

Head of the Myanmar Military, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing

Defence Services Commander-in-Chief's Office
Ministry of Defence Tatmadaw,
Information Technology Department, Office No.3
15015, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
cincdsmyanmar@gmail.com

To the Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, head of the Myanmar Military,

I am writing to express my grave concern about the re-arrest of Thet Hnin Aung on 26 June 2023 on the same day as his release from Zaymathwe Prison after serving two years for his active participation in the Civil Disobedience Movement. That day he was forcibly disappeared for five months and only able to contact his family in November 2023 when he revealed that he has been sentenced to seven years in prison with hard labour under Article 52a of the Counter Terrorism Law.

It is worrying to learn that Thet Hnin Aung was subjected to a secret military trial, where he was not present, nor was he allowed to be legally represented. In addition to receiving the maximum punishment available, this is the first time that a labour activist has not only forcibly been disappeared, but also charged with such a severe sentence.

Of further concern, Thet Hnin Aung's family are particularly worried for his health. Suffering from hearing loss and a troublesome digestive system, he requires daily medication. These health problems are direct results of the torture and other ill-treatment he endured during his prior imprisonment.

As I am sure you are aware, prior to his re-arrest, Thet Hnin Aung was detained for two years (2021-2023) in Insein Prison and Zaymathwe Prison. Disturbingly, however, he never got to enjoy a moment of freedom. On 26 June 2023, the day of his release, witnesses stated that soldiers placed black hoods over Thet Hnin Aung and two other prisoners and took them away by military car.

This travesty of justice should end. Anyone detained or imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising their human rights should be immediately and unconditionally released. Peaceful dissent is a human right.

Therefore, I urge Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to:

- **Guarantee immediate access to necessary medical care for Thet Hnin Aung.**
- **Immediately and unconditionally release Thet Hnin Aung from arbitrary detention and allow him to freely exercise his human rights.**
- **End the practice of enforced disappearances and arbitrary detention and disclose the fate and/or whereabouts of forcibly disappeared people.**
- **Ensure respect for the human rights of everyone in the country including the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and association.**

Yours sincerely,