

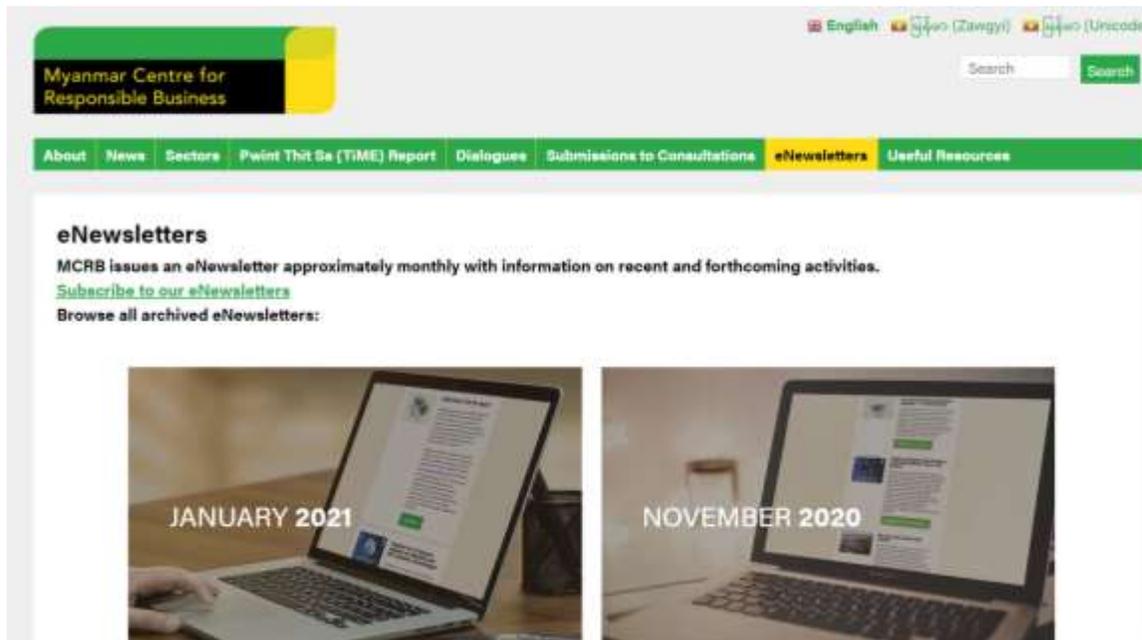
Perspectives on Human Rights and Business in Myanmar since 1 February

Vicky Bowman, Director MCRB

Safeguarding the Rule of Law and Human Rights in Myanmar, LAW ASIA,

8 April 2021

MCRB aims to provide a trusted and impartial platform for the creation of knowledge, building of capacity, undertaking of advocacy and promotion of dialogue amongst businesses, civil society, governments, experts and other stakeholders with the objective of encouraging responsible business conduct throughout Myanmar.



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Founders:

Financial support from governments of:

- UK
- Norway
- Switzerland
- Netherlands
- Ireland
- Denmark



CRPH Statements

- Dr Sasa (CRPH Special Envoy) 26 March calling for **‘Targetted sanctions against the illegitimate military regime, the individuals in charge, the military companies and their subsidiaries including sanctions on their business in financial, insurance services, oil and gas, timber and gemstone’**
- CRPH statement (13 March) that any Myanmar Investment Commission permits issued since 1 February will be considered invalid.



26th March 2021

Statement by Dr Sasa regarding USA and UK sanctions on military Generals' business, Myanmar Economic Corporation (MEC) and Myanmar Economic Holdings Limited (MEHL)

I am delighted and grateful to learn today that the USA and UK have once again shown strong global leadership targeting coordinated sanctions on the illegitimate military regime in Myanmar.

The military regime has stolen democracy and freedom from our people and then poured out atrocities against innocent civilians. I would like to express my deepest appreciation to the USA and UK, who have taken a stand for the people of Myanmar who have suffered so much and for so long. These sanctions target the source of wealth and income of military Generals who have killed innocent people and committed ethnic cleansing against the Kachin, Karen, Kayah, Shan, Mon, Rakhine, Chin and Rohingya. These same Generals are guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity. They have repeatedly committed these crimes over many years. Specifically, in 1988 and 1997 when they killed hundreds of innocent unarmed students. In 2007 when they stood against peace-loving Buddhist monks during the Saffron revolution. In 2017 against the Rohingya population and now again in 2021, where they have killed more than 300 on the streets of Myanmar and illegally detained more than 2500 including democratically elected leaders, our State Counselor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and our President, UWSA Myint.

