AfP Condemns the Increasing Violence in Myanmar and Supports the Peaceful Protests Calling to Reinstate the Democratically Elected Government

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Washington, D.C., USA. – The Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfP) strongly denounces the increasing violence by Myanmar’s security forces and calls on the military to immediately end its deadly attacks against peaceful protestors, release Aung San Suu Kyi and all those illegally detained, and reinstate the democratically-elected government.

After the coup d’etat in Myanmar on February 1st, the military declared the November election results fraudulent and instated a year-long state of emergency. In response to the coup, hundreds of thousands of citizens took to the streets, facing increasingly brutal crackdowns by security forces. On the deadliest day since the coup began, at least 38 protesters were killed by Myanmar police on Sunday, March 14th, before the junta declared martial law in several districts of Yangon, Myanmar’s largest city.

According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), a non-profit human rights organization based in Thailand, over 200 people have been killed since the beginning of the coup, with hundreds more injured and thousands detained. Tom Andrews, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar said the brutal crackdowns on peaceful protesters are, “likely meeting the legal threshold for crimes against humanity.”

AfP welcomes United States Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas’ move to designate Burmese nationals in the U.S. eligible for “Temporary Protected
Status,” allowing them to remain in the U.S. while the crackdown continues. The new status will allow around 1,600 people to continue living and working in the U.S. for the next 18 months.

On March 10th, the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctioned the adult children of Min Aung Hlaing, commander-in-chief of Myanmar’s military forces, and six entities that they own or control. The U.S. Department of Commerce’s Bureau of Industry and Security implemented new export controls on Myanmar and added four entities to the Entity List. These actions build on President Biden’s Executive Order to levy sanctions against those responsible for Myanmar’s military coup. The sanctions target 10 current and former military leaders and freeze $1 billion in U.S. assets that benefit the junta. The sanctions will not affect Myanmar’s economy, civil society groups, or other entities that benefit Myanmar’s citizens.

Meanwhile, the international community has failed to take concrete action to help the Rohingya in the villages in Rakhine State or refugee camps in Bangladesh. AfP calls on the international community to address the ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya and the military to halt the targeting of ethnic minorities.

With over 130 member organizations, AfP brings together the largest development organizations, most innovative academic institutions, and influential humanitarian and faith-based groups to harness collective action for peace. We build coalitions in key areas of strategy and policy to elevate the entire peacebuilding field, tackling issues too large for any one organization to address alone.