

Statement of the UNI Global Union Management Committee on Myanmar

UNI Global Union condemns the military coup in Myanmar in the strongest possible terms. We are outraged by the unlawful detention of National League for Democracy (NLD) elected leaders, including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and President U Win Myint, ministers, officials and activists. This coup represents a perversion of Myanmar's democracy and an attack on the people's will, as reflected in last November's election result.

UNI deplores the declaration of a state of emergency and the adoption of laws that allow the military to tighten their illegitimate grip on power. We further note that the army has resorted to martial law, banning all public gatherings denying freedom of association and freedom of expression to the working people of Myanmar in an attempt to maintain its precarious grip on power by force.

UNI rejects the charges against the Confederation of Trade Unions Myanmar (CTUM) and Myanmar Industries Craft and Service - Trade Union Federation (MICS) elected leaders and officials. We deem unacceptable that 16-labour organisations have been declared illegal by the military and that trade union leaders have been forced into hiding. Trade unions are a pillar of democracy in Myanmar and throughout the world, therefore it is clear that these tactics are designed to further dismantle Myanmar's democracy.

UNI holds the Myanmar military responsible for the more than 850 deaths that have been caused by the ruthless attempt to suppress the peaceful, country-wide Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM). We condemn the unrestrained use of violence and lethal weapons by the Myanmar military and the resulting bloodshed. We call for the immediate cessation of the violence to stop this senseless loss of life.

UNI calls upon all people of good conscience to join us in our condemnation of the Myanmar military and to do all in their power to force the military to hand the country back to the people of Myanmar and their democratically elected leaders.

UNI stands in solidarity with our sisters and brothers of the Myanmar Trade Union movement. We pledge to do everything possible to support the fight for rights and democracy in Myanmar.

In addition, and in line with the demands of the Council of Global Unions, UNI

- Calls on the UN Security Council to impose a global arms embargo on Myanmar;
- Calls on the UN Security Council to impose sanctions against the military leaders responsible for the coup, sanctions must also target economic capital which provide the military with its revenue;
- Calls on the European Union to cancel Myanmar's Everything But Arms (EBA) preferential trade status;
- Calls on international companies operating in Myanmar to end any direct or indirect business relationships or financial ties to military-owned businesses and to use their leverage to secure the release of detainees, restore democratic institutions, and guarantee the human and labour rights of all Myanmar workers. This must include international companies providing support to workers where operations are curtailed, including protection to workers protesting the coup.
- Calls upon the United Nations, governments and inter-governmental bodies to formally recognize the legitimacy of Myanmar's national unity government.

We call on our affiliated unions worldwide to support the measures outlined above and to:

- Exert pressure on their national governments to demand that the Myanmar military rescind the state of emergency, immediately release all political figures and activists, defend the Myanmar people's right to choose their leaders, and remove limits on freedom of expression, assembly and association.

In addition, UNI notes that the military has increasingly curtailed access to the internet and communications tools in use by the protestors. We call upon telecommunications companies operating in Myanmar to protect human rights and to:

- Publicly speak out against efforts to restrict and block access to communications.
- Take all reasonable steps to protect individual user data.
- Develop action plans with civil society organizations, in the case that the human rights situation deteriorates.
- Not to take retaliatory action against workers who participate in strikes against the military regime, or who resist illegitimate orders from authorities that violate human rights.