These same military Generals have stolen both our country's wealth and our freedom by their smoking guns. These two holding companies, Myanmar Economic Corporation (MEC) and Myanmar Economic Holdings Limited (MEHL) have for many years been the means by which the military Generals have plundered our nation's riches and wealth for their own advantage. They continue to use this wealth to kill, destroy and wipe out the people of Myanmar.

We have been calling on the world to take targeted coordinated tougher sanctions, both economically and diplomatically. Without these, the military Generals will never understand what they have done. They have no regard for the sanctity of life, human rights, democracy, justice and international law. They have turned the military into a project to protect themselves rather than the people. They have used the armed forces to keep themselves in power at the expense of the people. They are content to live in a nation where they can murder people on the streets, and as long as they are in power, my people, the people of Myanmar, have no future.

The international community must continue to use all the power it has to weaken and stop the Tatmadaw military Generals, whose illegitimate actions cannot be allowed to be repeated again and again in the history of Myanmar. The threat to their personal finances, to the world and to their income, matters more to them than the freedom of our people, peaceful and courageous people of Myanmar. Through stronger, tougher, coordinated, targeted sanctions, the military Generals, their families and their supporters will finally start to bear some of the consequences of their crimes.

I therefore, urge all heads of governments and states around the world, to please follow the leadership of the USA and the UK, cooperating together and imposing targeted, stronger and tougher sanctions against the illegitimate military regime, the individuals in charge, the military companies and their subsidiaries, including sanctions on their business in financial, insurance services, oil and gas, timber and gemstone.



Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Planning, Finance, and Industry

Announcement No.1/2021
The 1st Waxing of Taboung, 1382 ME
(13 March 2021)

1. The Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations hereby notifies that the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) has suspended the issuance of all Myanmar Citizen Investment and Foreign Investment permits and endorsements for all investment projects. Henceforth, investors should refrain from submitting all applications to the MIC until further notice.
2. All MIC permits and endorsements issued by the illegitimate military regime from 1 February 2021 are illegal and invalid and will not be honoured when the legitimate government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar returns to power.

U Tin Tun Naing

'KNOW and Show': Due diligence

2011 UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights – 'Know and Show'

Ongoing human rights due diligence, mainly related to operational safety risks:

- minimising and documenting interactions with security forces
 - securing rooftop access
 - store/plaza closures to prevent risk of security forces entering in pursuit of protesters, arrests in bank branches
- alterations to operations to reduce safety risk e.g.
 - work from home (problematic without internet)
 - changing overnight maintenance to avoid curfew violation
 - closing office/operations due to risk of harassment of staff who do choose to work
 - reducing in-country expat staff,
- return to cash economy – robbery risk

Business connections with military owned firms – Myanmar Economic Corporation (MEC), Myanmae Economic Holdings Ltd (MEHL)

- Already undertaken by many both before market entry, and following Rohingya report
- Increased Consumer focus e.g. removal of Myanmar Beer/MyTel from sale, ending social media services for MEC/MEHL products

Banks remain mostly closed despite pressure from junta

A month and a half after the military seized power, most banks in Myanmar are barely operating.



Employees

Safety – right to life

- Options for those who want to carrying on working: focus on safety - changed work patterns, travel, work from home office closure
- Digital safety: advice on social media use, VPNs, keeping data safe
- Mental welfare
 - availability of counselling services, 'emotional workshops'
 - dealing with divisiveness and bullying within/outside the office (social media harassment of staff with family who are military, staff who want to work)
 - support to families with members arrested, including connecting to lawyers

Payroll – right to decent conditions of work

- Struggles to make payroll In face of bank closure, lack of liquidity or income; salary cuts and furloughs

Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) – right to freedom of expression, freedom of association

- Negotiated/flexible approach to allow for CDM participation
 - Initially paid (Feb/Mar) now increasingly unpaid leave
- Dialogue with staff on issues such as tax disobedience

'The local contractor cannot get their labourers to the site. They cannot put five people in a truck without police thinking they are part of the protest'.

