

**Debate Pack**

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By John Curtis (subject  
specialist),  
Tim Robinson (compiler)

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# Human rights in Myanmar

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# 1 Summary

A Westminster Hall debate on human rights in Myanmar is scheduled for Wednesday 19 April 2023, from 9:30-11:00am. The debate will be led by Naz Shah MP.

# 2 Background

Myanmar's military, the Tatmadaw, [seized power on February 1, 2021](#). Since then, thousands of civilians and soldiers have been killed and many more arrested, including civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

## The military's role in Myanmar

Myanmar's military first seized power in a coup in 1962. A transition to democracy began in 2008 under a new constitution drafted by the military, and nationwide parliamentary elections were held in 2015.

The 2008 constitution still granted wide powers to the military, and it maintained its influence by controlling significant parts of the economy.

## The 2021 military take over

The progress of democratisation was abruptly halted when the Tatmadaw seized power in the February 2021 coup, only three months after Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) party achieved a [landslide victory in parliamentary elections](#). The military claimed there was widespread fraud in the election to justify the coup, [claims not backed up by international observers](#). Aung San Suu Kyi, the country's de facto leader, along with other senior members of the NLD were detained, and the [internet and social media was shut down](#).

The military authorities claimed as part of a "five-point roadmap" published shortly after the coup that [they planned to hold new elections by mid-2023](#).

## Protest movement grows

Protests against the military takeover started within days of the coup, building to [mass protests](#), as part of a wider peaceful civil disobedience movement that included [strikes and blocking of roads](#).

In April 2021, ousted NLD members of parliament, protest leaders, and activists from several minority groups established a parallel government known as the National Unity Government (NUG).

A spokesman for the NUG said at the time [its objective was to end violence, restore democracy and build a "federal democratic union"](#). They also said the NUG intended to form a federal army and were in talks with minority ethnic forces. In a July 2021 report, the Foreign Affairs Select Committee [called for the UK Government to support to the NUG, and treat it as a "government-in-waiting"](#) (pdf).

## Armed resistance

The opposition to the military regime has now morphed from protests into organised armed resistance.

In the months following the mass protests, which were largely ended by a crackdown by security forces, civilians, mostly young adults, [started to take up weapons](#), joining local militia groups.

Many of these young people are from the Bamar ethnic majority from the central plains and cities. This is the first time in Myanmar's recent history that the armed forces have faced violent opposition from young Bamars.

The Tatmadaw has been engaged in [military operations against armed ethnic groups for decades](#) in Myanmar's border states, home to most of its minority ethnic populations. These include operations in Rakhine state, home to most of the Rohingya Muslims, [nearly 900,000 of whom have fled to Bangladesh](#).

The civilian-led government initiated a peace process in 2011 that resulted in many armed groups signing ceasefires. Most groups suspended negotiations after the 2021 coup and now many have resumed attacks on Tatmadaw forces, which has escalated military operations in return.

## National Unity Government declares war

In September 2021, the NUG [declared war on the military junta](#) and formed an armed division known as the People's Defence Force (PDF), though when it was first formed it was mostly [an umbrella organisation](#) for the various militias.

The NUG and armed ethnic groups have a shared enemy in the Tatmadaw. However, the International Crisis Group (ICG) has said a united front comprising all of Myanmar's armed ethnic groups joining the NUG against the military regime is "[not a realistic prospect, given their diversity and the historical rivalries among them](#)". But, according to the ICG at least four groups have emerged as important partners of the parallel government, and another half-dozen or so have engaged with the NUG to some degree.

Such was the rise in violence, [with over 2,000 people reportedly killed in December 2021 alone](#), that some observers, including UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, said the conflict should be labelled a civil war that would ["echo the Syria situation"](#) if something wasn't done.

Though observers have highlighted [the dynamics in Myanmar are very different to those in Syria](#).

## Civil war

By 2022 as the conflict escalated [most observers agreed that Myanmar was now in a civil war](#).

According to an [analysis conducted in November 2022 by the United States Institute of Peace](#) (USIP), they estimated there are roughly 65,000 total PDF troops, and “approximately 20 percent of PDF troops are equipped with military-grade weapons and another 40 percent have homemade weapons”.

The USIP observed that the range of armed groups fighting the Tatmadaw military junta, including the PDF and Local Defence Forces (LDFs) and People’s Defense Teams (PDTs), which are more autonomous and smaller armed groups, are starting to become more military effective forces: “Eighteen months since the coup, the PDFs, LDFs and PDTs are undergoing a transformation from fractious, decentralized and localized resistance forces to a more organized and better equipped military force”.

The USIP assesses that the “junta is losing control of a wide swath of territory, particularly in rural areas. Moreover, resistance forces are making progress toward overcoming their weaknesses in command and control and weapons”.

An [analysis by the Stimson Center](#) in January 2023 however, stated that “resistance forces remain divided by ethnic and political differences”, and that “despite some on-the-ground success in military cooperation, alliance politics in the resistance movement remain fluid and unstable”.

## Recent attacks by military cause large civilian casualties

On 7 April 2023 it was [reported that around 10,000 Burmese people had fled to neighbouring Thailand](#) to escape intense fighting between the Tatmadaw and the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). The KNLA is one of the ethnic armed groups that has been fighting the military for decades, but since the coup has been [coordinating some operations with the People’s Defence Forces](#).

On 11 April 2023, it was reported that over 100 people [appeared to have been killed in an airstrike by the Myanmar military](#) “one of the deadliest so far in the civil war”. According to a [BBC analysis of data from the conflict-monitoring group Aced](#) (Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project), “there were at least 600 air attacks by the military between February 2021 and January 2023”. The news organisation also reported that “the junta has been increasingly relying on its Russian and Chinese aircraft to bomb opposition-controlled villages, inflicting much higher casualties among non-combatants”.

## Aung San Suu Kyi convicted

Aung San Suu Kyi, who has been in detention since the February coup, was [convicted in December 2021](#) of inciting dissent and breaking Covid rules.

U Win Myint, President at the time of the coup, and U Myo Aung, the mayor of the capital Naypyidaw, were convicted of similar charges alongside her.

In January 2022, Suu Kyi was [sentenced to another four years in jail](#) for the illegal possession and import of walkie-talkies and breaking Covid-19 rules. These trials were widely condemned, Michelle Bachelet [described the December 2021 hearing as a "sham trial"](#).

In December 2022, Suu Kyi was sentenced to an additional seven years in prison after being [found guilty of the final five charges](#) of a total of 19 she has faced since February 2020. These latest convictions take her overall jail time to 33 years.

