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ORAL STATEMENT

U.N. Human Rights Council 49th Session

Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar

Delivered by: Wai Phyo Myint, Asia Pacific Policy Analyst, Access Now (*via video*)

Dear Special Rapporteur,

The military is cementing its chokehold on the internet and expanding its digital toolkit to undermine human rights in Myanmar.

The military has forced telecommunications providers to install intercept technology, while actively fortifying surveillance mechanisms.

Through a takeover of Telenor Myanmar, a military-linked company will gain access to the data of millions of its subscribers. Those tools and data are being abused to monitor and target individuals - not only opponents of the regime, but anyone in the country.

Internet shutdowns continue - especially in regions where serious international law violations are being committed. Price hikes and onerous data provision requirements make internet access difficult - turning the clock back to a Myanmar closed off to the world.

A draft Cybersecurity Law will criminalize the use of Virtual Private Networks - the only way most people are now navigating the throttled internet.

Hate speech and incitement to violence proliferate online. Death threats; bounty vigilantism; calls for sexual violence; and inflammatory racism are rife. Doxxing on Telegram is leading to arrests, and people's property being confiscated.

We reiterate our call for a comprehensive arms embargo - including banning sale or transfer of surveillance and censorship equipment, intelligence or other assistances to Myanmar's military.

We also urge technology companies to invest and cooperate more in their rights obligations to combat hate speech and incitement to violence.

We call on Myanmar to stop throttling and shutting down the internet.

Thank you.



Access Now (<https://www.accessnow.org>) defends and extends the digital rights of users at risk around the world. By combining direct technical support, comprehensive policy engagement, global advocacy, legal interventions, grassroots grantmaking, and convenings such as RightsCon, we fight for human rights in the digital age.

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