Bank staffer dies two days after being shot by junta's troops on her way home from work

The 33-year-old woman worked for South Korea's Shinhan Bank in Yangon, and was shot in the head while travelling in a company vehicle

 Myanmar Now
Published on April 2, 2021



Business provision of essential services for enjoyment of human rights

- **Telecoms/data – right to information, expression; enables enjoyment of many other rights**
 - Government instructions for internet shutdowns, including wifi and no mobile data,
 - website blocking including VPNs, Facebook
- **Banks – right to own property, livelihood, decent working conditions**
 - Shortage of staff due to civil disobedience and safety fears
 - Limits on cash withdrawal
 - Cash collection/payment of suppliers is difficult
 - ATM replenishment and payroll services
- **Food**
- **Logistics**(right to livelihood)
 - Domestic
 - Crops to market
 - Ports:
 - Imports: fuel, pharmaceuticals, food
 - Exports: garments etc
- **Healthcare**
 - State hospitals not functioning
 - Shootings in and at private hospitals
 - Shortages of essential drugs
- **Energy for power generation**



A GUIDE FOR BUSINESSES OPERATING IN MYANMAR TO RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS

March 2021

Produced by Conyat Create



1 Ensure workers' safety and security



2 Leverage operations to respect human rights



3 Give business support to human rights advocacy

Examples of how business activities can impact human rights:

Action/ Inaction	Collaborating with military or military-backed entities	Calling public security forces to manage workplace related issues	Not supporting workers' decision to protest or physically preventing them from doing so
Potential Outcomes	Inadvertently financing military activities that harm civilians	Possible arrest, detention, injury or death of workers	Prevents workers from exercising free will and creates conflict between workers and employers
Human Rights at Risk	Right to life and health	Right to safety and security and right to life	Right to freedom of expression and right to peaceful assembly

This Guide primarily focuses on the salient human rights risks that have emerged since the declaration of a state of emergency on 1st February. In recognition of the innumerable harms that have been inflicted on the people of Myanmar, note that these recommendations may not account for all harms.

During heightened social and economic instability, it is especially important to consider the connections between human rights and your business operations in Myanmar. Your business is likely to play an important role in affecting the conditions of your workers, your stakeholders, and actors at various levels in your operations and supply chain. By taking steps to understand your businesses' capacity to respect human rights and taking actions to respond to the needs of workers, you can support the wellbeing of the society in which your business operates.

<https://conyatcreate.com/pdfs/Guide-for-Businesses-Operating-in-Myanmar-to-Respect-Human-Rights.pdf>

‘Know and SHOW’: Statements

- Individual company statements, including on human rights dilemmas and operations e.g. Telenor, TOTAL, H&M, Maersk, Woodside, Maersk, Kirin
- Joint statements as companies and chambers
 - On the situation
 - Declining invitations to meet military regime and minimising contact
- Comments on laws eg cybersecurity
- Responses to inaccurate information about company

Kirin Statement on the situation in Myanmar

February 5, 2021

- Kirin Holdings Company, Limited is deeply concerned by the recent actions of the military in Myanmar, which are against our standards and Human Rights Policy.
- We decided to invest in Myanmar in 2015, believing that, through our business, we could contribute positively to the people and the economy of the country as it entered an important period of democratization. Our aspiration was and remains to create a positive impact on Myanmar’s economy and society through our operations at Myanmar Brewery Limited and Mandalay Brewery Limited.
- Given the current circumstances, we have no option but to terminate our current joint-venture partnership with Myanma Economic Holdings Public Company Limited, which provides the service of welfare fund management for the military. We will be taking steps as a matter of urgency to put this termination into effect.
- We will aim to provide updates as soon as practicably possible.



Telenor Myanmar pays annual licence fee under strong protest – calls for immediate opening of data network

(26.03.2021) Telenor is required to meet its licence obligations and pay the annual licence fee, but does so under strong protest against recent developments and calls for Myanmar to immediately open the data network and honour the country's commitments to international agreements and human rights law.

Published: 26 March 2021 13:18

Reading Time: 2 minutes

Telenor Group is gravely concerned with the negative development in Myanmar, and the unavailability of the mobile data network since the 15 March. We maintain that the network should be kept open at all times so that people can stay connected and to ensure people's basic rights of freedom of expression and opinion. As a company operating in Myanmar, we now face several dilemmas, including legal and licencing obligations that in normal circumstances are business as usual. At the same time, millions of people rely on Telenor Myanmar to keep them connected.

