



## Timor Leste Opens Unprecedented Legal Proceedings Against Myanmar Junta

*Press Release for Immediate Publication*

**Dili, 2 February, 2026:** The judicial authorities in Timor Leste have opened legal proceedings against the Myanmar junta, including dictator, Min Aung Hlaing, for war crimes and crimes against humanity. This is the first time a member of the Association of South East Asia Nations (ASEAN), has initiated such action against a fellow ASEAN member state.

A senior Timorese prosecutor has been appointed to look into the criminal file presented two weeks ago in Dili by the Chin Human Rights Organisation (CHRO). “I welcome the move”, said Salai Za Uk, Executive Director of CHRO, “and we look forward to working with the Timorese authorities, as well as civil society groups in Timor Leste, on pursuing justice for the Chin People and all people in Myanmar. Given Timor Leste’s history, and the indignities the Timorese people suffered in their struggle for independence, there is a real sense of solidarity with the people of Myanmar, against whom the junta is inflicting appalling barbarities on an almost hourly basis”.

The opening of proceedings in Dili comes amid widespread international condemnation of the recent "sham" election in Myanmar, including from ASEAN, which refused to send election observers, and confer any legitimacy on the poll. It also comes as Myanmar marks the fifth anniversary of the failed coup, in which the self-appointed Senior-General, Min Aung Hlaing, attempted to seize power from the democratically elected government. Today, after what the UN calls a “reign of terror” on the Burmese people, his isolated clique controls, a mere forty per cent of the country and has lost control of hundreds of kilometers of Myanmar’s international borders.

“The rule of law is a priority issue for Timor Leste”, said Jose Teixeira, from the Timorese law firm Da Silva Teixeira & Associados Lda, representing CHRO, “and it is vital that the independence of the Timorese judiciary is respected and that the legal process runs its course. We firmly reject any outside interference, particularly from the Myanmar junta, in Timor Leste’s court system”.

The criminal file presented to the Timorese Prosecutor includes irrefutable evidence of the gang rape of a seven-month pregnant woman in front of her husband; the massacre of ten people,

including a journalist and a 13-year-old boy, who was among eight people who had their hands tied behind their backs and their throats slit; the deliberate killing of a Christian Pastor and three Deacons; a disproportionate and indiscriminate aerial attack on a hospital, which killed four medical staff and four patients, and a series of attacks on Christian churches, civilian infrastructure protected under international law.

Chris Gunness, Director of the Myanmar Accountability Project (MAP), which supports legal cases against the Myanmar junta said “this is a significant milestone on the Burmese people’s long march to justice, freedom and dignity. The road ahead will be fraught with obstacles, but this case sends a powerful signal. The Burmese people are saying loud and clear that justice and accountability are an indispensable part of their struggle against dictatorship and tyranny”.

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