

February 27, 2026

Shingo Ueno  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Sumitomo Corporation

**Re: Inquiry regarding ongoing partnership with military junta-controlled Myanmar Posts and Telecommunication**

Justicer For Myanmar  
Mekong Watch  
ayus:Network of Buddhists Volunteers on International Cooperation  
Friends of the Earth Japan  
Japan International Volunteer Center (JVC)  
Network Against Japan Arms Trade (NAJAT)  
Pacific Asia Resource Center (PARC)

We are civil society organizations from Japan and Myanmar that make policy proposals urging Japanese companies to consider the environment, society, and human rights in their overseas business operations.

Our organizations have previously engaged with your companies separately to raise concerns regarding its continued business with state-owned telecommunications firm, Myanmar Posts and Telecommunication (MPT), illegally controlled by the Myanmar military junta.<sup>1</sup>

Since February 1, 2021 when the Myanmar military attempted a coup, it has been committing war crimes and crimes against humanity with total impunity as it tries to take control of the country. The Internet in Myanmar since the military's coup attempt is among the most restricted in the world.<sup>2</sup> In 2025, ahead of a sham election, the junta intensified digital surveillance and censorship, illegally passing a cybersecurity law to control online content and monitor users, while an "election protection" law criminalized criticism and led to legal action against more than 400 people, including for online activity.<sup>3</sup>

We understand that since 2014, MPT is a joint operation between the now junta-controlled Ministry of Transport and Communications (MOTC) and Sumitomo Corporation and KDDI Corporation through the joint venture KDDI Sumit Global Myanmar Co., Ltd. (KSGM). While we note your public statements that KSGM has agreed to amend its agreement with MPT

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.mekongwatch.org/PDF/rq\\_20211018\\_Eng.pdf](https://www.mekongwatch.org/PDF/rq_20211018_Eng.pdf);  
<https://www.justiceformyanmar.org/stories/silk-road-of-surveillance>; <https://foejapan.org/issue/20210426/3583/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://freedomhouse.org/country/myanmar/freedom-world/2025>

<sup>3</sup> <https://freedomhouse.org/country/myanmar/freedom-world/2025https://www.hrw.org/news/2026/02/02/submission-to-foreign-affairs-defence-and-trade-references-committee-on-democracy>

with a view to limiting the scope of its support for MPT's telecommunications operations, it remains invested in the telecom operator.<sup>4</sup>

Given KDDI and Sumitomo's continued stake in the joint operation, your companies retain responsibility for the adverse human rights impacts linked to MPT's surveillance and censorship collaboration with the junta.

In September 2025, a Justice For Myanmar's investigation exposed significant collaboration between the illegal Myanmar military junta and Geedge Networks in implementing a commercial version of China's "Great Firewall", giving the junta unprecedented capabilities to track down, arrest, torture and kill civilians.<sup>5</sup> The report highlights that this far-reaching Chinese surveillance and censorship technology was implemented in MPT data centres for the military junta.

MPT was among the first operators to implement Geedge systems. Hardware and software supplied by Geedge Networks enable tracking of network traffic at the individual level, permitting the military to identify the geographic location of mobile subscribers in real time by linking their activity to specific cell identifiers (cell IDs). With MPT's direct assistance, the junta has enhanced its capability to track down, arrest, torture and kill human rights defenders, journalists and civilians across the country.

This is not the first time MPT has facilitated surveillance for the military junta. In 2020, Israeli surveillance-for-hire corporation Cognyte Software Limited won a tender for the provision of an interception gateway to MPT.<sup>6</sup>

We are deeply concerned that your companies' continued partnership with MPT contravene human rights responsibilities under OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and risk aiding and abetting the junta's commission of international crimes. All businesses have a responsibility to respect human rights and are therefore required to exercise human rights due diligence to identify and prevent, mitigate and remedy adverse human rights impacts. Companies should use their leverage to ensure that its partners act responsibly, and, where no improvement is seen, responsibly exit.

As you are aware, in June 2023 Sweden's Council on Ethics of the AP pension funds recommended the exclusion of Sumitomo and KDDI from investment by the Norwegian Government Pension Fund Global (GPF) citing the "unacceptable risk" of contributing to serious rights violation in war and conflict. The Ethics Council concluded that as long as the partnership with MPT persists, this risk "will remain at an unacceptable level".<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.sumitomocorp.com/en/mideast-africa/news/important/group/20250428>;  
[https://newsroom.kddi.com/news/detail/kddi\\_nr\\_s-34\\_3804.html](https://newsroom.kddi.com/news/detail/kddi_nr_s-34_3804.html)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.justiceformyanmar.org/stories/silk-road-of-surveillance>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.justiceformyanmar.org/stories/israeli-surveillance-firm-cognytes-business-in-myanmar-exposed>

<sup>7</sup> <https://files.nettsteder.regjeringen.no/wpuploads01/sites/275/2024/03/Sumitomo-ENG.pdf>;  
<https://files.nettsteder.regjeringen.no/wpuploads01/sites/275/2024/03/KDDI-ENG.pdf>

We would also like to bring your attention to MPT's provision of web hosting services to the junta propaganda sites, including the junta's Ministry of Information (moi.gov.mm), Infosheet (infosheet.org), Myawady News (myawady.net.mm), the Office of the Commander in Chief (cincds.gov.mm) and the Ministry of Defence (mod.gov.mm). These pages serve as Myanmar military mouthpieces and disseminate military propaganda, misinformation, and hate speech to users worldwide. Your company's role in sustaining junta propaganda infrastructure creates further adverse human rights impacts that should be urgently addressed.

Sumitomo and KDDI's continued partnership with military junta-controlled Myanmar Posts and Telecommunication poses risks not only to the people of Myanmar, but also to your companies and investors through potential liability under international law for adverse impacts. We note that even if KDDI and Sumitomo engaged MPT on human rights concerns, all such efforts appear to have failed, as evidenced by MPT's continued central role in junta's digital repression.

Therefore, we would like to ask the following questions regarding your ongoing partnership with MPT.

- Are you aware that your company is involved in the implementation of mass surveillance and censorship for the MOTC using products—hardware and software—supplied by Geedge Networks (including Tiangou Secure Gateway (TSG), Network Zodiac, and the Cyber Narrator) in your Naypyidaw, Yangon and Mandalay data centres?
- Given the increasing human rights risks, does your company have any plans to divest from KSGM and end its partnership with MPT?
- Have you conducted human rights due diligence on the provision of hosting services to the military junta? If so, what are the results of that due diligence?

We request that you kindly respond by March 30, 2026. Please note that your response—or lack thereof—will be published on our website.

**Contact information for responses and inquiries regarding this matter:**

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