

#MilkTeaAlliance

JOINT STATEMENT

01 Feb 2024

Statement on the Third Anniversary of the Myanmar
Military Junta's Failed Coup Attempt





#MilkTeaAlliance Friends of Myanmar statement on the 3rd Anniversary of the failed coup in Myanmar.

In the face of this, the Peoples of Myanmar have stood firm against the terror inflicted upon them. The People's Revolution continues! From daily protests, a massive civil disobedience movement, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), and communities seek to do everything they can to care for and support displaced people, to encourage defections and weaken the Junta. As this occurs, the Junta itself also faces internal collapse due to a corruption scandal that led to the termination of some of its own officials. [1] Diaspora and allies continue to raise funds and advocate for more international support. Such actions show without a doubt that the Peoples of Myanmar's voice and actions are clear: THE JUNTA WILL NOT RETAIN POWER!

Many have taken the hard step of taking up arms and forming People's Defense Forces (PDFs) or joining Ethnic Revolutionary Organisations (EROs), to strike back against the murderous Junta and protect their families and friends. In recent months these groups have had numerous victories capturing towns, bases, and outposts across many regions in Myanmar. We have seen the increasing numbers of junta forces surrendering. In Northern Shan, Kachin, Chin, Rakhine, Karreni, and Karen states the armed resistance is pushing the Junta back and in other regions, forces are cutting supply lines and keeping the Junta off balance. The cost however continues to be high with continued & increasing retaliation from Junta forces against civilians through airstrikes, shelling and burning of villages.

On the international front, there has been some progress towards justice. The Rohingyas are pushing a number of judicial remedies in countries such as Argentina [2] and the Philippines on the grounds of universal jurisdiction. The ICJ case "Gambia vs Myanmar" [3] is progressing & many are trying to bring other cases against the Junta for its crimes. Some multinational corporations such as Zara and H&M [4] have withdrawn their business ventures in response to labor violations in Myanmar. Some sanctions have been imposed by the USA, Canada, the EU, and UK. While we welcome all these developments, they are insufficient and more action against the Junta is still needed.

Unfortunately, the junta's tyranny has also been amplified by both action and inaction of international actors. A case in point is when the junta organized a forced repatriation of Rohingyas from Bangladesh. [5] Despite helping create an ASEAN Troika to resolve the Myanmar crisis and

being the de facto leader of the ASEAN, Indonesia has done little to help resolve the crisis for Myanmar. It has not provided safe haven for Rohingya refugees. [6] The crisis in Aceh has reached critical levels to the point that even Acehnese themselves are harassing Rohingya refugees. When an international actor resists the sham governance of the junta, it immediately pushes back. Such is the case when the junta expelled the Timor-Leste Ambassador. This was in response to Timor-Leste's acknowledgment of the NUG. [7]

We call on all the peoples of the world to express solidarity with the Peoples of Myanmar by pressuring those in power, the so-called "international community" including regional blocs, Myanmar's neighbors, INGOs & Businesses to uphold the following principles:

Desist from legitimizing the junta.

The international community must cease from providing political legitimacy to the Myanmar junta. Even when the foreign actors claim they do not recognize the legitimacy of the junta, they may engage in acts that indirectly legitimizes the junta. One notes when ASEAN invited a representative from the junta as an observer to a military exercise. [8]

Stop trading with the junta.

The international community must acknowledge that providing economic relief to the junta is detrimental to the civilian population. We echo the call of our friends from the Blood Money Campaign (BMC) & Justice 4 Myanmar, in campaigning to stop the flow of oil and gas resources to the junta. [9] It is important to acknowledge the role of the oil and gas industry in capacitating the military arm of the junta. Such resources are used to operate military machinery such as fighter jets that bomb Myanmar civilians. We are calling for sanctions against Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprises (MOGE).

Honor the non-refoulement principle and protect displaced persons.

Due to the inhumane policies of the Junta, thousands of civilians have ended up being refugees in foreign lands. With this, the refugees sometimes face horrendous conditions in these places. The host populations in these lands at times do not understand the plight of these displaced persons. Hence, instead of expressing solidarity and rendering support to the displaced persons, they express hate and condemnation. We also urge international aid agencies to render support to Myanmar refugees in places such as Indonesia, Thailand, Bangladesh, etc. Efforts must be made to ensure that:

(1) Adequate support reaches the displaced persons and,

(2) Local populations must be convinced to express solidarity with the displaced persons.

