

Global Civil Society Statement on Myanmar

We, the undersigned organizations, call on the United Nations Security Council to urgently impose a comprehensive global arms embargo on Myanmar to help prevent further violations of human rights against peaceful protesters and others opposing military rule. In recent weeks, Myanmar security forces have killed hundreds of people, including dozens of children, merely for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

Since the February 1, 2021 coup, Myanmar's military junta has responded with increasing brutality to nationwide protests calling for the restoration of democratic civilian rule. As of May 4, security forces have killed at least 769 people, including 51 children as young as 5, and arbitrarily detained several thousand activists, journalists, civil servants, and politicians. Hundreds have been forcibly disappeared, the authorities unwilling to provide information on their well-being or where they are being held. Over the past few months, the military has demonstrated a callous disregard for human life that has driven its strategy for decades. In video footage from cities and towns across the country, soldiers can be seen shooting down protesters, including children, brutally beating medical aid workers, and firing shotguns into crowds of peacefully protesting doctors.

In addition to the latest violations of human rights, Myanmar's security forces have a history of grave abuses against peaceful critics of the government and military, and war crimes and other international crimes against the Rohingya and other ethnic minority groups. Of particular note is the military's widely documented use of sexual and gender-based violence as a weapon against ethnic communities.

No government should sell a single bullet to the junta under these circumstances. Imposing a global arms embargo on Myanmar is the minimum necessary step the Security Council should take in response to the military's escalating violence. Arms and materiel provided to Myanmar's security forces are likely to be used by the security forces to commit abuses in violation of international human rights and humanitarian law.

For this reason, the undersigned organizations urge the United Kingdom, the Security Council's "penholder" on Myanmar, and other Security Council member states to begin negotiations on a resolution authorizing an arms embargo as soon as possible. This will demonstrate to the junta that there will be no more business as usual.

Security Council members have increasingly spoken with one voice on Myanmar. The Council has called for the immediate release of Aung San Suu Kyi and others arbitrarily detained, including civilian leaders. It has condemned the military's crackdown on peaceful protesters and called for an end to the ongoing violence. But unity is not an end in itself. The Council should now build on that unity and negotiate a resolution that would include an arms embargo and other substantive measures.

A comprehensive UN arms embargo on Myanmar should bar the direct and indirect 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. Such an embargo should be accompanied by robust monitoring and enforcement mechanisms.

We note with disappointment the failure of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' (ASEAN) April 24, 2021 summit to take more robust action to protect Myanmar's people. Less than a day after the summit's conclusions were published, the military's violence continued, which only highlights the need for UN member countries and the Security Council to take decisive action to pressure the junta to reverse course.

The time for statements has passed. The Security Council should take its consensus on Myanmar to a new level and agree on immediate and substantive action. An arms embargo would be the centerpiece of a global effort to protect the people of Myanmar from further atrocities and help bring an end to impunity for crimes under international law.

Myanmar's people cannot afford to wait any longer for the Security Council to take action.

Signatories

ACAT-France
 Access Now
 Act Church of Sweden
 Action Committee for Democracy Development
 Action on Armed Violence (AOAV)
 Africa Centre for Security, Governance and Research
 African Council of Religious Leaders-Religions for Peace
 Alliance for Democracy in Laos
 ALTSEAN Burma
 Amnesty International
 Arakan Institute for Peace and Development (AiPAD)
 Arakan Rohingya National Organization
 ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights
 Asia Democracy Network
 Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
 Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP)
 Association for Public Policy – APP (Argentina)
 Association INFO BIRMANIE (Info Burma)
 AVAAZ
 Baptist Union of Denmark
 Burma Campaign UK
 Burma Human Rights Network
 Burma Task Force
 Burmese Rohingya Organization UK
 Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies
 Calgary Karen Community (CKCA)
 California Shan Society
 Cameroon Youths and Students Forum for Peace
 Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT)
 Canadian Burmese Rohingya Organization
 Canadian Rohingya Development Initiative
 Center for Justice and Accountability
 Center for Peace Education – Miriam College
 Center for Victims of Torture
 Centre Delas for Peace Studies
 Centro de Estudios EcuMénicos, A.C. – México
 Chin Human Rights Organization
 Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW)
 CIVICUS
 Civil Rights Defenders
 Committee of 100 in Finland
 Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI)
 Community Empowerment for Progress Organization
 Control Arms
 Cordaid
 Dallas Ft. Worth Karen Community
 Dallas Karen Baptist Church, TX
 Danish United Nations Association
 Danmission
 DEEKU, the Karenni Community, USA
 EarthRights International
 Edmonton Karen Community Youth Organization
 Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights
 FOMICRES, Mozambique
 Fortify Rights
 Forum on Disarmament and Development (FDD)
 FundiPau (Fundacio per la Pau)
 Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect
 Global Justice Center
 Global Movement for Myanmar Democracy (GM4MD)
 Global Network of Women Peacebuilders
 Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict
 Global Witness
 Good Neighbors
 Hawai'i Institute for Human Rights
 HelpAge International
 Human Rights Foundation of Monland (Thailand)
 Human Rights Information and Training Center
 Human Rights Watch
 Institute for Asian Democracy
 Institute for Justice and Reconciliation
 Institute for Statelessness and Inclusion
 International Campaign for the Rohingya
 International Center for Not-for-Profit Law
 International Commission of Jurists
 International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)
 International Human Rights Clinic, Harvard Law School
 International Karen Organization, Australia
 International Service for Human Rights
 International State Crime Initiative
 International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs
 Ipas (Myanmar)
 Jewish Rohingya Justice Network
 Kachin Community UK
 Kachin National Organization USA
 Kachin Women Action Thailand
 Kachin Women's Association of Thailand (KWAT)
 Kansas Karenni Community, KS
 Karen Youth Education Pathways USA
 Karen American Association of Wisconsin
 Karen Association of Huron, SD
 Karen Community of Akron, OH
 Karen Community of Canada (KCC)
 Karen Community of Czech Republic
 Karen Community of Finland
 Karen Community of Hamilton
 Karen Community of Iowa, IA
 Karen Community of Ireland
 Karen Community of Israel
 Karen Community of Kansas City, KS & MO
 Karen Community of Kitchener & Waterloo
 Karen Community of Leamington
 Karen Community of Lethbridge
 Karen Community of London
 Karen Community of Minnesota, MN

