

October 11, 2022

Press Release:

Letter Sent to 160 Institutions to Urge Engagement with Three Japanese Banks Regarding Junta-linked Projects in Myanmar
Continued Investment May Finance Human Rights Violations by the Myanmar Military

Mekong Watch
Friends of the Earth Japan
Justice For Myanmar
Network Against Japan Arms Trade (NAJAT)
ayus:Network of Buddhists Volunteers on International Cooperation
Japan International Volunteer Center (JVC)

Six civil society organizations that work on business and human rights sent a letter dated September 30, 2022 to 160 major investors in three major Japanese banks (MUFG Bank, Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation, and Mizuho Bank) that are investing or lending to projects that may benefit the Myanmar military, or that hold shares in Japanese companies that may be complicit in human rights violations in Myanmar. The letter urges the investors to engage with the banks.

Since the Myanmar military attempted a coup d'etat in February 2021, we have pointed out that some of the Japanese companies investing in projects in Myanmar may be complicit in human rights violations by the Myanmar military through business operations benefiting the military. Through letters of request and meetings, we have also asked these companies to act in accordance with their human rights policies and international human rights responsibilities. There is a strong concern that if these business operations continue or are conducted as planned, they will provide a source of funds for the Myanmar military, thereby facilitating the military's international crimes, which include the murder of citizens, unlawful arrest, arbitrary detention, sexual violence, forced disappearance, and torture.

In their human rights policies, the financial groups that oversee each of the banks (Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, Mitsui Sumitomo Financial Group, and Mizuho Financial Group) publicly state that they will follow and implement international human rights standards such as the UN Global Compact and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

The letter requests that the institutions holding shares in the three banks promptly engage with the banks to take the "measures required of banks" shown in the letter, and that if the three banks do not take measures even after engagement, to consider divestment.

Please refer to the letter for further details.

[日本語/Japanese]「ミャンマーでの問題事業に投資を継続する日本の3銀行の株主として、ミャンマー国軍の資金源を確実に断つ措置を講じるよう銀行にエンゲージメントを求める要請書」(2022年9月30日付。三菱UFJ銀行、三井住友銀行、みずほ銀行の主要株主160機関に送付)
http://www.mekongwatch.org/report/burma/mbusiness/20220930Letter_Jp.pdf

[英語/English] "Call for Engagement to Urge Banks to Take Measures to Stop the Flow of Funds to the Myanmar Military," dated September 30, 2022, sent to 160 institutional investors holding shares in MUFG Bank, Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation, or Mizuho Bank
http://www.mekongwatch.org/report/burma/mbusiness/20220930Letter_Eng.pdf

List of 160 recipients of the letter (要請書送付先160機関)
<http://www.mekongwatch.org/report/burma/mbusiness/20220930List.pdf>

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