

**Ending Impunity, Forging Accountability:  
Implementation of SC Resolution 1325 in Burma (Myanmar)**

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Two days ago, the representative of Burma’s military regime stated during the UN Security Council’s Open Debate on Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace & Security that

“the government promotes policies that ensure that the needs and priorities of women and girls are addressed and that rape let alone gang rape is regarded by the Myanmar people and government as a most dastardly and abhorrent crime. Whenever such a crime is committed, we make sure that the full force of law is applied against the perpetrators.”

This statement is completely contradictory to the reality of the life of women from Burma and the crimes the military regime has committed against women in Burma. As my colleague just mentioned the regime is carrying out a widespread systematic campaign of rape and sexual violence against women in Burma, especially ethnic minority women.

The military regime constantly claims that they have brought peace and stability to the country. But they fail to mention their deliberate campaign to attack ethnic minority civilians, especially women and children and the still ongoing crackdown on peaceful demonstrators.

Women's lives are at risk under their military rule. Women live in constant fear of rape, other forms of sexual violence and other human rights abuses at the hands of the military regime.

Rape survivors and the family members of rape victims dare not speak up about the crime committed against them for fear of retribution by the regime authorities. As a result, a culture of silence is common throughout Burma.

In further evidence of the regime’s intimidation and system of impunity in

*Early February of this year, four girls, aged 14 to 16, from a village south of Putao, northern Kachin State, were gang-raped by three army officers and four soldiers from a local SPDC military base. The army gave hush money to the girls and their parents and ordered them not to report the incident to police or other authorities. After news of the incident was reported by a Kachin news group, the girls were arrested and jailed by the military authorities.*

This case shows not only the regime’s brutality in the crimes it commits against girls in Burma but also the length they are willing to go to protect the perpetrators of crimes against women and girls in Burma.

We have seen a simple pattern of gender based violence against women during the recent crackdown. Women activists are facing imprisonment, harassment, financial hardship, sexual

violence and death as a result of their activism in defense of democracy and human rights. Furthermore, there are several cases of women family members and relatives of political activists being taken hostages to catch the political activists themselves.

Just last week Mee Mee, a woman political activist from the 88 Generation Students who spent many years as a political prison, was hunted down in her hiding place and arrested by the regime authorities. Mee Mee may be familiar to all of you from her photograph displayed in newspapers across the world as the face of the protests when they began in August. She had to go into hiding to avoid being arrested and tortured but the regime found her. Within 24 hours of her arrest she had been beaten so badly she had to be taken to the prison hospital, where she still remains.

In Burma, everything is upside down. The military regime has all the power, they commit widespread systematic human rights abuses against women and girls and are never held accountable for their crimes. On the other hand, innocent women and girls suffer from many human rights abuses, including gender-based violence, and are the ones who end up in jail.

While the regime proclaims to the world that they have a zero tolerance policy of violence against women, the evidence we have presented here today proves quite the opposite is true.

The military regime avoids addressing the key argument that widespread sexual violence is an inevitable result of military rule and their system of impunity, and that women and girls in Burma will remain at risk until there is democratic reform and restoration of the rule of law and accountability.

We are urging the Security Council to live up to its obligations under Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, in order to protect the women and girls of Burma and ensure women's participation in efforts to promote peace and reconciliation in the country.

The military regime needs to be held accountable for all their crimes. If the regime is still in power the human rights situation will not improve and their system of impunity will never end. So let us work together to bring an end to military rule in Burma.