## Widespread arrests of civilians and activists

Thousands of [civilians were also arrested](#) in the months after the coup, as well as civil society figures such as trade union leaders, [political activists](#), and [journalists](#). The monitoring group the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), state that [as of 12 April 2023](#), since the coup a total of 21,348 people were arrested and among them 17,460 are currently under detention, 5,586 of whom are serving sentences. The AAPP state that numbers may be higher, as these figures only include cases they have been able to verify. The group has also recorded that there are currently 109 post-coup death row prisoners.

The [AAPP state that](#) “a total of 3,240 people, including pro-democracy activists and other civilians, have been killed through military crackdowns against the pro-democracy movement”.

High-profile cases of arrests include that of Australian Sean Turnell, an academic and former adviser to Aung San Suu Kyi, who in September 2022 [was jailed for three years](#) after having been found by a military court of breaching the Official Secrets Act, charges he denied.

Earlier that month, former UK ambassador Vicky Bowman and her Burmese husband Htein Lin [were sentenced to one year in prison on immigration charges](#). Bowman is the [head of the Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business](#), which advises companies on human rights issues in the country. She was the UK ambassador to Myanmar from 2002-2006. Her husband is a former political prisoner and prominent artist.

On 10 April 2023, the military authorities [said they had arrested 15 teachers](#) for reportedly teaching at an online school operated by the National Unity Government. In July 2022 at [least 30 teachers were arrested for the same](#)

[reason](#) after a data leak that reportedly identified students enrolled at a private online school aligned with the NUG and those teaching them.

## NLD dissolved

On 28 March 2023, the NLD was dissolved after it failed to register the party under a new election law imposed by the military leadership by the required deadline of that day. Tun Myint, the secretary of the NLD Yangon region executive committee, said [they would not register with election authorities](#) as such bodies had been established by the “illegitimate military council”.

39 other parties are [reported to have been disbanded](#) for failing to register under the new process also.

The law [imposed higher hurdles for parties wishing to take part in elections](#), including requirements for national parties to “fulfil various criteria, including recruiting 100,000 members within 90 days of registration – far more than the previous requirement of 1,000 members.” Parties must also “open offices in at least half of all 330 townships within 180 days, contest at least half of all constituencies and hold funds of 100m kyat (£40,000)”.

The law is part of the process of preparing for new elections which the military government said they planned to hold by August 2023. However, on 2 February 2023, the junta [announced a six-month extension of to its state of emergency](#), meaning they cannot be held during this period. The Guardian [also reported](#) that at the same time of the state of emergency announcement the military junta chief, Min Aung Hlaing, “acknowledged that more than a third of townships were not under full military control”.

Aung Kyi Nyunt, a former NLD parliamentarian, said in [an interview in April 2023](#), that the movement behind his party “remains strong”, and asked what they will do next now they have been dissolved, answered “we will continue to do our job”.

## Human rights situation

In its overview of human rights in Myanmar in 2022, Human Rights Watch gave this assessment:

Since staging a coup on February 1, 2021, the Myanmar military has carried out a brutal nationwide crackdown on millions of people opposed to its rule. The junta security forces have carried out mass killings, arbitrary arrests, torture, sexual violence, and other abuses that amount to crimes against humanity. Freedom of speech and assembly face severe restrictions.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Human Rights Watch, [World Report 2023: Myanmar](#), March 2023.

In March 2023 Human Rights Watch called upon Bangladesh to [halt plans to return Rohingya refugees back to Myanmar](#) “where lives and liberty may be at grave risk”.

On 12 April, Human Rights Watch [reported that Thailand had forcibly returned three opposition activists to Myanmar](#) “putting them at grave risk of persecution and other abuses”.

In April, in response to the air attacks on civilians described above, [Amnesty International stated that](#) “The relentless air attacks across Myanmar highlight the urgent need to suspend the import of aviation fuel”. The [UK Government announced sanctions](#) on companies supplying the Myanmar Air Force with aviation fuel in January 2023.

## Prospects for the future

The [International Crisis Group warned in March 2023](#) that if the military junta went ahead with elections it “will trigger escalated violence” saying that “the regime is using the polls as a pretext for intensifying its counter-insurgency operations” and “it will likely respond to any boycott with repression”. The ICG also stated that “ethnic armed organisations and resistance groups have threatened to disrupt the polls, with some already killing voter list enumerators”.

The group called upon proposed the following actions for international actors and the NUG:

Western and regional actors that have tools or channels for influencing Naypyitaw should press it not to impose elections by force. They should send a concerted message that polls are illegitimate and withhold electoral support. The parallel National Unity Government should unambiguously oppose resistance attacks on electoral targets.<sup>2</sup>

The [Brookings Institution also stated](#) that the planned elections would add to uncertainty in the country and that “the civil war inside Myanmar is likely to only escalate in 2023” and that “there is no end in sight”.

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<sup>2</sup> International Crisis Group, [A Road to Nowhere: The Myanmar Regime’s Stage-managed Elections](#), 28 March 2023.

## 3

# Press and media articles

The following is a selection of press and media articles relevant to this debate.

Please note: the Library is not responsible for either the views or accuracy of external content.

### [Airstrikes by Burmese military kill dozens at anti-junta event](#)

The Guardian

Min Ye Kyaw and Rebecca Ratcliffe

11 April 2023

### [A week after deadly airstrikes, Chin villagers still wonder why they were targeted](#)

Myanmar Now

Khin Yi Yi Zaw

6 April 2023

### [US, UK, Japan and Australia condemn Myanmar for banning 40 political parties](#)

The Guardian

Rebecca Ratcliffe

30 March 2023

### [For us Rohingya, fire is just the latest danger. Stop ignoring us](#)

The New Humanitarian

San Thai Shin

22 March 2023

### [Myanmar is a failing state, led by a junta fuelled by Russian arms, says UN rights envoy](#)

The Guardian

Rebecca Ratcliffe

15 March 2023

### [Developments in Gambia's Case Against Myanmar at the International Court of Justice](#)

Human Rights Watch

14 February 2023

### [How is Myanmar faring two years after coup that ousted Aung San Suu Kyi?](#)

TRT World

1 February 2023



[Don't buy Myanmar junta's empty 'humanitarian' gesture](#)

Myanmar Now

18 November 2022

[Vicky Bowman: Former UK ambassador among prisoners freed in Myanmar](#)

BBC News

Oliver Slow & Simon Fraser

17 November 2022

[UN investigator says Myanmar post-coup abuses a 'major focus'](#)

Al Jazeera

13 September 2022

[Crimes against humanity are being systematically committed in Myanmar, says report](#)

