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## [Myanmar: Note on New Draft Cyber Security Law](#)

The military regime running Myanmar first proposed a draft Cyber Security Law in February 2021 but strong criticism from a number of companies and organisations, including the Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD), led to the temporary withdrawal of those proposals. In January 2022, however, the regime promulgated a new version of the draft Law which retains all of the repressive elements of the original version and adds further restrictions. CLD is today releasing its Note on the New Draft Cyber Security Law, providing a detailed assessment of the impact of the changes to the draft Law and how they breach international human rights guarantees.

*“The original version of this draft Law was already very repressive but these amendments make it much worse,”* said Toby Mendel, Executive Director of CLD. *“The changes are carefully tailored to give the military regime power to control those aspects of digital and civil space where it feels threatened, such as the use of VPNs and reliance on cryptocurrencies to get around its increasingly repressive control measures.”*

Some of the key points made by CLD in the Note were:

- The regulatory powers of institutions which are not independent of the military regime and which were already too extensive have been further expanded.
- The requirement to get permission from the Ministry to use a VPN, and the minimum sanction of one year’s imprisonment for breach, is completely illegitimate.
- The significant expansion of control over financial services, including the explicit ban on the use of cryptocurrencies, represents, in conjunction with other measures, a clear breach of the right to freedom of association and an attempt to limit further civic space.
- The power of military-controlled (i.e. non-independent) bodies to impose harsh administrative sanctions on a range of actors is not legitimate, and this is also true of the provision for mandatory minimum imprisonment sentences for numerous offences.

CLD recommends that the military regime to stop trying to introduce this illegitimate law, in an undemocratic manner. At such time as democracy returns to Myanmar, proper consultations could be held regarding what form of cyber security law might be needed.

CLD’s Analysis of the Amendments is available [here in English](#) and [here in Burmese](#).

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