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Justice Center
Human Rights Through the Rule of Law



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December 16, 2014

Why Burma should not be anyone's "Destination of the Year"

Dear Friends,

When *Travel + Leisure* magazine this month declared Burma its "Destination of the Year," the Global Justice Center spoke with journalist Lauren Wolfe to lift the veil on human rights abuses that continue to be perpetrated with impunity in a country deemed to be "on the cusp of great change."

In Ms. Wolfe's article published in *Foreign Policy*, "[Come for the Golden Pagodas and Stay for the War Crimes](#)," GJC Senior Burma Researcher Phyu Phyu Sann spoke about the current environment inside Burma, particularly how the military continues to commit crimes of sexual violence without any fear of prosecution or accountability. Using a recent report by GJC partner, the Women's League of Burma, Ms. Wolfe reports that **"rape is used as a means to punish, gain information, humiliate, instill fear, and even to ethnically cleanse minority populations"** in Burma.

Burma's military is able to use rape as a weapon of war due to Burma's 2008 constitution, which was officially adopted in 2011. Ms. Sann states that the constitution **"places the military outside the purview of the civilian courts and includes an amnesty provision which precludes the prosecution of military perpetrators of crimes, including sexualized violence."** The constitution also guarantees the military's continued supremacy, as it gives the military 25% of seats in Parliament. Reform is therefore nearly impossible, as amending the constitution requires the approval of more than 75% of Parliament. As Tin Tin Nyo, the Secretary for the Women's League of Burma General, said to Ms. Wolfe: "for the people who have been suffering at the hands of the government and military for decades, **nothing has changed.**"

The Global Justice Center is fighting for true democratic reform in Burma. This starts by getting the international community to address Burma's constitution as a violation of international law and a roadblock to justice for the Burmese people.

We rely on people like you to make change happen in

the parts of the world most in need. Thank you for your continued support of GJC's work.

Sincerely,



Janet Benshoof, President
Global Justice Center

Learn more about GJC's [Burma Law Project](#).

Global Justice Center | info@globaljusticecenter.net | <http://www.globaljusticecenter.net>

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