Peoples Dispatch

16 August 2022

[Executing This Hip-Hop Star Could Be Rogue State's Biggest Mistake](#)

Daily Beast

Naomi Gingold

6 August 2022

[Myanmar: Cycle of 'human rights violations and abuses' continues, warns Bachelet](#)

UN News

14 June 2022

[Myanmar Junta Carrying out 'Genocide by Attrition' in Rakhine State: Report](#)

The Diplomat

Sebastian Strangio

9 June 2022

[How Aung San Suu Kyi, arrested Myanmar leader, went from Nobel Peace Prize to pariah](#)

The Washington Post

Adam Taylor

1 February 2012

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## Press releases

[UN HRC52: UK General Comment on the situation in Myanmar](#) [Speech]  
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Simon Manley CMG  
4 April 2023

**UK General Comment on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, as delivered by Simon Manley, UK Ambassador to the WTO and UN in Geneva.**

Let me start by thanking our European colleagues for presenting this draft resolution and for leading such constructive negotiations.

This initiative comes at a crucial moment for the people of Myanmar. The text before us today rightly details the dramatic deterioration in the human rights situation since the Myanmar military coup. The junta has consistently shown it holds no respect for international rule of law, human rights or democracy. Across the country, we see arbitrary arrests, targeting of civilians, including the Rohingya and other minorities and civilian infrastructure, torture, mass gender and sexual-based violence, and other restrictions and assaults on rights and freedoms.

Indeed just last week, the junta decided to dissolve forty political parties, including the National League for Democracy, underscoring their assault on the rights of the Myanmar people.

We are appalled by the ongoing and egregious actions of the junta. The people of Myanmar have shown immense courage in the face of this, and we continue to stand with them.

Mr President,

Accountability is the only way to end the military's culture of impunity. Thus we are strongly supportive of new elements in this text to strengthen accountability efforts including by urging all UN bodies to collaborate fully with the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar.

And as this Council recently heard from the Special Rapporteur, and as his report details, weapons used to kill civilians should no longer be transferred to Myanmar. No Member State should sell arms to Myanmar, a trade which is enabling the crimes he has set out. The UK has a longstanding arms embargo on Myanmar and let me once again encourage other Member States to do the same.

We reiterate our support for the people of Myanmar and their aspirations for a peaceful, democratic and inclusive future. The UK has co-sponsored this resolution and we urge our fellow members of this Council to support it.

**Myanmar: FCDO statement on the dissolution of political parties**

**Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

**29 March 2023**

A Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office spokesperson said:

“The Myanmar military regime’s decision to dissolve 40 political parties, including Aung San Suu Kyi’s National League for Democracy party, is a further assault on the rights and freedoms of the Myanmar people.

“There can be no solution to the crisis created by the military regime without meaningful, inclusive dialogue, which respects the people’s democratic wishes.

“We condemn the military regime’s politically motivated actions and their use of increasingly brutal tactics to sow fear and repress opposition. The UK will continue working with partners to pressure the regime to end all violence and create space for meaningful and inclusive dialogue. We reiterate our support for the people of Myanmar and their aspirations for an inclusive and democratic future.”

**Myanmar Armed Forces Day: UK announces fresh sanctions on aviation fuel and military equipment suppliers**

**Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

**27 March 2023**

- UK announces further sanctions against prominent arms dealer and aviation fuel suppliers in Myanmar
- sanctions to target enablers of air force bombing campaign against civilian population
- announcement comes as Myanmar marks its annual Armed Forces Day

A new round of UK sanctions will target suppliers to the Myanmar regime of military equipment and other material, which are still being used to attack its civilians.

Those sanctioned today include a company and its director who supply the Myanmar Air Forces with aviation fuel and a second individual who is the director of a company which supplies restricted goods and technology through its business.

On 1 February 2021, the Myanmar military overthrew the democratically-elected government, led by Aung San Suu Kyi, and installed a military regime. Since then, they have used violence and atrocities to maintain power and suppress any opposition voices.

The Minister of State for the Indo-Pacific, Anne-Marie Trevelyan, said:

“On Myanmar Armed Forces Day, the UK condemns the military’s increasingly brutal campaign against the Myanmar people.

“The sanctions announced today are designed to reduce the military’s access to fuel and military equipment.

“The UK will continue to work closely with partners to hold the military regime to account and support the people of Myanmar, as they strive for a return to democracy and freedom.”

These targeted sanctions will raise the cost for those profiting from, or supporting, the regime and restrict the military’s access to fuel and military equipment.

The UK has led the international community’s work to support a peaceful resolution in Myanmar and a return to democracy, as well as pushing for progress towards accountability and justice. It has also played a key role in calling on countries around the world to end the sale and transfer of arms and equipment which facilitate the military’s atrocities.

At the United Nations the UK successfully coordinated a Security Council Resolution on the crisis, the first of its kind, to apply further pressure on the military to end its violence and engage in dialogue.

This will be the 15th round of targeted sanctions by the UK against the military regime in Myanmar. The UK will continue to work with international partners to maintain pressure on the military regime and welcomes the sanctions announced by the US to coincide with Myanmar Armed Forces Day.

#### [HRC52: Statement on Myanmar \[Speech\]](#)

**Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Simon Manley CMG  
20 March 2023**

**The UK's Ambassador to the WTO and UN in Geneva, Simon Manley, delivered this statement on Myanmar at the 52nd session of the UN Human Rights Council.**

Special Rapporteur,

Thank you for your sobering update and passionate commitment.

It has been over two years since the military seized power in a coup, plunging Myanmar into crisis.

Myanmar's people have shown extraordinary resilience in the face of unspeakable atrocities, demonstrating their commitment to democracy and human rights. We continue to stand with them. They are indeed not forgotten, they are not alone.

Across Myanmar, the junta is committing brutal human rights violations and abuses including against Rohingya and other minorities. Thousands of civilians, including children, jailed, tortured and killed. Gender and sexual-based violence rife. Civic space virtually non-existent. Over 17 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, and nearly 2 million people displaced.

Since the coup, the UK has provided over £100 million to support those in need. We must collectively ensure that all responders on the front line are supported and that we innovate to channel resources for the humanitarian response.

Special Rapporteur,

How can the international community ensure access to displaced population inside and outside Myanmar?

**[The worsening situation in Myanmar means conditions for the voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return of the Rohingya are not in place: UK Statement at the UN \[Speech\]](#)**

**Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Fergus Eckersley, UK Political Coordinator at the UN  
16 March 2023**

Mr. President, it has now been over two years since the military's coup. Since then, over 3,100 people have been killed by the military regime. Over 20,000 people have been arbitrarily detained and over 17 million are in need of humanitarian assistance.

