

ETUC statement on Myanmar's coup

endorsed by the Extraordinary Executive Committee at the meeting of 9 February 2021

Trade unions all over Europe are appalled at the military's action in Myanmar and express concerns at the restrictions on civil society, workers and journalists and independent politicians. We will do all within our power to stop the coup from succeeding, to ensure the release of all those detained and to bring an end to the violence and harassment of people. The perpetrators of the coup must be isolated to keep alive the democratic transition in Myanmar, to fully respect human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law.

We stress the need to coordinated actions to support democratic institutions and processes in accordance with the will and interests of the people of Myanmar. In line with the positions and demands of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), the ETUC calls on International Institutions, the European Union and EU Member States for:

- All governments to stand together and not recognise or appease the military;
- The immediate release of all political prisoners and trade unionists
- Myanmar's seat at the UN to be vacated;
- An urgent resolution from the UN Security Council;
- A statement from the UN Human Rights Council;
- Welcome the Statement of the ILO Director General and we call on them to consider all possible actions to restore democracy and workers' rights¹. The ILO has a key role to play in monitoring attacks on freedom of association and other rights violations including violence against workers;
- Sanctions targeted at the military leaders, including immediate financial sanctions that focus on their business interests; Consider withdrawing the Everything But Arms (EBA) status in case no progress has been made in restoring a democratic government;
- An immediate cessation of all military cooperation with Myanmar and an end to arms trade;
- All lobby firms employed by Myanmar's military to be exposed and held accountable by governments;
- Immediate support and assistance to all refugees from Myanmar's military persecution and protection of minorities including Rohingya;
- Protection for Myanmar's diplomatic staff in foreign countries;
- International companies to end ties with military, to provide support to workers where operations are curtailed, and to support and protect workers who are protesting the coup; The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) to work towards a coordinated approach by Asian Governments;
- An EU rule that telecom companies must keep open internet and social media in the face of a coup;

We stand in solidarity with Myanmar's workers, trade unions and with the people of Myanmar. We pay tribute to those brave workers that are taking action to reject the military takeover.

¹ https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_770062/lang--en/index.htm

We pledge to stand united with the people of Myanmar to ensure that the people's vote, after 30 years of military dictatorship, is respected and that all those who have been democratically elected can form a legitimate government.

The ETUC supports the ITUC/CGU Call for global action in support of the Confederation of Trade Unions Myanmar (CTUM) - Global Noise Barrage on 11 February 2021 and continuing initiatives to denounce the coup.