

United Nations Human Rights Council
58th Regular Session
Agenda Item 4

**Oral statement of the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) in the General
Debate on Item 4**

Mr. President,

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) calls for more robust action by States and the Council on the human rights situations in Eswatini, Myanmar and Afghanistan.

Eswatini's dire human rights situation is generally neglected. The ICJ denounces the shrinking civic space and the decay of the rule of law, echoing the grave concerns expressed by lawyers and human rights defenders in the country. The ICJ has documented numerous instances of repression, intimidation, and killings of individuals involved in human rights and public interest cases. Authorities have wholly failed to investigate the deaths and injuries caused by the suppression of protests in 2021.

There is an absence of structural conditions and guarantees to ensure an independent judiciary. The executive continues to abusively invoke terrorism and sedition laws in contravention of international law to justify spurious prosecution of dissidents.

In Myanmar, four years after the coup, the junta's repression against lawyers and human rights defenders, as well as its systematic atrocities against the civilian population intensified, as exemplified by recent unlawful air strikes. The ruling junta plans to hold sham general elections in the face of absolute absence of the rule of law. Now is the time for the international community to increase efforts to hold those responsible for the most serious crimes under international law accountable.

The ICJ calls on States to enforce arrest warrants against Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and other officials to advance justice and accountability. We urge States to increase humanitarian aid through financial support for those suffering, now exacerbated by the United States' suspension of foreign aid.

Finally, the ICJ supports the call by a group of States for the establishment of a robust investigative mechanism for the egregious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law in Afghanistan, some amount to crimes against humanity.

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