. The same month, a documentary filmmaker died following torture in Insein Prison, three days after being transferred to a hospital. Violence against trade unionists including threats, arbitrary arrests, sexual violence and torture continued to take place, as highlighted by the International Labour Organization’s (ILO) Commission of Inquiry.<sup>10</sup>

### **Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**

Civilian lives and livelihoods were also drastically affected by the continued deterioration of the economy since the coup. Escalations in violence disrupted trade, production and supply chains, and heightened economic and climate vulnerabilities, leading to a 40 percent depreciation of the Kyat in the first eight months of the year. Expert reports suggested that high inflation and an expected GDP contraction of one percent in the fiscal year ending March 2025 would contribute to further deteriorations<sup>11</sup>. As highlighted by the humanitarian sector,<sup>12</sup> a quarter of Myanmar’s population, over 13 million people, suffered from food insecurity, and the number of people in need of assistance rose to 20 million. On the basis of a study assessing damage caused by Cyclone Mocha on agricultural land and consequent production capabilities in Rakhine, UNDP warned that 2 million people, including tens of thousands Rohingya, faced risk of famine from April 2025 as there would not be sufficient rice to meet the basic needs of the population.<sup>13</sup>

In addition, military-imposed import restrictions and the implementation of distortionary price control measures directly impacted civilians’ livelihoods, including through severe shortages of essential goods and retail businesses ceasing operations due to insufficient margins. Agricultural exports increased as conflict-related disruptions of transport networks limited the internal distribution of rice and other cereals

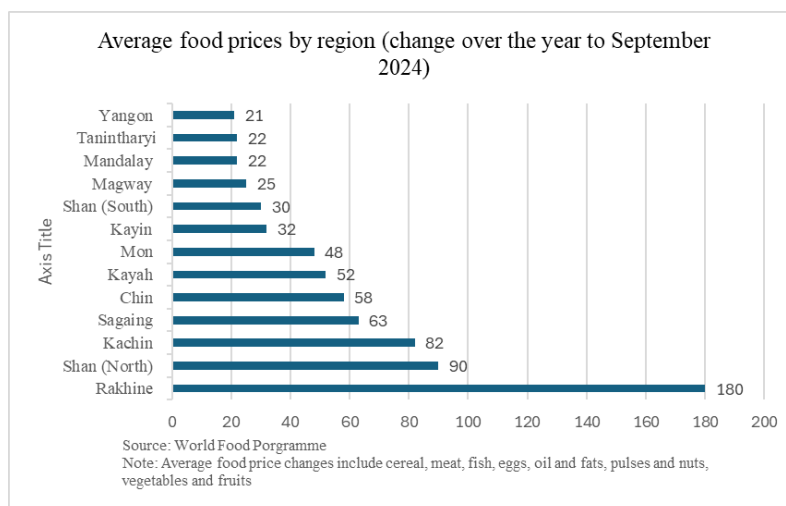
<sup>10</sup> <https://www.ilo.org/resource/news/ilo-myanmar-commission-inquiry-finds-far-reaching-violations-freedom>

<sup>11</sup> According to the World Bank, the GDP may further contract by one percent instead of growing as initially estimated.

<sup>12</sup> <https://myanmar.un.org/en/286727-myanmar-humanitarian-needs-and-response-plan-2025-december-2024>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.undp.org/asia-pacific/publications/rakhine-a-famine-in-the-making>

from agricultural heartlands in lower Myanmar to upper Myanmar, depressing domestic consumption and creating surplus stocks for exports. Soaring food, fuel and fertilizer prices risked pushing even more people into poverty. Food prices skyrocketed 80-180 percent in high-conflict areas such as Kachin, Shan, and Rakhine.<sup>14</sup>



A key source of income for the military, its affiliated border guards, some EAOs, and other actors derives from drug production. While not a new issue of concern, UNODC reported that Myanmar remained the world's main producer of opium and one of the biggest manufacturers of synthetic drugs.<sup>15</sup> According to the Global Organized Crime Index, Myanmar was the biggest nexus of organized crime in the world in 2024.<sup>16</sup> Particularly alarming was the fact that poppy cultivation expanded from Kachin and Shan to areas in Chin and Kayah that have not been traditionally drug production hubs. Among the reasons was that poverty and the severe strains on the economy and opportunities for development caused by the military coup and ensuing violence forced many farmers to convert cultivation to meet their basic survival needs.

Other important developments during the reporting period related to the establishment and expansion of scam centers in the east of the country, which raised serious concerns about human trafficking and other related violations and abuses. According to a thematic OHCHR report, victims faced a range of serious violations and abuses, including threats to their safety and security; and many were subjected to torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, arbitrary detention, sexual violence, and forced labour.<sup>17</sup> Aggravating this already dire situation, in December, cholera spread in Shwe Kokko, one of the main gambling and scam centers hubs in the country, causing alarm also in Thailand due to its proximity

<sup>14</sup>

<https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099121024092015654/pdf/P50720310fc16e0251ba691e1227abb7375.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> [https://www.unodc.org/roseap/uploads/documents/Publications/2024/Myanmar\\_Opium\\_Survey\\_2024\\_web.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/roseap/uploads/documents/Publications/2024/Myanmar_Opium_Survey_2024_web.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/crime-rate-by-country>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/08/hundreds-thousands-trafficked-work-online-scammers-se-asia-says-un-report>

to the border. Due to the collapse of the health system following the military coup, Myanmar lacks the capacity and staff to respond to an epidemic or medical emergencies. Cholera outbreaks were reported from several parts of the country, including in Yangon, and the military's persistent denial of access to assistance represents a continuing major protection concern for 2025.

