

MEDIA ADVISORY: UN Special Envoy Heyzer addresses Myanmar's critical importance to the region at Shangri-La Dialogue

SINGAPORE, 11 June 2022 – The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar Noeleen Heyzer affirmed her commitment today at the 19th Shangri-La Dialogue Asia Security Summit to work with all parties in Myanmar towards the cessation of violence and urgent access for humanitarian aid.

The Special Envoy delivered her address to the Special Session entitled “Myanmar: Finding a Way Forward” focusing on how the international community can best assist the people of Myanmar. She was joined by panelists including His Excellency Saifuddin Abdullah, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia; Pornpimol Kanchanalak, Adviser to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Special Representative of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on Myanmar, Thailand; and Derek Chollet, Counselor of the Department, U.S. Department of State.

“There is an urgency for a coherent international response built on regional unity. The people of Myanmar need our collective support to respond to the realities on the ground, and to address the escalating vulnerabilities,” Ms. Heyzer said.

Addressing the inter-governmental security conference, the Special Envoy emphasized that more needs to be done to deliver aid through all existing channels and inclusive processes, to support local humanitarian networks and to build community-based resilience. Humanitarian support must be delivered without discrimination and not be instrumentalized for political or military gain.

Special Envoy Heyzer told the audience of her continuing consultations with all Myanmar stakeholders representing parties to the conflict and civil society, including women community leaders who have highlighted the the urgent need for humanitarian support and protection for women and children. In concert with Her Excellency Retno Marsudi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, Ms. Heyzer continues to explore strategies to advance the Women, Peace and Security platform on Myanmar.

In her bridging capacity helping to amplify the voices of the people of Myanmar and align regional and international efforts, Special Envoy Heyzer emphasized the crucial role of ASEAN in de-escalating the crisis and importance of restarting momentum on the Five-Point Consensus. In addition to the humanitarian obligation to the people of Myanmar, the worsening security situation has major consequences for the entire region.

“The trajectory of growing violence and instability in Myanmar has dire implications beyond national borders,” Special Envoy Heyzer said. “The illegal economy is thriving and spilling over into the region as drug production and trade, human trafficking, export of timber and other illicit activities reach record highs.”

As of 26 May, more than 1 million people have been displaced in Myanmar, with more than half of them losing their homes since the 1 February 2021 military coup. More than 40,200 people have fled to neighboring countries and 12,700 houses, religious buildings and schools have been destroyed.

The Special Envoy will address the United Nations General Assembly on 13 June to brief Member States on the urgent situation.

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