Support provision of humanitarian aid.

We urge neighboring countries such as Thailand to allow CSOs and other organizations to operate a humanitarian corridor to enable the flow of aid toward the Myanmar people in need. International organizations & funders must channel support in ways that actually reach those in need. We believe that to do this greater funding needs to be channeled directly to CSOs & groups who can reach the areas where the Junta is barring INGOs access both within Myanmar and in the border regions. We demand that the Myanmar junta desist from targeting humanitarian personnel and facilities such as healthcare workers.

Given all this information, we call on our allies to help us spread this message to their respective countries and other international organizations such as the United Nations and ASEAN. Such solidarity helps provide strength and resilience to all those resisting the tyranny of the junta. Until the oppression against the people of Myanmar ends, the world can be assured that the people's revolution shall continue!

To our friends and allies in the resistance

For three years you have fought, sacrificed, and suffered. We know a little of this from both our own contexts & that we have lost contact with (and in some cases lost) friends from Myanmar. That heartbreak must be so much harder for those on the ground and with closer links. We recognize that the situation on the ground continues to be incredibly hard and that the challenges faced are still significant.

The toll the resistance is taking physically and emotionally on our friends is obvious. Nevertheless, their determination to succeed and create a better, fairer, and more inclusive future remains undiminished. It is because of the incredible continued resistance of the Peoples of Myanmar that we can refer to the military's action on February 1, 2021 as a failed coup.

To our beloved comrades, we will continue to support you in every way that we can. We will raise up your cries for justice, and your calls for action. We will share your campaigns and advocacy alongside the diaspora. We will continue to provide material resources and emotional support as

best we can. We know it is not and will never be enough but we hope it is something that aids you in your struggle.

Your creativity and perseverance shines through various forms such as memes, campaigns, banners, artworks, and many other mediums. Your groups have forged solidarity with other networks which have led to the amplification of your advocacies. But it has also allowed you to express solidarity with similar causes in other lands. This in turn facilitates the understanding of our shared struggles that cuts across national borders.

Shared suffering and mutual objectives are the foundations that build our alliances and friendships. We will transcend the suffering and work together in solidarity. When we are beaten down, we help each other to get back on our feet and stand in solidarity. Your cause is our cause and we believe that you will win!

In love & solidarity.

#MilkTeaAlliance Friends of Myanmar

Endorsements

1. Association of United Nationality in Japan (AUN)
2. Blood Money Campaign (BMC)
3. Burma Refugee Saving Association (B.R.S.A)
4. Chin Community of Japan (CCJ)
5. Chin Youth Organization of Japan (CYO-JP)
6. Colorful Spring (စေ့စုံစံ့စိုင်း)
7. Dawei Youths in Japan (DYJ)
8. Debbie Stothard, ALTSEAN-Burma
9. Doh Atu, Ensemble pour le Myanmar
10. Dragon Dawn
- 11. Emilie Palamy Pradichit, Manushya Foundation**
12. Federation of Worker's Union of Burmese Citizens in Japan (FWUBC)
13. General Strike Committee of Nationalities
14. GenY For Revolution Japan
15. Global Myanmar Spring Revolution (GMSR_Japan)
16. Hope For Youth -Kyushu Japan
17. Initiatives for International Dialogue (IID)
18. International Society of Myanmar Scholars and Professionals (Japan)
19. Japan Myanmar Future Creative Association (JMFCA)
20. Japan Myanmar Help Network - JMHN
21. Kachin Affairs Organizintion -Japan (KAO (Japan)
22. Karen National League Japan-KNL
23. Karenni National Society (KNS)Japan