Another element linking human rights to the economy and the conflict related to the losses of territories by the military in areas rich in natural resources. In particular in Kachin and Shan, the military lost portions of territories with mines extracting gold, rubies, jade, and rare earths minerals. This directly affected the ability of the military to finance their operations through the revenues from the exploitation of natural resources, possibly further crippling their institution already affected by international targeted sanctions. While the military does not appear to be in the position of regaining territories from EAOs, it is expected that the military will likely increase its use of the air force to bomb EAO positions, also heightening concerns for the civilian population.

#### - **Accountability and international developments**

Under military rule, human rights violations and other breaches of international law by the military and to a lesser extent by anti-military armed groups continued unabated, with complete lack of accountability. Under the current circumstances, the administration of fair justice in accordance with international standards is not possible in Myanmar.

Hope for ending impunity rests on the international community and notable developments took place in 2024. In November, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) applied for a warrant of arrest against Min Aung Hlaing for the alleged crimes against humanity of deportation and persecution of the Rohingya committed in 2017 leading to the exodus of over a million people to Bangladesh. The Prosecutor also announced that further applications would follow, although no progress has been noted since.

Also in The Hague, proceedings continued in the case brought by The Gambia against Myanmar at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) alleging violations of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide.<sup>18</sup> Between November 2023 and December 2024, 11 States in total filed declarations of intervention and the Court declared seven admissible so far.<sup>19</sup> The written proceedings have now closed, and the next step expected is for the Court to schedule hearings on the merits of The Gambia's claims of genocide.

In November, the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) issued its final recommendation to remove the accreditation status of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission for failing to comply with the Paris Principles and in particular for lacking independence from the military.<sup>20</sup> In accordance with its procedures, in 2023 GANHRI had suspended the Myanmar commission giving it one year to address recommendations and show a minimal compliance with the Paris Principles. During this reporting period, GANHRI assessed that the commission had made no progress and hence decided to remove accreditation.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.icj-cij.org/en/case/178>

<sup>19</sup> Member States filing interventions were Belgium, Canada, Democratic Republic of Congo, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Maldives, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/countries/nhri/global-alliance-national-human-rights-institutions-ganhri/session-reports-and-recommendations-sub-committee-accreditation>

Moreover, Austria, Canada, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States, as well as the European Union, imposed new sanctions against individuals and companies for their membership or affiliation with the military, including the Shwe Byain Phyu Group and Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd. These sanctions aimed to restrict the military's access to military material, equipment, and funds.

At the intergovernmental level, on 4 April, the UN Human Rights Council in its resolution 55/20<sup>21</sup> called, for the first time, on Member States to refrain from the export, sale or transfer of jet fuel to the Myanmar military. Additionally, the Human Rights Council called for an immediate halt to the illicit transfer of arms and other military equipment to Myanmar. Despite a series of open and closed meetings of the UN Security Council over the year, no further formal action was taken beyond resolution 2669, adopted in late 2022.

At its November 2024 meeting, the ILO Governing Body noted with utmost concern the absence of any concrete action to address the grave violations of the freedom of association and forced labour conventions, as called for in the recommendations of the 2023 Commission of Inquiry report. The Governing Body accordingly decided to place on the agenda of the International Labour Conference meeting in June 2025 an item concerning additional measures that could be taken to secure compliance by Myanmar with the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry (article 33 of the ILO Constitution).<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> <https://docs.un.org/A/HRC/RES/55/20>.

<sup>22</sup> [GB.352/INS/11\(Rev.1\)/Decision](#)

**ANNEX I: Activities of the OHCHR Myanmar Team in 2024**

<b>Mandate/Mechanism</b>	<b>Outputs and products</b>
<b>Human Rights Council</b>	<p>HRC 55 – Oral Update (oral update, ID and Q&amp;A, press statement);</p> <p>HRC56 – Report on Rohingya and other minorities (report, ID and Q&amp;A);</p> <p>HRC57 – Report on the human rights situation (report, ID and Q&amp;A).</p>
<b>General Assembly</b>	<p>GA 78 – Report on the human rights situation in Myanmar (report, presentation, Q&amp;A).</p>
<b>Human Rights activities</b>	<p>Eleven monthly reports and one annual report;</p> <p>261 formal interviews with victims, witnesses, and other individuals with first-hand or relevant knowledge of events;</p> <p>89 consultations with national and international organizations, UN entities, thematic experts, and other key stakeholders;</p> <p>19 training sessions, of which 4 in person, for over 500 participants, over half of whom were women, for civil society and duty-bearers. Training covered International Human Rights Law, International Criminal Law, International Humanitarian law, documentation of human rights violations, analysis, reporting, and advocacy.</p> <p>Referral of over 20 protection cases to service providers;</p> <p>Supported a grassroot organizations to submit a proposal to the Fund on Torture that led to the award of a grant.</p>
<b>Public advocacy</b>	<p>Seven press releases/statements;</p> <p>Several social media posts;</p> <p>Presentation of HRC55, HRC56, and HRC57 to CSOs, INGOs, and various UN Mechanisms;</p> <p>Engagement on PoC with five new duty-bearers.</p>
<b>UN System</b>	<p>Contributions to reports of the Secretary-General, SRSGs on CAAC and SVC;</p> <p>Contributions to reports on reprisal; counter-terrorism; women, peace, and security; ILO commission of enquiry;</p> <p>Regular coordination with justice and accountability mechanisms.</p>

**ANNEX II: Overview of key human rights developments in 2024**