The military regime is using increasingly brutal tactics to sow fear and repress any form of opposition. Indiscriminate air strikes are increasing. As are reports of military atrocities, conflict related sexual violence, and mass burning of villages. We condemn the latest horrifying reports of a massacre of at least 28 people sheltering in a monastery in Southern Shan State over the weekend.

I wish to make three points:

First, we fully support the efforts of the UN Special Envoy to find durable and inclusive dialogue-driven solutions to the escalating crisis in Myanmar. ASEAN's leadership is central – we welcome the renewed efforts under Indonesia's leadership, including to fully implement the ASEAN Five Point Consensus. In December, the Security Council agreed resolution 2669 which

sent a unified message: of solidarity with the people of Myanmar; of support to ASEAN's efforts; on the need to end violence immediately; and on the need to release political prisoners, including Aung San Suu Kyi and President Win Myint. Today's General Assembly discussion has echoed these messages. There is strength in this collective unity.

Second, the military should face the consequences of their actions. Since the coup, the UK has sanctioned 18 individuals and 28 entities, including those who have committed serious human rights violations. We encourage others to do the same, and we reiterate that no country should sell arms to Myanmar.

Finally, we cannot forget the most vulnerable. Hundreds of thousands of Rohingya and other minorities remain confined to their villages and Internally Displaced Peoples camps in Rakhine State. The systemic human rights violations they have suffered for decades must end. The worsening situation in Myanmar means conditions for the voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return of the Rohingya are not in place. We thank the UN, the Government of Bangladesh, and other hosting nations for their generosity and for the lifesaving support they are providing to the Rohingya. We should support efforts to meaningfully include their voices in discussions on Myanmar's future – a peaceful, democratic future that meets the aspirations of the people of Myanmar.

### [UK provides new life-saving support for Rohingya people](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

10 March 2023

- Minister for the Indo-Pacific, Anne-Marie Trevelyan, announces new UK funding through the World Food Programme to help 449,000 people
- she is visiting Bangladesh for the first time in her role to strengthen historic UK-Bangladesh ties
- she will meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Foreign Minister Dr A K Abdul Momen, and strengthen UK-Bangladesh partnership on climate action

Minister for the Indo-Pacific Anne-Marie Trevelyan will visit Cox's Bazar this week to see first-hand how UK support is providing a lifeline to Rohingya people in the camps.

During her first visit to Bangladesh in the role, she will also set out how the UK is providing new humanitarian support through the World Food Programme to supply food for 449,000 people living in the camps this month.

UK support will also go to the [nited Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for pressure cookers that can help to reduce the consumption of cooking gas.

Minister for the Indo-Pacific Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

“The UK is committed to supporting Rohingya people who continue to live in Cox’s Bazar. We are helping the World Food Programme feed 449,000 people, as well as providing pressure cookers that can help to reduce the consumption of cooking gas.

“The UK continues to push for a long-term solution that will enable the Rohingya to return to Myanmar on a safe, voluntary and dignified basis.”

During her visit, Minister Trevelyan will meet Bangladesh’s Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Foreign Minister Dr A K Abdul Momen as well as hold talks with civil society organisations.

British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Robert Chatterton Dickson said:

“I’m pleased to welcome the Minister for the Indo-Pacific to Bangladesh. The UK’s partnership with Bangladesh is a unique and valued relationship which contributes much to the prosperity and security of both our countries.

“This visit reaffirms the UK’s firm commitment to Bangladesh as a fast growing Indo-Pacific partner with strong people-to-people connections and our ambition to work even more closely together in the future.”

## **Background**

The new package of funding totals £5.26 million. £4.26 million will be distributed through the World Food Programme and £1 million will go through the UNHCR for pressure cookers.

Since 2017, the UK has provided £350 million to support Rohingya, and Bangladeshi host communities. This has included food, shelter, water and sanitation, healthcare and protection services that are vital for women and girls in the camps.

**2023 Rohingya Joint Response Plan: UK statement**

**Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Simon Manley CMG  
7 March 2023**

**The UK's Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva, Ambassador Simon Manley, delivered this statement during the 2023 Rohingya Joint Response Plan.**

Let me begin by expressing my heartfelt appreciation to the Honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, State Minister Shahriar Alam, and the Government of Bangladesh. You have generously hosted one million Rohingya refugees for over 5 years. I would also like to express our gratitude to our humanitarian partners that are providing vital assistance, including, High Commissioner and Director-General, you, your staff and the volunteers on the ground.

As we enter the sixth year of the crisis, a long-term solution for the Rohingya people remains frustratingly out of reach. The UK remains deeply concerned by the worsening situation in Myanmar, which means that the conditions for the Rohingya to return are not in place. The High Commissioner for Human Rights set out that situation just yesterday across town in the Human Rights Council, just as the DG did here this morning: military attacks on the civilian population up nearly 400%. Over 600 villages torched by the junta's troops. A staggering 17.6 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. Since the February 2021 coup d'état, we have provided over £100 million in humanitarian support in Myanmar, including for the Rohingya and other Muslim minorities.

In December, as the State Minister mentioned, the UK led efforts to secure the first ever UN Security Council Resolution - UNSCR 2669 - on the situation in Myanmar. That Resolution stresses the need to address the root causes of the crisis in Rakhine State and create the conditions necessary for the voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable return of Rohingya refugees.

We also continue to do all we can do to support the Rohingya whilst they remain in Bangladesh – providing £345m since 2017. The UK Minister for the Indo-Pacific, Anne-Marie Trevelyan, will visit Bangladesh just this week to see in person the effect of our support for the humanitarian response. And we welcome this year's JRP, in particular the inclusion of the skills development framework, and roll-out of the Myanmar curriculum. These are vital to help prepare the Rohingya for their eventual return to Myanmar.

We well understand the challenges the Government of Bangladesh faces in managing this protracted crisis, including security, environmental and economic impacts. The tragic fire just this weekend in Cox's Bazar, leaving thousands of Rohingya without shelter, just adds to that challenge.



And we are deeply troubled by the trajectory for 2023, and the fragility of the situation set out so graphically today by the High Commissioner and the UN Resident Coordinator. As the High Commissioner said, we face unparalleled global humanitarian need - a situation exacerbated of course by Russia's ongoing war against Ukraine - and the global response is under unprecedented strain. This has been highlighted by the first food ration cut for Rohingya refugees since 2017. There is a real risk that refugees, including the extremely vulnerable, will not receive the full range of basic assistance they so desperately need, as the UN Resident Coordinator set out this morning.