24. Kansai Group Japan
25. KnowUsMoreMyanmar (KUM)
26. Kobe Myanmar Community (KMC)
27. Kyauktada Strike Committee
28. League For Democracy in Burma (L.D.B Japan)
29. Maiko Ichihara, Hitotsubashi University
- 30. Manushya Foundation**
31. Mon Youth For Federal Democracy (MYFD)
32. Muslim Youth Network
33. Myanmar Development Support Group (MDSG)
34. Myanmar Nationalities' Support Organization – JP (MNSO)
35. Myanmar Spring Revolution Japan (MSRJ)
36. Myanmar Tozan Club (MTC)
37. Myanmar Youth and Student Association, Japan (MYSA)
38. Myanmar's Youth Association Hokkaido (MYAH)
39. MyaYar Knowledge Tree
40. Okinawa Myanmar Association (OMA)
41. Palaung National Society Japan, PNS-Japan
42. Palaw Supporting Group - Japan
43. Patrick Poon
44. People's Hope Spring Revolution (PHSR)
45. Punnyakari Mon National Society Japan, PMNS-Japan
46. Revolution Tokyo Myanmar (RTM)
47. Shan Community in Japan (SCJ)
48. ShizuYouth For Myanmar
49. Siriphorn Chaiphet
50. Sitt Nyein Pann Foundation
51. Spring Revolution Restaurant (SRR)
52. Sone See Yar (Volunteer Group)
53. Southern Dragon Myanmar
54. SRUN SRORN, Act for Paris Peace Agreements
55. Tai Youths Network Japan (TYNJ)
56. Tanade Sirinamus
57. Try Together At Japan (TTAJ)
58. Union of Myanmar Citizen Association – Japan
59. Voice For Justice
60. Volunteers in Myanmar
61. We Are One Saga MOSA
62. We for All
63. We Support
64. Xun-ling Au, MTA Calendar/MTA-FOM
65. Yaw Funding Japan
66. Yokohama Pamphlet Campaign - Myanmar

CRPH Support Group Norway and members organizations:

1. Aung San Su Kyi Park, Norway
2. Chin Community in Norway
3. Democratic Party for a New Society, Norway.
4. K'cho Ethnic Association
5. Kachin Association Norway
6. Karenni Association - Norway
7. Matu Burma Foundation
8. Mon Association - Norway
9. Myanmar Baptist Churches in Norway
10. Myanmar Catholic Community In Norway
11. Myanmar Community in Norway
12. Myanmar Hindu Community - Norway
13. Myanmar Muslim Organization - Norway
14. NLD Organization Committee (International) Norway
15. Norway Falam Community
16. Norway Matu Community
17. Norway Rawang Community
18. Rohingya Community in Norway
19. Youth for democratization of Myanmar (UDM)
20. Zomi Christian Fellowship of Norway
21. Zomi Community Norway

2 organizations have requested anonymity in endorsing this statement.

Endnotes

[1] AP News. "Myanmar Military Court Sentences General Ousted from Ruling Council to 5 Years for Corruption." AP News, 11 Nov. 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/myanmar-corruption-soe-htut-d42278dbf6b0e2db0ceb822a39d385e0>.

[2] Hamman, Carlos G. "Argentine Court Hears Allegations of Genocide against Myanmar Leaders." Radio Free Asia, 7 June 2023, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/rohingya-argentina-06072023162250.html>.

[3] ICJ. ICJ – The Gambia v. Myanmar | IIMM. <https://iimm.un.org/icj-the-gambia-v-myanmar/>. Accessed 27 Jan. 2024.

[4] Hutt, David. "EU's Myanmar Stance Questioned after H&M, Zara Exit." Dw.Com, 12 Sept. 2023, <https://www.dw.com/en/eus-myanmar-stance-questioned-after-hm-zara-exit/a-66789436>.

[5] Al Jazeera. "Myanmar Seeking to Repatriate Rohingya Refugees from Bangladesh." Al Jazeera, 31 Oct. 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/31/myanmar-176>.

[6] Al Jazeera. "Indonesian Navy Pushes Back Rohingya Refugee Boat off Aceh." Al Jazeera, 29 Dec. 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/12/29/indonesian-navy-pushes-back-rohingya-refugee-boat-off-aceh>.

[7] Initiatives for International Dialogue-. PRESS STATEMENT: Philippine Activists Deride Myanmar Junta's Expulsion of Timor-Leste's Top Diplomat; Appeals Anew to ASEAN to Impose Sanctions. 30 Aug. 2023, <https://iidnet.org/press-statement-philippine-activists-deride-myanmar-juntas-expulsion-of-timor-lestes-top-diplomat-appeals-anew-to-asean-to-impose-sanctions/>.

[8] Koh, Collin. ASEX-01N Strengthens the Intra-ASEAN Military Landscape | East Asia Forum. 27 Oct. 2023, <https://eastasiaforum.org/2023/10/27/asex-01n-strengthens-the-intra-asean-military-landscape/>.

[9] Action Network. Blood Money Campaign: Blood Money Campaign. <https://actionnetwork.org/groups/blood-money-campaign>. Accessed 27 Jan. 2024.