



Myanmar's civilian government submitted donation request to Australian Government for locally made AstraZeneca vaccine while the country is likely to become an exporter of COVID-19 under the military junta.

Date: 26 July 2021

Myanmar is likely to become an exporter of COVID-19, including potential new variants, if the international community does not act now. This crisis may soon explode to further exacerbate the regional and global health crisis. The National Unity Government of Myanmar, therefore, has submitted an urgent request to Prime Minister Scott Morrison and his government to donate locally made AstraZeneca vaccine.

As the Australian Government has changed its COVID vaccination roll out plan and now relies more on the Pfizer vaccines, we suggest that the AstraZeneca vaccines in stock could be reallocated for those in need in developing countries, and Myanmar should be considered in first line.

There is growing evidence that the military junta is purposely targeting the healthcare system and healthcare workers, using the COVID-19 pandemic as a weapon of war against their own people. Myanmar is now one of the most dangerous places for healthcare workers in the world, with more than 250 attacks this year, by far the highest of any country. The UN Special Advisory Commission for Myanmar has said that military leaders are using the COVID19 as a weapon to quell anti-coup movements. The inhumane actions of these military leaders now threaten the entire region.

The military dictator is not interested to support the country and its people but exists solely for his excessive desire for power. The National Unity Government of Myanmar has set up a COVID19 taskforce to confront the catastrophic situation by joining together with ethnic health organisations in Myanmar led by well-know Dr Cynthia Maung, Ramon Magsaysay Award receiver and one of Time Magazine's Asian Heroes in 2003 and Dr Zaw Wai Soe, NUG Union Minister for Health.

The National Unity Government and its COVID19 taskforce is working closely and in coordination with responsible ethnic health organizations and community-based organizations in this shared endeavour to ensure the equitable access to vaccinations for all people in Myanmar.

Contact:

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THE REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
THE NATIONAL UNITY GOVERNMENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR

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The Hon. Scott Morrison, MP
Prime Minister of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Date: 26 July 2021

Dear Prime Minister

Subject: Seeking Australian Government's urgent help to confronting COVID catastrophe in Myanmar by donating locally made AstraZeneca vaccines.

Reference: National Unity Government of Myanmar (NUG), Acting President's urgent request to Prime Minister of Australia for humanitarian assistance to Myanmar, dated 19 July 2021.

I am writing to follow up our Acting President's request letter to you (See attached) in which he seeks the Australian Government's urgent support to help with the COVID-19 crisis unfolding in Myanmar. Myanmar is facing an extremely serious public health emergency due to uncontrollable COVID-19 transmissions, no governmental responses and no medical supplies and health care. It is as you would know a great challenge to the South and Southeast Asia region. The NUG has set up COVID-19 Taskforce together with Ethnic Health Organisations who are working along the Thai Myanmar border.

On behalf of vulnerable people in Myanmar especially for those who live in the border area, I make this urgent request to your Government, to donate locally made AstraZeneca vaccines to the Taskforce. The initiative will also help not only the vulnerable communities but contain transmission so as to not to spread out to the region.

As the Australian representative of the NUG of Myanmar, I am able to liaise between the Government of Australia and the COVID-19 taskforce. The crisis in Myanmar is now everybody's concern and I implore the Australian Government to provide urgent help to those in this extremely dangerous situation. Your officials can reach me via email tunaung.shwe@mofa.nugmyanmar.org or 0421 160 415.

I am currently at the UNSW undertaking my Doctoral Studies. Please find attached my letter of appointment and CV together with NUG Acting President's urgent request and statement of formation of the Taskforce.

I look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully

**Representative for The Commonwealth of Australia
The National Unity Government of Union of Myanmar**

CC Senator the Hon Marise Payne, Minister for Foreign Affairs
Senator the Hon Penny Wong, Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs
Senator the Hon Dean Smith, Chair of Parliamentary Friends of Myanmar
H.E Zin Mar Aung, Minister for Foreign Affairs, National Unity Government of Myanmar
H.E Prof Zaw Wai Soe, Minister for Health, National Unity Government of Myanmar
H.E Dr Shwe Pon, Deputy Minister for Health, National Unity Government of Myanmar



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COVID - 19 Task Force (CTF)

COVID-19 Task Force Statement
from the COVID-19 Task Force of Ministry of Health, NUG &
Ethnic Health Organisations

Dated: 22nd July 2021

- 1) COVID-19 Task Force (CTF) was formed on 21st July 2021 by the Ministry of Health, National Unity Government in collaboration with Ethnic Health Organisations, in order to prevent, mitigate and control the spread of COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2) COVID-19 Task Force (CTF) is headed by Chair of Ethnic Health Committee, Dr. Cynthia Maung as Clinical Lead and Union Minister for Minister of Health, Dr. Zaw Wai Soe as Deputy Clinical Lead. Relevant staff from the Ministry of Health and Ethnic Health Organisations and various experts will act as members of the task force.
- 3) COVID-19 Task Force (CTF) will be responsible for issuing directives relating to COVID-19 prevention and control public health information and will be giving urgent priority to discussions and cooperation with international associations in order to procure, not only the COVID-19 vaccines but also prerequisite assistance and equipment needed for vaccination programmes. This will be part of the recovery programme for coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 4) In order that CTF achieves the above objectives:
 - a) To be able to procure the COVID-19 vaccines, related vaccine strategy plans, etc., and financial support, discussions and consultations will need to be held with organisations from the United Nations, International Non-Government Organisations, International Governments and ASEAN Countries.
 - b) To be able to control and manage COVID-19 pandemic the public will need to comply strictly with the public health directives issued.

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