Telenor secured a licence with the Union of Myanmar to own and operate a telecommunications network in 2013, which included a recurring annual licence fee. At the end of March 2021, Telenor will make payment of the annual licence fee to the telecom regulator in Myanmar, represented by the Ministry of Transport and Communication (MoTC). Meeting the licence obligations is required for Telenor to continue to provide mobile connectivity to the people of Myanmar. Failure to do so could lead to licence termination. The conclusion is reached based on a broad assessment including legality and the safety and security of our personnel on the ground.

However, the payment is made under strong protest on the current developments. Communication and access to information is important for the safety, security and well-being of the people of Myanmar, also in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Telenor Group has stressed to the MoTC that the ongoing data network shutdowns are currently obstructing our ability to serve our customers. On the part of the Myanmar authorities, we have urged that the MoTC ensures that Telenor Myanmar can fully extend the positive impact of mobile access to the people of Myanmar, starting by:

1. Immediately lift the shutdown of mobile internet,
2. Uphold the rule of law and,
3. Ensure sound regulatory frameworks and laws for the telecom industry, in line with international standards, including human rights standards.

Furthermore, Myanmar is bound by international agreements, treaties and international human rights law, and we call for Myanmar to honour these commitments.

Telenor's mission in Myanmar is to provide mobile communication for all, based on global standards, and Telenor Myanmar remains committed to serving its customers and the people of Myanmar.

Media contact:

TOTAL CEO Statement, 4 April

For some time, there have been calls for Total to stop "financing" the military junta that has taken power in Myanmar despite the results of democratic elections, by ceasing all payments of taxes owed to the state with respect to our business in the country. I address you today to describe the actions we have taken but also to speak about the dilemma that Total has been facing since the beginning of the crisis. Respect for human rights lies at the heart of our Code of Conduct and our values: Respect for Each Other is deeply rooted in Total's culture. Both on a personal level and as a company we are appalled by the repressive action taking place in Myanmar. In the current situation, certain decisions are evident and others less so.

Should we discontinue the project to develop our gas discovery on the A6 block? The answer is clearly yes. The teams have been instructed to discontinue the project as soon as the crisis began. In the current situation, it goes without saying that we do not intend to invest further in the future.

Should we halt the current gas well drilling campaign? Again, the clear answer is yes. We have also given instructions to cease drilling operations and decommission the drilling rig as of May, taking account of the contract in force. What remains of our business is our offshore gas production in Myanmar which provides half of the electricity for the city of Yangon, almost 5 million inhabitants, and which also supplies western Thailand, where most of the gas is exported.

Should we stop paying taxes to the State of Myanmar? The first thing to remember is that not paying taxes is a crime under local law. We have considered putting the four million dollars of monthly taxes into an escrow account, but such non-payment would expose our affiliate's management to arrest and imprisonment. This is our first human rights dilemma. The facts are these: those who are concerned about Total indirectly financing this repressive junta need to know that we have paid absolutely no taxes to the military government since the crisis began in February, for the simple reason that the banking system no longer functions. But if the system was to be re-established, in order to close off this source of revenue, we would actually have to stop producing gas. Most of the revenues accruing to the government of Myanmar come from gas exports and are not paid by Total, but by a Thai company, PTT, that buys the gas.

So should we stop producing gas on the Yadana field in Myanmar? We certainly will if we feel that we can no longer produce in the safety conditions required by our rules. We are not at that stage today, because these facilities are not affected by the dramatic events unfolding onshore. But can we halt production of this gas that supplies electricity to a large population in Yangon, adding to their suffering? For their part, the Thai authorities have alerted us to the importance of this source of energy, which is vital for their population in the west of the country. Can a company like Total decide to cut the supply of electricity to millions of people—causing the closure of hospitals and businesses, upending everyday life—with all the consequences that it will have? This is our second human rights dilemma, because access to energy is a fundamental right.

Finally, and most importantly, even if we did decide to stop production in protest against the situation in Myanmar, we would be putting our employees in a terrible situation: exposing them to forced labor. Having seen the practices of the junta in other economic sectors, and given the vital importance of this gas for the generation of power, we have no doubt that the junta will not hesitate to force our employees to produce the gas by forced labor. It is inconceivable for us to expose our Myanmar employees in the country to such a risk given their loyalty to us over many years. This is our third human rights dilemma.

