



An Open Letter to Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Minister for Foreign Affairs Senator Penny Wong

Myanmar Dictatorship Cannot be Normalised, Time for Action is Now

04 August 2026

Dear Prime Minister Albanese and Foreign Minister Wong,

We respectfully request that the Senate Foreign Affairs Reference Committee recommendations be adopted without any delay and/or being watered down. Our reasons are detailed as follows.

Today, as a result of the 2021 military coup in Myanmar, [more than 4 million people are displaced](#), [16.2 million people require humanitarian assistance](#), and [8.5 million people face acute food insecurity in 2026](#). Schools, hospitals, monasteries, churches and displacement camps remain under attack as civilians, including children, are killed through escalating aerial assaults enabled by military-controlled financial and aviation supply networks.

[The Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee](#) concluded that the junta's 2025-26 election was neither free, fair nor inclusive and must not become a "cloak of respectability" for continued military rule.

Myanmar is not solely a humanitarian crisis. It has become a regional security challenge, fuelling transnational crime, illicit finance, cyber scam networks and strategic instability across Southeast Asia.

Recent regional developments have increased the urgency for Australian leadership to act. Following [ASEAN's informal meeting with Myanmar's representative in Bangkok on 12 July](#), despite the military authorities' continued failure to implement the Five-Point Consensus, the [Quad Foreign Ministers, including Australia, have recognised Myanmar as a growing regional security and transnational crime challenge](#). Australia should act before diplomatic engagement risks normalising military rule. [AFP statements](#) have highlighted Myanmar-based scam compounds as a growing source of transnational fraud increasingly affecting Australians and broader regions.

The Senate Committee's recommendations therefore demand urgent action. The Committee called on the Australian Government to:

- reject attempts to legitimise Myanmar's military regime;

- align sanctions with key allies;
- sanction the Central Bank of Myanmar and military-controlled banks;
- disrupt jet fuel supply chains enabling airstrikes;
- supplement engagement with ASEAN with stronger engagement through the Bali Process;
- expand humanitarian, education and safe migration pathways;
- expand flexible, locally led and cross-border humanitarian assistance to communities affected by conflict and displacement; and
- formalise engagement with Myanmar diaspora communities.

Australia's [Magnitsky-style autonomous sanctions framework](#) was specifically designed to address serious human rights abuses, violations of international humanitarian law and transnational threats. The situation in Myanmar now squarely meets that threshold.

While allies including the United States, United Kingdom, European Union and Canada have expanded sanctions targeting military-linked financial networks, Australia's Myanmar sanctions framework continues to lag behind key partners. The Senate Committee itself warned that these gaps weaken collective pressure and create loopholes exploitable by the junta.

Myanmar's military continues to seek political legitimacy while relying on financial infrastructure, sanctions-evasion networks and expanding illicit economies, including cyber scam operations that have become a growing regional security concern.

The Central Bank of Myanmar, military-linked banks and aviation fuel networks now function as lifelines sustaining the junta's atrocities and repression. The Senate Committee accordingly recommended targeted sanctions against them.

Australia should not allow diplomatic engagement to evolve into the gradual normalisation of military rule. We respectfully urge your Government to implement the Senate Committee's recommendations swiftly and decisively.

Sincerely,

Myanmar Campaign Network

On behalf of endorsing organisations and supporters