

The New York Times  
The Opinion Pages

**To the Editor:**

Re "[Keep Up the Pressure on Myanmar's Generals](#)" (Op-Ed, March 6):

Peter Popham misses the point when it comes to a discussion about reform in Myanmar, formerly Burma. Sanctions or no sanctions, the Myanmar Constitution prohibits any meaningful change, no matter how large President U Thein Sein's appetite for reform.

This Constitution not only guarantees the military a dominant role in politics, but it also sets it entirely outside the civilian government and, through its broad sweeping amnesty provision, guarantees the military immunity for its crimes, including sexual violence against ethnic women.

Consequently, if Myanmar is truly to move away from authoritarian rule toward a democratic system based on the rule of law, the focus needs to be on the Constitution, justice and accountability, not sanctions.

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New York, March 6, 2012

A version of this letter appeared in print on March 9, 2012, on page A30 of the New York edition with the headline: Change in Myanmar.