These are the reasons why we have decided to discontinue our projects and drilling in Myanmar, but will continue to produce gas. Not because we want to maintain our profits and continue to pay taxes to the military junta. But to guarantee the safety of the people who work for us, employees and managers, to protect them from prison or forced labor, and to avoid further worsening the living conditions of the people by depriving millions of electricity. Resolving these dilemmas by a simplistic solution at the expense of our local employees and the Myanmar population which is already suffering is not the choice I have made. And since I feel that I cannot take the decision to discontinue production, in compliance with our ethics, our firm commitment to human rights and our ambition to be a responsible company, I am today deciding to donate to associations working towards human rights in Myanmar, the equivalent of the taxes that we will effectively have to pay to the Myanmar government.





Telenor Myanmar pays annual licence fee under strong protest – calls for immediate opening of data network

Telenor licence fee payment

- (26.03.2021) **Telenor is required to meet its licence obligations and pay the annual licence fee, but does so under strong protest against recent developments and calls for Myanmar to immediately open the data network and honour the country’s commitments to international agreements and human rights law.**
- Telenor Group is gravely concerned with the negative development in Myanmar, and the unavailability of the mobile data network since the 15 March. We maintain that the network should be kept open at all times so that people can stay connected and to ensure people’s basic rights of freedom of expression and opinion. **As a company operating in Myanmar, we now face several dilemmas, including legal and licencing obligations that in normal circumstances are business as usual.** At the same time, millions of people rely on Telenor Myanmar to keep them connected.
- Telenor secured a licence with the Union of Myanmar to own and operate a telecommunications network in 2013, which included a recurring annual licence fee. **At the end of March 2021, Telenor will make payment of the annual licence fee to the telecom regulator in Myanmar, represented by the Ministry of Transport and Communication (MoTC). Meeting the licence obligations is required for Telenor to continue to provide mobile connectivity to the people of Myanmar. Failure to do so could lead to licence termination. The conclusion is reached based on a broad assessment including legality and the safety and security of our personnel on the ground.**
- However, the payment is made under strong protest on the current developments. Communication and access to information is important for the safety, security and well-being of the people of Myanmar, also in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Telenor Group has stressed to the MoTC that the ongoing data network shutdowns are currently obstructing our ability to serve our customers. On the part of the Myanmar authorities, we have urged that the MoTC ensures that Telenor Myanmar can fully extend the positive impact of mobile access to the people of Myanmar, starting by:
 - Immediately lift of the shutdown of mobile internet,
 - Uphold the rule of law and,
 - Ensure sound regulatory frameworks and laws for the telecom industry, in line with international standards, including human rights standards.
- Furthermore, Myanmar is bound by international agreements, treaties and international human rights law, and we call for Myanmar to honour these commitments.
- Telenor’s mission in Myanmar is to provide mobile communication for all, based on global standards, and Telenor Myanmar remains committed to serving its customers and the people of Myanmar.

Challenges and dilemmas in Myanmar

- Under the current circumstances, Telenor faces several dilemmas in Myanmar. We entered Myanmar in 2013 with a clear ambition to support the country in its progress towards democracy and economic development. The recent events represent a set-back for the country's path to reform. Access to telecom services is essential for people to exercise their basic right to freedom of opinion and expression, and to gain information. These services are also critical in the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and for economic opportunities. When following authority orders in these irregular times, we know it has negative impact on human rights in Myanmar. We are working to minimise this impact, and Telenor continues to emphasise to the authorities that access to telecom services should be maintained at all times.

Keeping the network open and adhering to our established process continues to be important

- Keeping open communication lines for the people in Myanmar is important, and Telenor continues to follow its established global process for handling authority directives. Each directive is assessed for legal basis, human rights impact, necessity and proportionality and our ability to be transparent.
- As a local employer, Telenor Myanmar needs to handle a difficult situation and ensure the safety and security of employees on the ground during this state of emergency. Our ambition is to continue to take action, and to keep the local and global community informed. Telenor is deeply concerned with events in Myanmar and continues to assess the situation on ground.

The screenshot shows the Telenor Myanmar website. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for Home, About Us, Innovation, Sustainability, Career, Media, and Investors. Below the menu, there is a secondary navigation bar with links for Strategic Direction, Responsible Business, Reporting & Studies, and Stories. The main content area features a breadcrumb trail: Home / Sustainability / Responsible Business / Human Rights / Managing Human Rights / Human Rights in Myanmar / Directives from authorities in Myanmar – February-March 2021. The article title is 'Directives from authorities in Myanmar – February-March 2021'. The text of the article begins: 'On Monday 1 February, a state of emergency was declared under military leadership in Myanmar. The situation in Myanmar is irregular and uncertain, and the authorities are establishing procedures for issuing directives towards operators. Telenor handles these according to its defined processes for authority directives. At Telenor we remain committed to our principle of transparency and we will publish information regarding authority directives on this page.' To the right of the article, there is a 'Related content' section with a thumbnail image and the text 'Human Rights in Myanmar'. Below the article, there is a section titled 'Challenges and dilemmas in Myanmar' which contains a summary of the text provided in the first block of the image.

