

H.E Ranieri Sabatucci,
Ambassador, Head of Delegation
EU Delegation to Myanmar

February 5, 2021

Subject: Urgent request for support to civil society activists in Myanmar

Your Excellency,

On behalf of Transparency International, I would like to express my concern about the increasing threats and persecution against civil society activists in Myanmar following the military takeover of 1 February. Activists at risk include several individuals who collaborate with our organization.

Transparency International is a global non-partisan movement working in over 100 countries, with an international Secretariat based in Berlin. Our work raises public awareness of the devastating effects of corruption and we provide research for policy makers committed to fighting against corruption.

Our work in Myanmar, funded by several EU countries, intends to nurture values of democracy, transparency and good governance. Our projects in the country have depended on the daily commitment of civil society members who have been willing to risk their well-being to promote the public interest and civic rights. As part of their efforts to counter corruption and improve transparency and accountability in the management of natural resources, many of these activists have carried out work that has been critical of both the government and the military. Some of them were political prisoners before the democratic transition began; they are now being targeted again by the military, and their lives and freedom are at risk.

Given the gravity of the current situation and the history of violence against civil society leaders, we urge you to support civil society in Myanmar, and in particular:

1. to ensure EU missions in Myanmar have a common and solid strategy in support of civil society;
2. to ensure that the most at-risk civil society members may find safe houses or if not possible find shelter and protection in the premises of EU missions, if no other option is available to them;
3. to support the availability of emergency financial support from the EU to enable at-risk civil society members to protect themselves, including through relocation within the country or abroad;
4. to encourage EU member states to expedite the issuing of temporary visas to enable temporary relocation within the EU in urgent cases of extreme danger;

5. to ensure that any sanction that the EU may consider imposing does not affect civil society emergency assistance and the ability of civil society groups to protect themselves and continue their important work.

Transparency International would welcome the opportunity to discuss the above matter with you.

Kind regards,



Daniel Eriksson
Interim Managing Director
Transparency International