

# Global Civil Society Statement Urging Arms Embargo on Myanmar

[iwgia.org/en/resources/publications/312-statements/4373-global-civil-society-statement-on-myanmar.html](https://iwgia.org/en/resources/publications/312-statements/4373-global-civil-society-statement-on-myanmar.html)



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 6, and arbitrarily detained several thousand activists, journalists, civil servants, and politicians. Hundreds have been forcibly disappeared, the authorities unwilling to provide information on their wellbeing 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 Ecueménicos, 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