When national laws do not protect human rights...

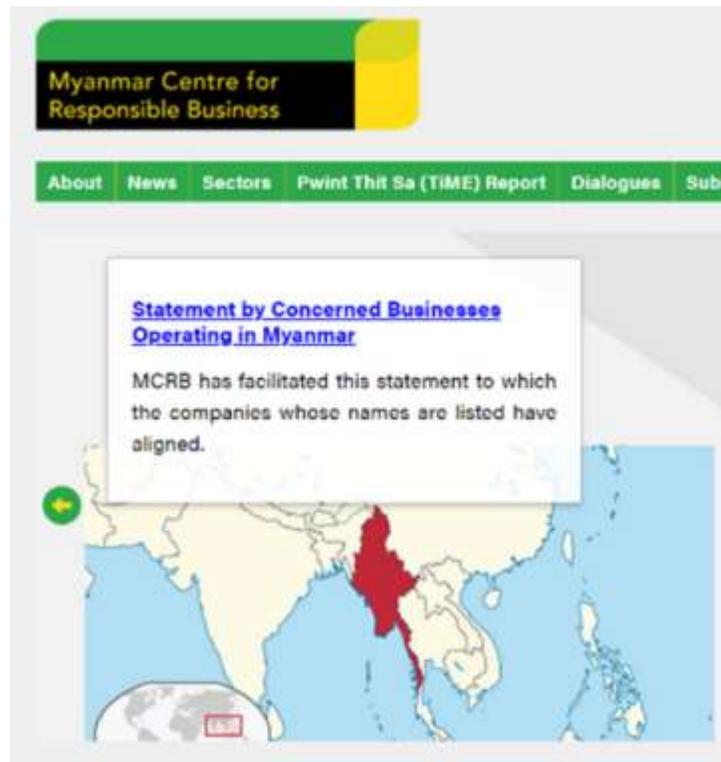
'Human rights due diligence' should involve analysis of domestic laws to see whether they are compliant with international human rights particularly on issues such as freedom of expression and association, and the right to privacy and not to be discriminated against, whether on religious, gender or other grounds.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), in its 2011 Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct says (paragraph 38)

'A State's failure either to enforce relevant domestic laws, or to implement international human rights obligations or the fact that it may act contrary to such laws or international obligations does not diminish the expectation that enterprises respect human rights.'

In countries where domestic laws and regulations conflict with internationally recognized human rights, enterprises should seek ways to honour them to the fullest extent which does not place them in violation of domestic law'.

19 February Statement by Concerned Businesses, Facilitated by MCRB



Available in English, Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Myanmar

234 company signatories as of 2 April (30:70 foreign: Myanmar)

- Our companies, as investors in Myanmar, have watched with growing and deep concern the developments in Myanmar since the declaration of a state of emergency on 1st February.
- Through our investments, operations, local partnerships and products, we support over a hundred thousand local jobs. The safety, security and wellbeing of our employees and those employed by our suppliers remains our primary concern. In recent days, we have sought to adapt our operations to ensure the safety of our employees and the provision of essential services to the Myanmar people – whether food and drink, electricity, telecommunications, financial services, logistics, healthcare or manufacturing - while respecting the individual rights to freedom of expression of our employees and the people of Myanmar.
- As investors, we inhabit a 'shared space' with the people of Myanmar, including civil society organisations, in which we all benefit from respect for human rights, democracy and fundamental freedoms – including freedom of expression and association - and the rule of law. The rule of law, respect for human rights, and the unrestricted flow of information all contribute to a stable business environment.
- We have always sought to operate in Myanmar transparently, and in line with core ILO Conventions and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. This includes undertaking ongoing human rights and wider business integrity due diligence, and complying with applicable sanctions, as well as the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), the UK Anti-Bribery Act and Myanmar anti-bribery laws.
- We will also continue to work hand in hand with local business partners which share the same approach. We believe our business presence, practices, and advocacy for a level playing field for all businesses, and our commitment to international human rights standards contribute in a significant way to the journey of openness and democracy in Myanmar.
- We remain committed to our employees and to the people of Myanmar. We hope to see a swift resolution of the current situation based on dialogue and reconciliation in accordance with the will and interests of the people of Myanmar.



