



Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children

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Burma: Women and Girls at Risk

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The Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children condemns the use of force by the military junta in Burma (Myanmar) on unarmed civilians, and the arbitrary detention of civilians, including monks, some of whom are young boys.

The Women's Commission calls on the U.S. government and the international community, especially Burma's primary trading partners, to put pressure on the junta to protect and respect the human rights of the civilian population.

The military regime has a long history of human rights abuses, including rape and sexual violence. Women and children are at great risk, whether they are fleeing the violence or held in detention. The international community must be ready to provide services and care for survivors of rape and sexual violence, including measures to prevent pregnancy or the transmission of HIV/AIDS which result from rape.

As a result of decades of oppression, more than 1.2 million people are internally displaced within Burma or living as refugees or forced migrants in neighboring Thailand, most of them members of ethnic minority groups. The recent violence may cause additional large numbers of Burmese to try and seek safety in Thailand.

The Women's Commission is recommending that:

- the U.S. government and the international community, especially Burma's primary trading partners, put pressure on the junta to protect and respect the human rights of the civilian population;
- the Thai government keep the border open, and allow for the registration of refugees so they can receive protection and access essential services, including food, shelter, health care and education;
- the United States and the international community be prepared to provide assistance to the government of Thailand so it can fulfill its obligations to refugees.

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The Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children works to improve the lives and protect the rights of refugee and displaced women, children and youth worldwide.

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