

Joint Statement of Opposition to efforts to resume the Myitsone Dam Project by 49 Civil Society Organizations and Kachin residents

5th May 2026

The attempts to forcibly resume the stalled Myitsone Dam project, which has been suspended since 2011 under former President Thein Sein's administration, are in direct opposition to the will of local Kachin people and the citizens of Myanmar.

According to the junta's order 214/2025 (December 16, 2025), individuals or organizations expressing opposition and rejection of the project without firm evidence will face legal actions under the existing law. Conducting fake public referendum according to the junta's order is the antithesis of freedom of speech and expression.

The Myitsone Dam project agreement is made between the Chinese government and a series of authoritarian ruling groups, forcibly proceeding with implementation in the name of development while prioritizing their own business interests, without consent from the people.

The Myitsone Dam project is 139.5 metres in height and 1,310 metres in width, and the project uses techniques that could potentially flood the area which is the size of Singapore. According to the "Independent Expert Review of the Myitsone Dam EIA (2013)", the project would not only destroy water sources but also the bio-diversity of the area. Additionally, the project has forcibly displaced 12,000 people. As a consequence, ancestral homes, beliefs and lands that have been inhabited and cultivated for generations have been forcibly seized, resulting in the total loss of traditional livelihoods including agriculture and livestock.

Therefore, we issue this opposition statement demanding the total cessation of the Myitsone Dam project, as it offers no benefits to the public and will only result in the severe destruction and loss of people's lives, homes, and properties.

1. The Chinese state-owned company (SPIC-YN) must immediately cease its lobbying efforts to resume the project, which disregard the clear opposition of the Myanmar people to the construction of the Myitsone Dam project.
2. To immediately stop threatening civilians who oppose the Myitsone Dam project and stop conducting fake public referendum by using force and intimidation against the public.
3. To permanently cancel the Myitsone Dam project that can adversely impact the well-being of local Kachin people and the whole of Myanmar.

4. To completely cancel construction of the project, as building the massive Myitsone Dam project while Myanmar is embroiled in nationwide war will only intensify the conflict.

5. We hereby declare that no government shall forcibly implement any project or investment under the guise of development without genuine consent of local communities in Kachin State.

For contact information;

Seng Mai, Kachin Human Rights Watch; khrw.721@gmail.com

Cindy Aung, Myanmar Women Environmental Human Rights Defenders Networking Group; wehrd.mm@gmail.com