**Questions put to mostly
Asian companies**

- 1. How long has your company been operating or investing in Myanmar?*
- 2. What policies and procedures do you have to ensure that your company's operations will not directly cause or contribute to human rights abuses as the situation in Myanmar unfolds (this includes potential violence and harassment to your workers and the communities where your investments are situated)? If your company comes across allegations of rights violations, will such information be made available?*
- 3. Are there immediate steps that your company has taken or is prepared to take to ensure that your company continues to respect human rights?*
- 4. What other commitments to all stakeholders can you publicly share as regards the following: respect for the rule of law and democracy, freedom of association and collective bargaining, freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly (including your company's policy on workers who join protests), wages, job security, anti-discrimination, non-retaliation, and others?*

Story Timeline

- 30 Mar 2021
Company Response
Denso's response →
- 29 Mar 2021
Company Response
Sumitomo's response →
- 24 Mar 2021
Company Response
Marubeni's Response →
- 22 Mar 2021
Company Response
Mitsui & Co.'s response →
- 22 Mar 2021
Company Response
PETRONAS' response →
- 19 Mar 2021
Article
Joint Statement by Foreign Chambers in Myanmar →
- 18 Mar 2021
Company Response
Nestlé's response →
- 18 Mar 2021
Article
British Chamber of Commerce Myanmar's response →
- 15 Mar 2021
Company Response
Itochu's response →
- 15 Mar 2021
Company Response
adidas' response →
- 10 Mar 2021
Company Response
Unicharm's response →

Recent Statements by Chambers of Commerce

4 March Statement from The American Chamber of Commerce, The European Chamber of Commerce, and The Italy Myanmar Business Association (UK and French Chambers associated with it – they did not receive the invitation)

**We have been requested to meet with representatives of the military government.
We have declined all invitations.**

Statement of Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Myanmar (JCCM), 15 March

- 1.JCCM expresses its deep concern over the ongoing violence against Myanmar citizens engaging in peaceful protests, which is causing many casualties.
- 2.JCCM sincerely calls for an immediate end to violence and recover stability under democracy.
- 3.JCCM has been, and remains, committed to making every efforts possible to support the people of Myanmar in achieving happiness and democracy in Myanmar.



March 19, 2021

JOINT STATEMENT

The above foreign Chambers of Commerce in Myanmar jointly release the following statement:

We unequivocally condemn violence perpetrated against unarmed civilians and those engaged in non-violent protest.

We reiterate our previous calls for unrestricted access to information across all telecommunications systems available in Myanmar to support the free flow of information.

We support the people of Myanmar on their journey to a modern, peaceful, and prosperous nation



30 March 2021

Statement on Myanmar by AustCham Myanmar, British Chamber of Commerce Myanmar, CCI France Myanmar, New Zealand Myanmar Chamber of Commerce

As friends of Myanmar, we share grave concern and sadness that the situation across Myanmar continues to deteriorate. We join with other Business Chambers and Associations, Non-Government and Civil Society Organisations, Foreign Embassies and Governments, Companies, the Myanmar people and the global community to condemn and call for an end to the killing and violence against the Myanmar people.

We condemn the arbitrary detention of Myanmar and foreign nationals. We call for the release of those arbitrarily detained.

As representative organisations of many foreign and Myanmar businesses, we have long supported the reform process and Myanmar's transition to an open, peaceful and prosperous country. We have championed the cause of responsible business and sustainable investment. We contributed to both the private and public sectors. Through the investments of our members and our Chamber programs, we believe that we have provided the Myanmar people with access to greater opportunities and prosperity.

Significant progress had been made. Now, amidst violence and a potential economic collapse, we risk losing over a decade of achievements realised together through a committed and collaborative partnership between public, private and development sectors.

The current conditions of instability and disruption cause great concern for the safety of the Myanmar people, our members and their employees. Business operations have also become extremely challenging, particularly disruptions to internet services. We all rely on internet, and without it many basic services cannot be provided to millions of Myanmar citizens. Without a swift and peaceful resolution to the situation, it will be extremely difficult for responsible businesses to consider making additional investments in Myanmar.

We reiterate our call for an end to violence, and we call for constructive dialogue with all stakeholders to bring peace and democracy.

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