The UK sees an urgent need to work pragmatically with your Government, State Minister, taking account of your concerns about the impact of the Rohingya refugee presence, to find a sustainable way forward that:

- Offers the Rohingya more self-reliance, and less dependence on humanitarian aid;
- Ensures that we achieve maximum effect with every pound, euro or dollar we spend; and
- Supports a safe and secure environment for refugees.

International Financial Institutions must play an important role in helping to meet the needs of all refugees and support the host community in Cox's Bazar. We hope the dialogue with them continues, and stand ready to contribute to creative solutions.

Let me end by reiterating the UK's commitment to the Rohingya while they are in Bangladesh, and the communities that do generously host them, and to working with you all to resolve the underlying causes of this tragic crisis

#### [HRC52: UK Statement on Myanmar](#)

**Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Rita French  
7 March 2023**

**During the 52nd session of the UN Human Rights Council, Rita French, the UK's Human Rights Ambassador, delivered a statement on the situation in Myanmar.**

Thank you, Mr President.

And thank you, High Commissioner, for your sobering update.

We share your concern at the situation in Myanmar. We condemn the junta's increasingly brutal tactics, including through indiscriminate air strikes, conflict-related sexual violence and arson attacks. The targeting of civilian

infrastructure, including schools, and hospitals and places of worship must cease. Civilians must be protected.

Over 2,600 people have been killed since the coup. Over 19,000 people have been arbitrarily detained. Female pro-democracy activists are increasingly targeted online.

The UK will continue to apply pressure through international fora, targeted sanctions, a comprehensive arms embargo and other means to oppose the junta's violent and oppressive actions. I am proud that the UK led efforts to secure the first ever UN Security Council Resolution on Myanmar which urges all parties to respect human rights, and to end violence.

Accountability is the only way to end the military's culture of impunity. Perpetrators must be brought to justice. To this end, the UK has established the Myanmar Witness programme which reports on some of the most egregious human rights violations.

High Commissioner,

How can the international community support access to justice for victims and survivors of sexual violence?

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## PQs

### Myanmar: Ethnic Groups

30 Mar 2023 | 174527

**Asked by: Sir Stephen Timms**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his Department is taking steps to ensure that education projects in Myanmar funded by the British taxpayer do not discriminate against ethnic minority languages.

**Answering member: Leo Docherty | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The UK, together with the US, Australia and Finland, is providing funding to the Myanmar Education Consortium (MEC). MEC's principle focus is providing education for ethnic communities, often living in areas outside the military regime's control. MEC is supporting over 200,000 children in hard-to-reach areas and is also promoting ethnic languages so children can learn in their mother tongue as well as gender equality, disability and social inclusion.

### Myanmar: Armed Forces

24 Mar 2023 | 169177

**Asked by: Sir Stephen Timms**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his Department has taken recent steps to help prevent the supply of aviation fuel to the Myanmar military.

**Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

On 31 January the UK sanctioned two companies and two individuals responsible for supplying the military regime with aviation fuel. We have also updated our Overseas Business Risk Guidance to make it clear UK businesses should conduct thorough supply-chain due diligence to ensure commodities, such as aviation fuel, do not reach the Myanmar military. The UK is committed to targeted sanctions which impose a cost on those profiting from, or supporting, the regime's campaign of violence against the civilian population.

## **Myanmar**

**23 Mar 2023 | 167193**

### **Asked by: Dr Rupa Huq**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent steps his Department has taken to support the people of Myanmar.

### **Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

Since the coup in Myanmar, the UK has provided £100 million to support those in need of humanitarian assistance, to deliver healthcare and education for the most vulnerable, and to protect civic space. On 31st January we announced our fourteenth tranche of sanctions, targeting companies and individuals who are responsible for supplying aviation fuel to the Myanmar Air Force. On 21 December 2022 the UN Security Council passed the first ever resolution, which was led by the UK, on the situation in Myanmar.

## **Myanmar: UN Agencies**

**20 Mar 2023 | 166250**

### **Asked by: Brendan O'Hara**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether UN agencies operating in Myanmar that receive UK funding are prohibited from buying goods and services from military-owned companies in that country.

### **Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The UK is committed to targeted sanctions which impose a cost on those profiting from, or supporting, the Myanmar military's campaign of violence against the civilian population.

On 28 February 2022 the UK updated our Overseas Business Risk Guidance to make it clear that UK businesses should conduct thorough supply chain diligence to ensure that commodities do not reach the military. Organisations involved in the delivery of essential humanitarian aid delivery are able to apply for licences for goods and services which may be impacted by targeted sanctions.

**Myanmar: Armed Forces**

**14 Mar 2023 | HL6003**

**Asked by: Baroness Nye**

To ask His Majesty's Government what funding they have provided for determining which infrastructure projects in Myanmar are not under the control of the military.

**Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

We are clear UK businesses should not work with the Myanmar military. The UK's Overseas Business Risk Guidance encourages UK businesses to conduct their own enhanced due diligence before making any investments, to ensure they do not enter into commercial relationships directly with the military or with their supply chain. To inform our Myanmar sanctions strategy, we conduct thorough research to identify military linked companies and their beneficial owners. Since the coup, we have announced 14 rounds of sanctions, which have limited the military's access to arms, revenue and equipment.

**Malaysia: Rohingya**

**13 Mar 2023 | HL5883**

**Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool**

To ask His Majesty's Government what assistance they provide to Rohingya refugees in Malaysia.

**Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

We regularly raise the status of Rohingya refugees with the Government of Malaysia and regional partners. The UK is a leading donor to the Rohingya response in Bangladesh, providing £345 million total humanitarian support towards the crisis since 2017. We have provided over £25 million for the Rohingya and other Muslim minorities in Rakhine since 2017. This includes direct funding to the refugee camp at Cox's Bazar and to UNHCR, which works with the Malaysian Government on refugee issues. The UK is grateful for Malaysia's support for the first UN Security Council Resolution on the situation in Myanmar.

### **Myanmar: Health Workers**

07 Mar 2023 | 828 cc682-5

#### **Asked by: Lord Crisp**

To ask His Majesty's Government what support they are providing for health workers in Myanmar who are caring for patients outside the areas controlled by the military government of that country.

I beg leave to ask the Question standing in my name on the Order Paper and, in doing so, I declare an interest as patron of THET, the Tropical Health and Education Trust.

