



Joint Statement: Western brands must condemn the military coup and support workers in Myanmar

The international community has reacted with a justified shock at Myanmar's military junta staging a coup on 1st February and arresting democratically elected leaders and activists.

We the undersigned join the growing number of voices in Myanmar and around the world that are calling for the military to release those detained and reinstate the democratic process.

The people of Myanmar have come out in defiance of the military and a spontaneous Civil Disobedience Movement has emerged that involves a call for a general strike. Workers, including many in the garment industry have gone on strike in reaction to the coup and are taking part in mass demonstrations on a daily basis.

We stand in solidarity with the striking workers and the calls for a general strike.

We fully support the trade union federations in Myanmar that have suspended all involvement in the tripartite mechanisms that had worked with the government on labour issues, citing fears of a return to the brutal and oppressive practices against workers perpetrated by the military junta in the past. Myanmar's trade union federations are calling for Western brands to take action and help end the military coup.

We urge all brands operating in Myanmar to:

1. Publicly join the international condemnation of the military coup in Myanmar and support the protests for democracy.
2. Exercise due diligence for any trade in Myanmar ensuring no business or investment ties directly linked with the military.
3. When working with businesses and suppliers not tied to the military in Myanmar, ensure that these businesses do not contribute to or aggravate human rights violations.
4. Ensure the job security and wage payments of striking or protesting workers, and make sure no worker or union leader is punished for going on strike or joining the demonstrations against the coup.
5. Protect workers in areas where the security situation, or a heavy police or military presence makes them feel unsafe going into work, ensuring they are not forced into work, and are not penalized or face loss of wages.

We call on brands to make these commitments public and to encourage other companies to follow suit. The international community needs to come together to put economic pressure on Myanmar's military, without negatively impacting the lives and well being of the people of Myanmar.

Signatories:

ASLEF
Burma Campaign UK
Community
Fashion Roundtable
GMB Union
Homeworkers Worldwide
Labour Behind the Label
NASUWT
No Sweat
UCU
Unison
Unite the Union
Usdaw
Traidcraft Exchange
TSSA
TUC
War on Want