



Laureates:

Rigoberta Menchú Tum, Guatemala (1992)
Jody Williams, USA (1997)
Shirin Ebadi, Iran (2003)
Tawakkol Karman, Yemen (2011)
Leymah Gbowee, Liberia (2011)

May 13, 2021

The Honorable António Guterres, Secretary-General
United Nations
United Nations Headquarters
New York, NY 10017

Dear António Guterres and members of the United Nations Security Council;

As Nobel peace laureates, we are deeply disturbed by the ongoing violence and repression in Myanmar. We stand with the people of Myanmar and call on the United Nations (UN) to urgently act to end the violence and bring peace to Myanmar.

Since the military coup of February 1, the people of Myanmar have led nationwide mass protests calling for human rights to be respected, for an end to repression and for those arbitrarily detained to be released, and the reversal of the coup leading to a new constitution for a functioning democratic State. For these calls, and despite engaging in nonviolent civil disobedience, thousands of civilians, including women, have faced violence, arbitrary detention, and extrajudicial killing.

This coup and surge in violence and repression are all happening in the context of a Myanmar that already does not respect human rights and where pro-democracy activists are targeted and imprisoned.

We call on the United Nations Secretary-General and the United Nations Security Council to act: Myanmar must be held to account for its crimes before the International Criminal Court; a monitoring and mediation team must be dispatched to Myanmar to ensure an end to the violence; and an arms embargo must be established.

Myanmar's military must be held to account for crimes committed – from the genocide and ongoing persecution of the Rohingya to atrocities being perpetrated today. We echo calls from the people of Myanmar for these crimes to be referred to the International Criminal Court. And as experiences with other conflicts have

shown, this process must be driven by the very people who are protesting the violation of laws, the denial of their human rights and who face violence and repression.

Advocating for peace, justice and equality

As Nobel laureates, we recently added our signatures to a letter – signed by over 150 women’s organizations and led by women from Myanmar – calling on the United Nations Secretary-General to send a monitoring and mediation team to Myanmar, without pre-conditions. The priority is to end the violence and military repression and by dispatching international mediators and monitors, compliance can be ensured. We are also calling for the full application of the Women, Peace and Security resolutions so that the women activists can play an effective role in bringing an end to the violence.

For decades, and across Myanmar, the military has tortured and killed the country’s ethnic minorities, used gender-based violence as a weapon of repression and fired on and killed peaceful protesters – all as a means to consolidate power. The international community has not only remained largely silent, but has aided the military by supplying it with weapons of war. Myanmar must be subject to an immediate and comprehensive arms embargo.

We call on the United Nations to fulfil its duty as the most powerful organisation for peace in the world.

We urge the United Nations Secretary-General and UN Security Council to:

1. Refer Myanmar to the International Criminal Court to hold the military and security forces accountable for their crimes under international law.
2. Dispatch a monitoring and mediation body to Myanmar in response to the Myanmar military and security forces’ increasing use of violence against peaceful protesters, including women.
3. Impose a comprehensive and global arms embargo on Myanmar.

Finally, what is happening in Myanmar is not a stand-alone tragedy. Unfortunately, it is reminiscent of other ongoing conflicts where peaceful protests for human rights are met with violence and repression. The United Nations stated purpose to end to armed conflict and bring peace through dialogue can only happen if United Nations fulfils its obligations not just to the State, but first and foremost, to its people. The prospect for peace in Myanmar depends on the United Nations fulfilling this obligation.

Sincerely,



Tawakkol Karman, Nobel Peace Laureate (2011) – Yemen

Shirin Ebadi, Nobel Peace Laureate (2003) – Iran

Leymah Gbowee, Nobel Peace Laureate (2011) – Liberia

Rigoberta Menchú Tum, Nobel Peace Laureate (1992) – Guatemala

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