#### **Answered by: Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

My Lords, Myanmar's public healthcare system has been in crisis since the coup. We are concerned about Myanmar's level of basic healthcare services and childhood immunisation rates. The UK is a leading donor on supporting healthcare needs in that country. This financial year, the UK has provided £13.95 million for healthcare in Myanmar, which is being delivered by the UN, by civil society and by ethnic healthcare organisations. This support is saving the lives of vulnerable women and children.

#### **Asked by: Lord Crisp**

I thank the Minister for that response. I agree that the situation in Myanmar two years after the coup is truly appalling. I pay tribute to the UK Government's efforts, including their efforts at the Security Council to keep up pressure on the country. There are many courageous health workers in the parts of the country that are not controlled by the military who are providing health services where and how they can from makeshift facilities, and they are being targeted by the military as a result. They are being excellently supported by UK and UK-based Burmese clinicians with education, training, advice, some supplies and more, largely over the internet. However, this is problematic because it is very largely controlled by the Government.

I have two immediate questions. I understand that Professor Zaw Wai Soe, the Health Minister of the National Unity Government, has asked the noble Lord, Lord Ahmad, if the UK can help by providing access to satellites. Can the Minister tell the House what progress is being made with this and when a response can be expected? Would he be willing to meet representatives of the UK and the UK-based Burmese clinicians in this country to discuss the situation, and what further practical action can be taken?

#### **Answered by: Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

My Lords, for obvious reasons, humanitarian access is extremely challenging, with many areas cut off completely to the UN and international NGOs. That is why our approach has been targeted at using and working with domestic

organisations of the sort that the noble Lord has cited. The problem with that, as he knows, is that healthcare workers affiliated in any way with the civil disobedience movement are targeted. According to the World Health Organization, at least 51 healthcare workers have been killed and 352 attacked since the coup, and the Tropical Health and Education Trust, which the noble Lord is part of, reports that 624 healthcare workers remain in arbitrary detention. I am afraid I do not know the answer about progress on satellites, but I will ask my noble friend Lord Ahmad, in whose portfolio this sits, and if he is not able to meet representatives then I will certainly happily do so.

**Asked by: Lord Collins of Highbury**

My Lords, since Security Council Resolution 2669, we have seen 2 million children in need of a targeted immunisation catch-up programme and 3,000 people having died at the hands of the military coup. Does the Minister agree with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, that the crisis will not end until those responsible are held to account? Will the Minister ensure that we pursue that strongly at the United Nations?

**Answered by: Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

I absolutely agree with the noble Lord and with the UN. He will know that in December last year the UN Security Council passed the first ever resolution on the situation in Myanmar, and that was led by the UK. The resolution demands an end to violence and urges immediate action by the military regime to fully implement the ASEAN five-point consensus and release everyone who has been arbitrarily detained. However, we are not going to see change until we see change at the very top. The noble Lord is right to make that point, and it is of course a priority for the UK.

**Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool**

My Lords, I declare my interests as vice-chair of the all-party parliamentary groups on Burma and the Rohingya. I want to take the Minister back to what he has just said about levels of access and the request from my noble friend Lord Crisp about meeting some of those who are involved in these issues, specifically in this case Burma Campaign UK, in order to address their concerns about the level of reporting that is required for the receipt of international humanitarian aid, which they say is wholly unrealistic and simply not feasible in a conflict zone. They say that people are dying because of the red tape. Can we look again at how to utilise local civil society organisations, as referred to by the Minister a moment ago, which are indeed best placed to get aid to those who need it? They say that, among Burma's ethnic minorities and the 2 million displaced since the military coup, a humanitarian catastrophe is unfolding.

**Answered by: Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

My Lords, it is without doubt a humanitarian catastrophe. Myanmar is the Indo-Pacific's most desperate humanitarian crisis. Some 17.6 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance and over 1.6 million have been displaced, including over 500,000 children. Some 15 million people are considered moderately or severely food insecure, and 7.8 million children remain out of school. So the noble Lord is right. The difficulty, as I mentioned earlier, is access. When dealing with a regime of the sort that runs that country, access to the grass roots is very difficult. So we have a twin approach: first, we work through channels such as the UN and ASEAN to push for greater humanitarian access and, secondly, we increasingly support local civil society networks with access to vulnerable communities to be the first responders to the crisis. That has ensured that UK aid is reaching the most remote and hard-to-reach areas, but it is difficult.

**Asked by: The Lord Bishop of London**

My Lords, the Burmese diaspora are working closely with NHS colleagues in delivering clinical education and training. Their time and expertise are gifted free of charge and supported by modest FCDO funds, which allow organisations such as the Tropical Health and Education Trust to organise and structure this support in a professional way. Could the Minister comment on whether he sees any scope for increasing those funds for UK health communities in their response to Myanmar?

**Answered by: Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

I will reiterate the point I made. We applaud the Myanmar health professionals who are risking their lives to continue treating patients. We commend the NHS volunteers who are sharing their skills and knowledge with colleagues and friends in Myanmar, taking huge risks in doing so. I absolutely pay tribute to them. Since the coup, we have provided around £100 million to support those in need of humanitarian assistance, to deliver healthcare and education for the most vulnerable and to protect civic space. In 2021-22, we provided nearly £50 million in aid to Myanmar, including £24 million of life-saving assistance for 600,000 people. I am not in a position to comment on future expenditure, but I think it is very clear from our recent track record that this remains a priority focus for the FCDO.

**Asked by: Lord Purvis of Tweed**

My Lords, as I started to say earlier, the attack on health workers and health support workers is deeply reprehensible and I support the Government's actions, including the sanctions. The operation of a parallel health system by health workers to provide much-needed support for children could be a model in other countries, such as Syria and Afghanistan, where we do not recognise the regimes. When the Minister is considering the right reverend



Prelate's question regarding UK government support, can that support include those seeking to offer vital health support in Syria and Afghanistan, where we do not recognise the regime?

**Answered by: Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The noble Lord makes an important point, and I will make sure that that suggestion is conveyed to relevant Ministers and officials. I will add that, according to the World Health Organization, one-third of all attacks on health workers around the world have occurred in Myanmar. This is a real problem. I think the approach adopted in that country by the international community has worked and, like the noble Lord, I do not see any reason why it would not in other areas where we do not recognise the regime.

**Asked by: Baroness Nye**

My Lords, I declare an interest as a trustee of Burma Campaign UK. The Minister will know that, since the coup in 2021, the military has brutally suppressed its critics and unlawfully attacked civilians on the ground and from the air, including many health workers working in the ethnic areas. While the UK and EU-imposed sanctions on aviation fuel are welcome, will the Minister give assurances that he will keep those sanctions under urgent review as companies change names to avoid sanctions, and look into whether British companies are involved in the provision of third-party services to vessels involved in the shipment of aviation fuel to Myanmar, such as insurance, shipping or financial services? Stopping the military's relentless bombing campaign on innocent civilians will help those providing humanitarian aid.

