

**TESTIMONY FOR THE RECORD**  
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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE**  
**TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION HEARING**  
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It is my honor to speak to you today on the Administration's Burma policy and our approach to addressing the human rights situation that has rapidly deteriorated since the military seized power in a coup d'état in February 2021.

Since the coup, Burma's military regime has escalated its brutality against the people of Burma, those who aspire for a more inclusive and democratic future for their country. The regime has carried out executions of pro-democracy activists and political leaders. It has killed thousands of men, women, and children, conducted airstrikes that have destroyed schools, concerts, and places of worship, and internally displaced over 1.6 million civilians. The worsening situation in Burma represents a serious human rights crisis, and increasingly, a threat to regional stability.

The Administration remains deeply committed to resolving the crisis in Burma to return the country to a path toward an inclusive, federal democracy, one that respects human rights. We appreciate the strong bipartisan support in Congress, and we welcome the BURMA Act, in particular, as a valuable tool to advance this goal.

Today, I'd like to focus on two key lines of effort in our Burma policy: 1) economic and political pressure on the regime; and 2) multilateral diplomacy. My colleagues, DRL Acting Assistant Secretary Barclay, GCI Ambassador Van Schaack, and Assistant Administrator Schiffer, will share their thoughts on broader human rights and humanitarian issues, as well as support for the pro-democracy movement.

To resolve the crisis in Burma, we must push Burma's military regime to reverse course. Sanctions are an important tool to promote accountability and inflict high costs on the regime for its human rights abuses and atrocities. Since the coup, we have imposed sanctions on numerous leaders of the military-led State Administration Council (SAC). We have also targeted cronies and businesses benefitting from or enabling the regime's violence and repression.

We have intensified our focus on key income streams that fund the regime's repression. In June, we designated two state-owned financial institutions that have been at the center of the military regime's weapons procurement and revenue generation.

Last month, the Department of the Treasury strengthened and expanded its use of Burma-related sanctions authorities by issuing a determination that allows sanctions to be imposed on any foreign individual or entity that operates in the jet fuel sector of Burma's economy. Concurrent with this determination, OFAC designated key individuals and an entity involved in the procurement and distribution of jet fuel, supplementing earlier sanctions designations of key suppliers of jet fuel, which is used to carry out the regime's air attacks. OFAC also sanctioned the regime's Ministry of Defense, which has carried out repression and brutal violence. Furthermore, we imposed sanctions on the leadership of the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE). We will continue to intensify actions in these areas.

Our sanctions against the state-owned banks Myanmar Foreign Trade Bank (MFTB) and Myanmar Investment Commercial Bank (MICB) "hit the bullseye," in the words of pro-democracy leaders. The designations of the state-owned banks are severely restricting the regime's access to foreign currency and eliminated a channel used to purchase weapons. We are fully prepared to intensify actions in these areas if the regime continues to inflict violence and repression on its own people. The attacks and violence must stop.

The United States has led coordination of sanctions actions with our allies and partners, including the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and the European Union, among others. This spring, State Department Sanctions Coordinator O'Brien convened a high-level meeting with counterparts to ensure a unified approach, and our teams continue consult regularly.

We recognize we must do more to deprive the military regime of financial resources. The regime is exploiting foreign currency earnings to purchase weapons from overseas, especially from Russia. The oil and gas sector remains among its primary revenue sources. We are carefully reviewing our options to deny the regime these funds while mitigating unintended effects on the people of Burma and our allies and partners. We continue to assess potential actions on other sectors of the economy, including teak and mining.

In addition to economic pressure, diplomacy is key to isolating the regime and denying it international credibility. In our high-level engagements, Burma remains high on the agenda. President Biden underscored the importance of democracy in Burma during the ASEAN-related summits in Cambodia last year.; Vice President Harris did the same in Indonesia this year. Secretary of State Blinken, Counselor Chollet, and other members of our leadership continue to conduct intense diplomacy on Burma, including with Indonesia as ASEAN Chair.

We engage with ASEAN member states collectively and individually to ensure Burma's military regime bears a cost for its lack of meaningful action on the ASEAN Five-Point Consensus. We welcomed ASEAN's decision to exclude the regime from leader-level and some minister-level meetings and to deny Burma the opportunity to chair ASEAN in 2026. In engagements with Burma's neighbors, we have underscored the urgency of the threat to regional security and the need for humanitarian assistance.

We also are leveraging the United Nations to advance our priorities. Along with our partners, we secured the first-ever UN Security Council resolution on the situation in Burma last December. And just last month, thirteen of

the fifteen UNSC members released a joint statement calling for the use of all tools at the Council's disposal to support a peaceful resolution in Burma. We are also advocating for implementation of the General Assembly's call for Member States to prevent the flow of arms to Burma.

Chairmen, Members, I thank you very much for Congress's generous support for the people of Burma. We value our partnership on this very challenging issue. While we know there are no easy solutions, I can assure you the people of Burma will remember for decades to come that the U.S. government, including Congress, came to their aid in their time of need.

Thank you.