



**Statement of Position by the Kachin State Human Rights Defenders Network (KSHRDN)
regarding the " Attempted Resumption of the Myitsone Dam Project"**

Date: April 1, 2026

The Kachin State Human Rights Defenders Network (KSHRN) issues this formal and strenuous condemnation of the current efforts to restart the Myitsone Dam project. Since its inception, this project has faced fierce opposition from local communities, the people of Myanmar, and the international community due to its devastating potential consequences. Consequently, the project remained suspended under successive administrations from 2010 to 2020. We find the renewed attempt to initiate this project utterly unacceptable and denounce it in the strongest possible terms.

Once again, efforts to restart the Myitsone project are underway through the manipulation of Myitkyina residents and the issuance of official directives and orders. We have observed instances of coercion where authorities have threatened that "action will be taken against anyone who opposes the Myitsone project without providing solid evidence," alongside the use of various incentives to buy support. Despite the unwavering opposition of the public, reports indicate that the relevant authorities are determined to implement the Myitsone project by any means necessary.

The current period is not only a time of nationwide civil war but also a time when it is absolutely impossible to ascertain the genuine will of the public. We view the attempt to exploit this period of political instability to restart the Myitsone project as a flagrant disregard for the opinions of the general public, as well as those of domestic and international experts.

At a time when hundreds of thousands of people in Kachin State are already displaced due to armed conflict, we are deeply concerned that the Myitsone project will compound their suffering, forcing them into further rounds of displacement. Furthermore, attempting to construct the Myitsone dam in Kachin State—a region already embroiled in long-standing armed conflict—will not only deepen the lack of trust among various stakeholders but also serve as a catalyst for further unnecessary conflict in the future.

According to expert assessments, the resulting adverse impacts of the Myitsone project will be immense. Potential consequences include the destruction and disappearance of environmental ecosystems and various species, the occurrence of severe flooding, the disruption of natural waterways, and the formation of detrimental sandbanks. Furthermore, it will lead to the irreparable loss of cultural heritage—not only for the people of Kachin State but for all ethnic nationalities across Myanmar—and will destroy the livelihoods of those who depend on the Irrawaddy River throughout its entire course.

Most critically, due to the local geographical conditions, there is an immense risk that the dam could breach—whether from natural seismic hazards or impacts from heavy artillery. Should such a failure occur, the lives, homes, and properties of the residents of Myitkyina could be obliterated in the blink of an eye.

Therefore, the **Kachin State Human Rights Defenders Network (KSHRDN)** solemnly issues the following demands:

1. **Respect Public Will:** To fully honor and adhere to the desires and consensus of the general public.
2. **Cease Intimidation:** To immediately stop all threats of legal action and harassment against citizens who oppose the project.
3. **Permanent Cancellation:** We call for the permanent and total cancellation of the Myitsone Dam project, as it fundamentally undermines the interests of local communities and the entire nation of Myanmar.

Kachin State Human Rights Defenders Network

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The Kachin State Human Rights Defenders Network is a coalition established in 2025, comprising six member organizations. Our mission is to protect and promote the human rights of the people living in Kachin State.