**Answered by: Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The Government always keep their sanctions policy under review. We are considering a range of further targets and other measures to hold the suppressive, brutal regime to account. It is vital that any sanctions imposed have the desired effect of denying the regime credibility and reducing its access to finance, arms and equipment. Part of that is to tackle the problem identified by the noble Baroness—the use of aviation fuel to facilitate bombing campaigns. That is a focus of the FCDO when it comes to looking at the appropriate sanctions.

**Myanmar: Education**

**06 Mar 2023 | 153914**

**Asked by: Preet Kaur Gill**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department takes to help ensure that monasteries

receiving British aid though the Myanmar Education Consortium do not engage in (a) hate speech and (b) anti-Muslim propaganda.

**Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

Monastic education plays an important role in the wider education sector in Myanmar, often reaching children in poor and conflict-affected communities with no alternative schooling. The Myanmar Education Consortium (MEC) has provided system-strengthening support to selected monastic schools. Any schools receiving support must demonstrate a strong commitment to the inclusive values of the MEC.

**Myanmar: Civil Society**

**22 Feb 2023 | 146997**

**Asked by: Brendan O'Hara**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much and what proportion of British aid to Myanmar goes directly to Myanmar civil society organisations.

**Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

Since the coup on 1 February 2021, the UK has provided over £100 million in life saving assistance, emergency healthcare and education for displaced and conflict affected people. Of the £49 million provided this year, £18 million has been channelled through Myanmar civil society organisations. We have found that local civil society partners are best placed to access hard-to-reach and conflict affected areas.

**Myanmar: Joint Peace Fund**

**22 Feb 2023 | 146996**

**Asked by: Brendan O'Hara**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much from the public purse his Department (a) has contributed as of 17 February 2023 and (b) plans to contribute in future to the Joint Peace Fund in support of Myanmar.

**Answering member: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The UK is committed to de-escalating the current crisis in Myanmar and seeking a resolution to the country's long running conflicts. The UK is a founding donor of the Joint Peace Fund and has contributed £7.16 million to the fund since 2016. No decision on future funding has yet been made.

### **Myanmar: Politics and Government**

**20 Feb 2023 | HL5442**

**Asked by: Lord Collins of Highbury**

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking following the adoption of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2669 on the situation in Myanmar.

**Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The first UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution on Myanmar, led by the UK, demands an end to violence and urges immediate action by the military regime to fully implement the ASEAN Five Point Consensus. The resolution requested the UN Secretary-General or his Special Envoy on Myanmar to provide an oral report to the UN Security Council (UNSC) by March. The meeting will take place in March. The resolution is an important step towards further UNSC scrutiny and action on the situation in Myanmar. We are working closely with our partners in New York to seize the momentum of this resolution.

### **Myanmar: Armed Forces**

**20 Feb 2023 | HL5441**

**Asked by: Lord Collins of Highbury**

To ask His Majesty's Government what analysis they have made of revenue flows to the Myanmar military; and what steps they are taking to stem those flows.

**Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

We have led international efforts to reduce the military regime's access to revenue, arms and equipment. On 31 January we announced our fourteenth round of sanctions, targeting those who profit from the supply of aviation fuel to the Myanmar Air Force. Following the coup, we strengthened our overseas business risk guidance to ensure that UK businesses are doing thorough due diligence in Myanmar to avoid exposure to the military and its business interests.

We continue to work with our partners to understand how we can take targeted and proportionate action to reduce the military's access to funds to facilitate its campaign of violence.

### **Myanmar: Humanitarian Aid**

**20 Feb 2023 | HL5440**

#### **Asked by: Lord Collins of Highbury**

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to increase their provision of humanitarian aid to the government of Myanmar; and what assessment they have made of the change in the needs of the population of that country since the military took control in 2021.

#### **Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

We remain strongly committed to helping those most in need in Myanmar. The UK remains one of the leading donors. Since the coup on 1st February 2021, the UK has provided over £100 million to support those in need of humanitarian assistance, to deliver healthcare and education for the most vulnerable, and to protect civic space. We are also working closely with civil society and local organisations to help build the resilience of communities and the foundations for a more open, inclusive and democratic Myanmar.

### **Myanmar: Sanctions**

**20 Feb 2023 | HL5439**

#### **Asked by: Lord Collins of Highbury**

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking (1) to stop human rights violations, and (2) to ensure accountability, in Myanmar, following the sanctions introduced since the military took power in that country two years ago.

#### **Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

We are clear that there must be accountability for atrocities committed in Myanmar. We condemn the ongoing serious human rights violations by the Myanmar military. We will continue to raise these issues on the international stage, including at the UN Security Council. We have established and funded the Myanmar Witness programme to collect and verify evidence of serious human rights violations and abuses.

On 25 August 2022, the UK announced its intention to intervene in the International Court of Justice case regarding Myanmar's compliance with its obligations under the Genocide Convention, in relation to acts committed against the Rohingya.

### **Myanmar: Politics and Government**

**20 Feb 2023 | HL5402**

#### **Asked by: The Marquess of Lothian**

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the current political and security situation in Myanmar; and what steps, if any, they are taking to hold the military authorities in Myanmar to account, particularly in view of international concerns over war crimes and crimes against humanity.

#### **Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The UK continues to condemn the military coup in Myanmar and the violence against the people of Myanmar. Since 1st February 2021, the UK has been at the forefront of the international response. We will continue to use all possible measures to target those who seek to facilitate and profit from the military's human rights violations. On 31st January, we announced our fourteenth tranche of targeted sanctions, to target companies and individuals who are responsible for supplying aviation fuel to the Myanmar Air Force. On 21 December 2022, the UN Security Council passed the first ever resolution, which was led by the UK, on the situation in Myanmar. led by the UK. The resolution highlighted the oppression faced by people across Myanmar, and demanded an end to violence and the release of all those arbitrarily detained. To end the culture of impunity in Myanmar, we have established the Myanmar Witness programme, which collects and preserves evidence of human rights violations for future prosecution.

### **Myanmar: Human Rights**

**20 Feb 2023 | HL5386**

#### **Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool**

To ask His Majesty's Government, in addition to existing sanctions placed on Myanmar, what further steps they intend to take to stop human rights violations and to ensure accountability of those responsible for the military coup and the subsequent attacks on civilians.

