

Thailand Reaffirms Bonds With Myanmar Junta

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Myanmar's junta leader Min Aung Hlaing and Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha, who also seized power in a coup, exchanged messages on Thursday to mark 75 years of diplomatic ties.

The Thai ex-general reaffirmed Thailand's support for Myanmar's pursuit of a peaceful and prosperous democratic federal union. Prayut is set to transfer power to property tycoon Srettha Thavisin, who was selected by the parliament in Bangkok this week.

In his message to the junta's foreign minister Than Swe, outgoing Thai foreign minister Don Pramudwinai, reaffirmed Thailand's commitment to strengthening bilateral cooperation.

Prayut said Min Aung Hlaing sought his help after the 2021 coup. He has also expressed support for Min Aung Hlaing's plan for democratization in Myanmar.

As foreign governments condemned the coup and the military's brutal crackdown on peaceful protesters, Thailand attended the Armed Forces Day in Naypyitaw, a month after the coup. The first international trip by then-foreign minister Wunna Maung Lwin, who now sits on the regime's governing body, the State Administration Council, was to Thailand.

Last year, the regime and Thailand appointed new ambassadors.

While Min Aung Hlaing has ignored ASEAN's peace plan for Myanmar known as the five-point consensus, Don sponsored an informal meeting on Myanmar in June in Pattaya, giving Than Swe, who served as the ambassador to the USA under President Thein Sein's quasi-civilian administration, an opportunity to repeat junta justifications for the 2021 coup and blame the popular revolutionaries for Myanmar's crisis.

Don is reportedly the only high-level representative of a foreign government to meet State Counselor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. It was claimed that he met the jailed civilian leader in Naypyitaw in July. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was arrested on February 1, 2021, during the coup and jailed on trumped-up charges and the regime has kept her isolated ever since.

The Thai government this week imposed jail sentences on seven young Thai people who staged a protest outside Myanmar's Embassy in Bangkok after the 2021 coup.

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