

In the face of a murderous military dictatorship, an urgent appeal for financial solidarity with grass roots resistance in Myanmar/Burma

Sunday 14 March 2021, by [ESSF](#), [JOHNSON Mark](#), [ROUSSET Pierre](#) (Date first published: 14 March 2021).

The Burmese army carried out a coup on 1 February in a country where it already controlled most of the power. It no longer wanted to share an ounce of that power with the civilian government or allow its erstwhile ally, the National League for Democracy (NLD), to gradually increase its influence.

We know how far the army is prepared to go to impose its order - the establishment of a regime of widespread terror: use of weapons of war against the population; coordinated indiscriminate killings throughout the country; mass arrests and torture; cyber-surveillance; drones that can spray aggressive gases; common prisoners released to sow chaos; death squads and paramilitary militias; extrajudicial executions; sexual violence; censorship; occupation of hospitals, schools and universities; use of blackmail and corruption...

The junta was immediately confronted with a vast movement of civil disobedience. For a few weeks, this blocked the military takeover. The civil service largely stopped functioning. Unable to impose its new order, the army engaged in a real war of attrition against popular resistance.

Myanmar is haunted by the spectre of 1988, when a mass anti-dictatorship mobilisation was drowned in blood. Times have changed, however: Burmese society is no longer cut off from the world as it was then. By its massiveness, the opposition to the coup has prevented the "normalisation" of the situation, and forced the imposition of some international sanctions.

The movement continues its struggle under extremely dangerous conditions. The victory of the democratic movement is possible, but the struggle is likely to be long, difficult and trying.

Europe Solidaire Sans Frontières (ESSF), is calling for financial solidarity to support this struggle, now and over the long term.

Our solidarity is focused on the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), which includes the health workers and "generation Z" (high school youth) who were the first to reject the coup, as well as labour unionists, including those in the CTUM trade union federation, which called for the general strike on 8 February.

Our financial solidarity will also support groups advocating for the progressive aspirations of national minorities and the associations that have been building solidarity between Bamar (the majority ethnic group) and the other peoples of the Union of Myanmar. In recent years, this has been cemented in particular by joint struggles against mining projects or the timber industry, which destroy local communities. There are many social movements in Myanmar, both local and sectoral,

which are now in opposition to the military dictatorship.

ESSF's financial support is not directed at the National League for Democracy and its affiliated organisations. The NLD is now being violently repressed and its cadres arrested or hunted down. However, when it was in government, it collaborated with or covered up for the army up to and including the Rohyngya massacre in 2017.

We are keen to carry out this solidarity campaign together with trade unions, social movements, networks, associations, parties, which share our objectives.

We are working with like-minded solidarity initiatives to identify the best division of labour and modalities of fund distribution. As always, ESSF transfers 100% of funds to partners, without salary or commission.

Please join us, please contribute what you can.

Thanks!

Mark Johnson and Pierre Rousset, for ESSF

To send donations

Cheques

cheques to ESSF in euros only, payable in France, to be sent to:

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2, rue Richard-Lenoir

93100 Montreuil

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We keep you regularly informed via our website of the situation and use of the solidarity fund.

P.S.

- Revised version.