

Burma

Myanmar's Shadow Government Vows a New Constitution and End to Dictatorship

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The Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) has announced plans to set up a national unity government in the first week of April to work on eliminating the dictatorship and drafting a new Constitution.

The CRPH—formed by elected lawmakers from the National league for Democracy (NLD) who were prevented from taking seats in the Union Parliament by the Feb. 1 coup— said in a statement that an interim national unity government will be formed based on an agreed Federal Democracy Charter. The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is Myanmar's Union Parliament.

According to the 20-page Federal Democracy Charter, which was made to the public on Wednesday night, the unity government will be composed of a president, state counselor, two vice presidents, a prime minister, ministers and deputies.

It will work to overthrow the junta by using all means: politically, economically, socially, via foreign affairs, through diplomacy, defense and security, according to the Charter.

The Charter outlined initial agreements on establishing a federal democratic union and interim constitutional arrangement before the country adopts a new Constitution that can guarantee equality and autonomy through a national referendum.

The members of the Charter include the elected lawmakers who were prevented from taking parliamentary seats by the Feb. 1 coup, pro-democracy political parties, general strike leaders and civil society groups as well as ethnic armed groups, the CRPH stated.

Following the release of the Federal Democracy Charter to the public, the CRPH also announced the repeal of 2008 Constitution, saying it was designed to prolong military rule and prevent the emergence of a democratic federal union.



After the CRPH, a committee of elected MPs serving as a shadow government, declared Myanmar's military-drafted 2008 Constitution abolished, young people in Yangon set copies of the charter on fire on Thursday. (Photo: The Irrawaddy)

The military takeover on Feb. 1 violated the Constitution and as a result nullified it, the CRPH stated.

Drafted by the then-military regime, the 2008 Constitution automatically granted the military a quarter of parliamentary seats and three ministerial portfolios together with other special powers, privileges and immunity from prosecution for human rights violations.



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The military declared a one-year state of emergency on Feb. 1 after detaining President U Win Myin, State Counselor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and other government officials.

As of Wednesday, it has arrested more than 2,700 individuals including elected leaders, lawmakers, political activists, student protesters, protesting workers against the coup. The regime's forces have killed at least 536 people, including more than 40 children, in two months.

Welcoming the CRPH's announcements of the Federal Democracy Charter and the abolishing of the 2008 Constitution, residents in Yangon fired fireworks and applauded at midnight despite the regime's forces nighttime patrols.



Healthcare staff protested against the military regime in Mandalay on Apr. 1. They also burned the military-drafted 2008 charter, celebrating the declaration of its abolition by the CRPH, a committee of elected lawmakers, the night before. (Photo: CJ)

People in several cities started Thursday with setting afire copies of the military-drafted 2008 Constitution.

The military regime has declared the CRPH as unlawful association and warranted its members under the incitement charges

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