#### **Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The UK is clear that there must be accountability for atrocities committed in Myanmar. We condemn the ongoing serious human rights violations by the Myanmar Armed Forces. We will continue to raise these issues on the international stage, including at the UN Security Council. We have established and funded the Myanmar Witness programme to collect and verify evidence of serious human rights violations and abuses. This evidence could be used in any future legal proceedings.

On 25 August 2022, the UK announced its intention to intervene in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) case regarding Myanmar's compliance with its obligations under the Genocide Convention, in relation to acts committed against the Rohingya. The UK is currently working on the scope of its intervention, including detailed consideration of the legal arguments. It intends to make a formal declaration to the Court in due course.

## 6 Other Parliamentary material

### 6.1 Written Statement

#### [Update on Myanmar](#)

02 Feb 2023 | House of Commons | HCWS540

#### **Anne-Marie Trevelyan | Department: Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

Yesterday marked two years since the military seized power from the democratically elected government in Myanmar. The military continues to instigate violence across the country and inflict acute suffering against the people of Myanmar.

The consequences for domestic and regional stability are clear; over 17 million people are now in need of humanitarian assistance - a staggering increase of 16 million in just two years; over 1.5 million people are displaced within Myanmar, with a million more in neighbouring Bangladesh, Thailand and India; illicit economies are thriving; and democratic gains have been reversed. Recent figures indicated Myanmar suffered some of the most intense violence in the world in 2022, with conflict-related deaths second only to Ukraine. There is a clear trajectory of increasing violence, human rights violations and abuses, to which the UK has responded with a range of tools.

Since the coup, we have provided around £100m to support those in need of humanitarian assistance, deliver healthcare and education for the most vulnerable, and protect civic space. We are proud to work with civil society organisations in Myanmar who have access to vulnerable communities in the most remote and hard to reach places, even where others have been unable to do so.

We have led a strong, coordinated international response to the coup, through our G7 Presidency and our leadership role on Myanmar at the UN Security Council (UNSC). On 21 December 2022, the UNSC passed the first ever resolution on the situation in Myanmar, led by the UK. The Resolution demands an end to violence and urges immediate action by the military regime to fully implement the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Five Point Consensus and release all those arbitrarily detained. We have also used our role at the UN Human Rights Council to highlight violations, including gender-based violence.

The UK condemns the brutal actions of the military regime. The military continues to use indiscriminate air attacks on schools, hospitals and places of worship, to suppress, intimidate and demoralise the civilian population. In

Myanmar, the security forces are committing atrocities with impunity, including reports of sexual violence, torture and village burnings bearing many of the hallmarks of the atrocities against the Rohingya in 2016 and 2017. In response to this violence, the UK has announced its fourteenth tranche of targeted sanctions, to target companies and individuals who are responsible for supplying aviation fuel to the Myanmar Air Force. We will continue to use all possible measures to target those who seek to facilitate and profit from the military's human rights violations.

We support all those working peacefully to restore democracy in Myanmar. The military must engage in inclusive and meaningful dialogue with the full range of opposition voices, including the National Unity Government (NUG), and respect the democratic aspirations of the people of Myanmar. In 2022, UK Ministers spoke regularly with counterparts in the NUG. We call on the military to immediately end its campaign of violence and release the thousands of people it has detained arbitrarily, including Aung San Suu Kyi. The military must engage in inclusive and meaningful dialogue with the full range of opposition voices in order to respect the federal, democratic aspirations of the people of Myanmar.

The Rohingya in Myanmar continue to suffer systemic discrimination. Sadly, this is leading to desperate attempts to reach third country destinations, often ending in tragedy. We will support all efforts to seek accountability for the atrocities they suffered in 2017. This is why, in August, we announced our intention to intervene in the International Court of Justice case brought by The Gambia.

We remain committed to supporting efforts to hold perpetrators of violence to account. We have provided funding to the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar and established the Myanmar Witness Programme to collect and preserve evidence of serious human rights violations and abuses, including those against women, girls and LGBT+ people.

I reiterate my steadfast support for the people of Myanmar, and my desire to work towards a peaceful, inclusive and democratic future for the country.

## 6.2

## Debates

[Persecution of the Rohingya: International Response](#)

13 Oct 2022 | 720 cc349-352



## 6.3

## Early Day Motions

**Second anniversary of military coup in Myanmar****EDM 819 (session 2022-23)****Rushanara Ali****31 Jan 2023**

That this House extends solidarity to the people of Myanmar resisting the military coup that took place on 1 February 2021; deplores that over 17,000 people have been arrested, over 2,700 killed and over one million forced to flee their homes; calls for the immediate release of elected members of Parliament illegally detained by the Burmese military, for an end to torture and sexual violence against activists in detention, and for the release of all political prisoners; condemns the almost daily use of airstrikes by the Burmese military; further calls on the Government to do everything it can to end the supply of aviation fuel to the Burmese military; welcomes the Government's international lead on sanctioning sources of revenue and arms to the Burmese military; calls for increased resources to be dedicated to speeding up the pace of such sanctions; further welcomes the Government's decision to join the Rohingya genocide case at the International Court of Justice; calls on the Government to convene a meeting at the UN Security Council on Myanmar's non-compliance with the provisional measures to prevent genocide set out by the International Court of Justice; calls on the Government to increase efforts to persuade countries such as India and Pakistan to stop supplying arms and other military equipment to the Burmese military; and calls on the Government to increase humanitarian aid, including cross-border aid, through local civil society organisations.

**One year anniversary of the military coup in Myanmar****EDM 908 (session 2021-22)****Rushanara Ali****26 Jan 2022**

That this House, on the one year anniversary of the military coup that took place on 1 February 2021 in Myanmar (Burma), condemns the crimes against humanity perpetrated by the Myanmar military against the people of Myanmar; stands in solidarity with the Burmese people opposing the military coup; notes in horror the increased attacks by the military in ethnic areas including Chin, Karenni and Karen State over the recent months which includes the burning of people alive, torching of villages and killings of children; demands an urgent stop to the attacks; demands the release of all political prisoners; welcomes the UK Government's condemnation of the coup and the introduction of targeted economic sanctions on military businesses; calls for further economic sanctions targeting military revenues; further calls

for sanctions on aviation fuel to ground military bomber jets; calls on the Government to increase its efforts to encourage other countries to introduce unilateral arms embargoes; further calls on the Government to increase cross-border aid through local organisations working directly with the people affected by the military attacks; and calls on the Government to join the Rohingya genocide case at the International Court of Justice to secure justice for the Rohingya genocide, and to publicly support the referral of the situation in Myanmar to the International Criminal Court.

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