I wish to express my appreciation to the United States Government for recognizing my grassroots activism with the Secretary of State's International Women of Courage (IWOC) Award for 2022.

Since my student life in Yadanabon University of Mandalay, I, a member of ethnic minority, have embraced non-violence activism in campaigning for democracy, human rights and minority rights.

Following the military coup d’état on February 1, 2021, we have resisted the regime by taking to the streets to protest peacefully. We call for the restoration of democracy, the releases of the political detainees, as well as the formation of the genuine federal union. Our people face the regime’s unrelenting violence and brutal crackdowns. Moreover, the regime has been torching entire villages, launching airstrikes against civilians and executing my fellow resisters en masse.

I dedicate my unequivocal support to our people’s resistance and resilience.

My fellow Burmese activists, from different generations, are fighting an uphill battle against the regime’s army that is heavily armed and its personnel trained by the same Russian military which Ukrainian people are defending. The Russian and Burmese regimes are birds of the same feather.

It is heartening to read the daily news reports that the President Joe Biden’s administration is providing all necessary military hardware, humanitarian aid and communications technology to Ukraine while rightly imposing unprecedented rounds of economic, trade and financial sanctions against the ruthless Putin regime.

We, Burmese people, too have been in the forefront of the fight against the repressive regime at home. The new generation of Burmese – Generation Z – of which I am a member have jettisoned the old racially and religiously exclusive ideas and national visions of our elders. Thousands of youths from all walks of life have taken up arms as well as continued to engage in numerous forms of non-violence resistance.

As we, the Generation Z of Burmese resistance, are forging ahead with our national vision for a new inclusive society and participatory democracy, I
would like to make a heart-felt appeal to the United States Government to consider extending similar packages of concrete support to us; Burmese democrats and resisters.

I would like to request the release of the $1 billion of Myanmar people’s funds, that has been frozen by the US, to the democratic leadership under the National Unity Government, of which I am a leading member.

Min Aung Hlaing’s regime should be designated as a “terrorist” organisation. Further, I request that sweeping financial sanctions are imposed against all Myanmar-military controlled and/or junta-linked commercial and financial entities, including Central Bank of Myanmar and Myanmar Gas and Oil Enterprise (MOGE).

In conclusion, I stand with all women around the world – from Ukraine to Afghanistan to Sudan to my home of Myanmar and beyond as we fight the oppressive structures and systems which bind us and deny us freedom, equity and truth. We know in our very beings that patriarchy, militarism and all forms of violence against can no longer be tolerated and we will rise.

Thank you.