Joint Call for a Global Arms Embargo on Myanmar

We, the undersigned organizations, call on the United Nations Security Council and UN member states to urgently institute a coordinated, global arms embargo on Myanmar in response to the February 1, 2021 military coup that has deprived the people of Myanmar of the right to democratically elect their government.
February 24, 2021

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An Open Letter to the UN Security Council and Individual UN Member States

We, the undersigned organizations, call on the United Nations Security Council and UN member states to urgently institute a coordinated, global arms embargo on Myanmar in response to the February 1, 2021 military coup that has deprived the people of Myanmar of the right to democratically elect their government. Our concerns are heightened by ongoing violations of human rights and the security forces’ history of grave abuses against peaceful critics of military rule, as well as against the Rohingya and other ethnic minority groups.

Under the commander-in-chief, Sr. Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, the Myanmar military has detained the elected civilian leaders of the country, nullified the results of the November 2020 democratic elections, and installed a junta, the State Administration Council, under a manufactured “state of emergency.” Since February 1, the junta has increasingly used excessive and at times lethal force at demonstrations; threatened and arbitrarily detained activists, journalists, students, and civil servants; and imposed rolling internet shutdowns that put lives at risk.

Days after the coup, UN Secretary-General António Guterres stated, “We will do everything we can to mobilize all the key actors and international community to put enough pressure on Myanmar to make sure that this coup fails.” The UN special rapporteur on Myanmar has called for targeted UN sanctions on the military and an arms embargo, while the deputy high commissioner for human rights has voiced support for targeted UN sanctions on the coup leaders.

In that spirit, we urge the Security Council to immediately impose a comprehensive arms embargo on Myanmar. Such a resolution should bar the direct and indirect

Signature

Access Now
Advocacy Forum-Nepal
AFL-CIO
All Arakan Students’ and Youths’ Congress
Arakan Information Center
Arakan Rivers Network
Arakan Rohingya Society for Peace and Human Rights
ARTICLE 19
ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights
Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs
Asia Democracy Network
Asia Justice and Rights (AJAR)
Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
supply, sale, or transfer of all weapons, munitions, and other military-related equipment, including dual-use goods such as vehicles and communications and surveillance equipment, as well as the provision of training, intelligence, and other military assistance. The embargo should be accompanied by robust monitoring and enforcement mechanisms.

Any sale or transfer of military-related equipment to Myanmar could provide the means to further repress the people of Myanmar in violation of international humanitarian and human rights law.

Until the Council acts, individual UN member states should adopt measures at the national and regional levels to block sales and other transfers of weapons and materiel to Myanmar, with the goal of extending an arms embargo to as close to a global scale as possible.

For decades, the Security Council’s response to crimes by the Myanmar security forces has been inadequate, emboldening the military to continue committing abuses without fear of serious consequences. The current crisis demands a change in course.

On February 4, the Security Council spoke with a single voice to demand the release of all those arbitrarily detained and the protection of the country’s democratic institutions. Council members should use that newfound consensus to take swift and substantive action. An arms embargo would be the centerpiece of a global effort to shield the people of Myanmar from a return to abusive and autocratic rule.

The time to act is now.

Signature

Asian Human Rights Commission  
Asian Migrant Centre  
Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL)  
Asian Resource Foundation  
Association of Human Rights Defenders and  
Promoters  
Association of Women for Awareness and Motivation (AWAM)  
Australian Centre for International Justice  
Australian Lawyers for Human Rights  
BALAOD Mindanaw  
Bir Duino Kyrgyzstan  
Brotherhood For Democracy (BFD)  
Burma Campaign UK  
Burma Human Rights Network (BHRN)
Signature

Burmese Rohingya Association in Japan  
Burmese Rohingya Community in Australia  
Bytes For All  
Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR)  
Cambodian Food And Service Workers Federation (CFSWF)  
Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC)  
Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (LICADHO)  
Canadian Rohingya Development Initiative  
Center for Alliance of Labor and Human Rights (CENTRAL)  
Center for Peace Education, Miriam College  
Center for Social Integrity  
Centre for Human Rights and Development  
Centre for Peace and Justice, Brac University  
CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation  
Climate Change Working Group-Myanmar  
Colorful Girls  
Community Resource Centre Foundation (CRC)  
Cross Cultural Foundation  
Christian Solidarity Worldwide  
Dawei Pro Bono Lawyer Network  
Democracy, Peace and Women Organization  
DHEWA (Development for Health, Education, Work, and Awareness) Welfare Society  
Equality Myanmar  
Equitable Cambodia  
European Rohingya Council  
Federal Association of Vietnamese Refugees in the Federal Republic of Germany  
Fortify Rights  
Free Rohingya Coalition  
Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect  
Global Justice Center  
Global Witness  
Htioi Gender and Development Foundation  
Human Rights First  
Human Rights Foundation of Monland  
Human Rights Law Centre  
Human Rights Office-Sri Lanka  
Human Rights Watch  
Human Rights Without Frontiers  
Info Birmanie  
Innovation for Change Network  
Institute for Asian Democracy  
Institute of Statelessness and Inclusion  
International Campaign for the Rohingya  
International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS), Asia Pacific  
International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development (INFID)  
International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT)  
Jewish Alliance of Concern Over Burma  
Jubilee Australia  
Justice for All/Burma Task Force  
Justice for Myanmar  
Kachin State Women’s Network  
Karapatan Alliance Philippines  
Karen Human Rights Group  
KontraS Aceh  
Loka Ahlinn Social Development Organization  
Maldivian Democracy Network (MDN)  
MAP Foundation  
Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia)  
Mekong Migration Network  
Mennonite Central Committee  
MeSheWe  
Mother Nature Cambodia  
Myanmar Human Rights Alliances Network (MHRAN)  
National Campaign for Sustainable Development Nepal  
Never Again Coalition  
New School for Democracy  
No Business With Genocide  
Nonviolence International  
Odhikar  
Olof Palme International Center  
OutRight Action International  
PAX  
Pax Christi Aotearoa New Zealand  
Pax Christi Australia  
Pax Christi International  
Pax Christi Korea  
Pax Christi Philippines  
People’s Empowerment Foundation  
People’s Watch  
Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA)  
Progressive Voice  
Prosecute; don’t perpetrate  
Public Association “Dignity”  
Pusat KOMAS  
Refugees International  
Restless Beings  
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights  
Rohingya Association of Canada  
Rohingya Human Rights Initiative  
Rohingya Today  
Rohingya Women Education Initiative  
Rohingya Youth for Legal Action  
Smile Foundation  
Swedish Burma Committee  
Taiwan Association for Human Rights  
Taiwan Forever Association  
Tampadipa Institute  
The Arakan Project  
The May 18 Memorial Foundation  
The PLAN: Public Legal Aid Network  
The Swedish Rohingya Association
February 24, 2021

Signature

Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania
US Campaign for Burma
Viet Tan
Vietnamese Women for Human Rights
Voice of Rohingya
Win Without War
World Federalist Movement/Institute for Global Policy
World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)
YMCA Mandalay
Youth Resource Development Program (YRDP)