

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom Hearing

Testimony and Remark by [REDACTED] A Chin Baptist-Christian Pastor

I am deeply grateful to the Commissioners of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom for granting me the opportunity to share my testimony and remarks at this hearing. I would also like to express my heartfelt appreciation for your tireless commitment to defending freedom of religion or belief worldwide, including Burma/Myanmar.

I am an ethnic Chin Christian from northern Burma. I have been a Baptist Pastor for 16 years in a village where the Myanmar military (Tatmadaw) is stationed. Three months after the 2021 military coup, the soldiers entered my home and searched every room, confiscated my computer and many of my religious books, before burning them outside. They ordered me to stop all my religious activities, including preaching and worship. Tatmadaw also bombed our church twice and damaged two buildings. I came to the realization that soldiers were targeting religious workers and religious buildings. Baptist News Global rightly notes, “Christian churches are explicitly targeted with bombings, fires and mass arrests” in Burma/Myanmar.¹

I fled to the forest about four miles away from the village along with all my villagers and church members. We built a shelter to live in and a shelter for worship as well. I led worship services, prayers, and preached to the internally displaced people in the forest. On Easter in 2023, we scheduled the worship service to begin at 9 am. Unfortunately, the military junta’s jet fighter dropped bombs on our village, forcing us to cancel the Easter service.

With my wife and my three kids, we fled the military junta’s persecution and legally arrived in the United States in August 2023. I am currently in the United States under Temporary Protected Status, which has been terminated effective January 26, 2026. My life is in extreme danger if I am forced to return to Burma, as the Tatmadaw continues to rule the country with terror.

The military junta seeks to legitimize its administration by holding elections. The junta leader, General Min Aung Hlaing justified himself by claiming the election is free and fair. However, the Tatmadaw continues to imprison democratically elected President U Win Myint, State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi, and many other leaders. Destroying of churches continues. Insecurity is widespread. Millions of people in Burma are still displaced—including my church members—without a house for living, a church to worship and pray, assistance for surviving, a school for learning, and hope for the future. They are holding on by a thread, struggling to survive even one more day.

Christianity in Burma/Myanmar has been intentionally, structurally, and systematically discriminated against and persecuted since Prime Minister U Nu’s declaration of Buddhism as “the State religion” in 1958. The government of the Union of Burma/Myanmar recognizes the “special

¹ Baptist News Global, “[An Advent call for advocacy for our Burmese brothers and sisters – Baptist News Global](#)”, December 16, 2025.

position of Buddhism” in its constitution (Article 361). Granting Buddhism legal status in the constitution is understood as permitting it to marginalize other religions rather than to ensure equal standing within the union.

Allow me to highlight the recent violations of the Tatmadaw against Christians in Burma/Myanmar.

1. On Christmas Day, December 25, 2025, the Tatmadaw’s jet fighter bombed and destroyed seven houses in Mindat Town, Chin State, Burma. According to the Burma Research Institute’s statement on December 31, 2025, the main reason for the bombing was that the military regime believed that many people were gathering to celebrate Christmas.²
2. On November 19, 2025, at midnight, the Tatmadaw’s fighter jets dropped bombs twice on Thuklai village in Chin State, Burma, and the Assembly of God Church and the school were destroyed, the Burma Research Institute documented.³
3. In November 2025, the Tatmadaw entered Tayagone Baptist Church, Kalay Township, Sagaing Region, and confiscated church properties: sound systems including speakers, a piano, guitars, two engine generators, hymn books, and Bibles. None of the Tayagone villagers and the church members have been able to return home. The church's senior pastor informed me of the updates.
4. On November 30, 2025, an ethnic Chin Christian pastor, Pau Muan Lian, was arrested in Yangon and sent to military training by the Tatmadaw.⁴ It is not only an assault on an individual but also an intentional abuse of the fundamental principle of religious liberty and a systematic violence against religious freedom.
5. After the 2021 coup, by citing Chin Human Rights Organization, Vatican News reports on April 11, 2025 that “at least 107 religious buildings, including 67 churches, have been destroyed in Chin State by army bombings”.⁵ Although the exact number of damaged and destroyed churches and other religious buildings is unknown, this number is undoubtedly increasing.

The situation in Burma has grown increasingly dire, showing no signs of genuine improvement. Therefore, with great honor, I would like to urge the U.S to continue to support Christians in Burma and to protect their religious works in the USA.

**Pseudonym is used for security reasons.*

² Burma Research Institute, “On Christmas Day, the Burmese Military’s Airstrikes Destroyed Seven Houses in Mindat Town, Chin State, Burma”, [Christmas-Day-Mindat-town-bombing-Statement-Dec-31-2025.pdf](#).

³ Burma Research Institute, “[PRESS-RELEASE-Remarks-by-ZTHmung-IRF-Roundtable-Given-on-Nov-25-2025.pdf](#)”

⁴ Chindwin News Agency, “An ethnic Chin Christian pastor was apprehended by the security forces of the junta in Yangon city and subsequently sent to the Ye military training base for military training on 30 November 2025,” [An ethnic Chin Christian pastor was... - Chindwin News Agency | Facebook](#), Posted on December 8, 2025.

⁵ Vatican News, “[Airstrikes destroy another Catholic church in Myanmar - Vatican News](#).”