Karen Community of North Carolina
 Karen Community of Ottawa
 Karen Community of Regina
 Karen Community of Rochester
 Karen Community of Rock Island, IL
 Karen Community of Saskatoon
 Karen Community of Syracuse, NY
 Karen Community of Thunderbay
 Karen Community of Toronto
 Karen Community of Windsor
 Karen Community of Winnipeg
 Karen Community Society of British Columbia
 Karen Organization of America
 Karen Thai Group
 Karen Youth Networks
 Karen Youth of Norway
 Karen Youth of Toronto
 Karen Youth Organization, Thailand
 Karenni American Association, USA
 Karenni Community of Bowling Green, KY
 Karenni Community of Des Moines, IA
 Karenni Community of Georgia, GA
 Karenni Community of Indianapolis, IN
 Karenni Community of Massachusetts, MA
 Karenni Community of Minnesota, MN
 Karenni Community of Missouri, MO
 Karenni Community of New York, NY
 Karenni Community of North Carolina, NC
 Karenni Community of Portland, OR
 Karenni Community of Texas
 Karenni Community of Wisconsin, WI
 Karenni National Women's Organization
 Karenni Society of Minnesota North East
 Karenni-American Catholic Association
 Kenya Section of the International Commission of Jurists
 Khmers Kampuchea-Kron Federation (KKF)
 KontraS
 Korea Karen Organization
 Korea Karen Youth Organization
 Latin American and Caribbean Human Security Network (SEHLAC)
 L'chaim! Jews Against The Death Penalty
 Liberia Action Network on Small Arms
 MADRE
 Mechanism of Search for Peace and Development Initiative
 Mennonite Central Committee United Nations Office
 Mensen met een Missie
 Myanmar Trust UK
 Nadia's Initiative
 Nepal Peacebuilding Initiative
 Never Again Coalition
 No Business With Genocide
 Nonviolence International
 Oversea Karen Organization Japan
 Pa-O Youth Organization (PYO)
 Parliamentarians for Global Action
 PAX
 Pax Christi International
 Pax Christi Philippines
 PEN Myanmar
 People's Federation for National Peace and Development
 People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD)
 Progressive Voice
 Reconstructing Judaism
 Refugees International
 Relief Action Network for IDP and Refugee (RANIR)
 RFK Human Rights
 Rights for Peace
 Rohingya American Society
 Rohingya Intellectuals Community Association, Australia
 Rohingya Organization Norway
 Rohingya Women Welfare Association
 Rohingya Youth Association
 Saferworld Europe
 South East Asia Movement for Human Rights & Justice
 Southern African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes
 Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa
 Sustainable Peace and Development Organization
 Swedish Burma Committee
 Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society
 The Arakan Project, Myanmar
 The Kachin Relief Fund
 The Shalom Center
 The Zambian Network for Human Rights Defenders
 TRANSCEND Pilipinas
 Unitarian Universalist Association
 United Nations Association – UK
 United Nations Association of Sweden
 US Campaign for Burma
 Vision GRAM-International
 Waging Peace
 West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP)
 Women for Peace and Democracy Nepal
 Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
 Women's International Peace Centre
 Women's Peace Network
 Women's Refugee Commission
 World Council of Churches
 World Federalist Movement/Institute for Global Peace
 Wunpawng Ninghtoi (WPN)
 Yanshuf Coalition, Israel