

Myanmar: Statement Regarding Global Apparel Brands - “In our time of greatest need, we call on the brands to support us in defense of our fundamental rights and futures”

Tuesday 9 March 2021, by [FGWM](#) (Date first published: 4 March 2021).

The members of the FGWM make the clothing of most of the global apparel brands who operate in Myanmar. We have worked dutifully over the years in Myanmar factories to make the brands’ clothing and to help the brands build their successful businesses. Now in our time of greatest need, we call on the brands to support us in defense of our fundamental rights and futures [1].

The military coup in Myanmar and the military’s violent repression of protesters has been universally condemned as a gross violation of democracy and human rights. The FGWM has led the Myanmar people’s struggle to defend our democracy and our rights, participating extensively in the Civil Disobedience Movement. However, many employers are actively interfering with our fundamental rights to political expression, intimidating, threatening, and even dismissing workers for joining the pro-democracy demonstrations (not to mention actively propping up a military dictatorship).



Members of the Federation of General Workers Myanmar (FGWM) lining up as part of the anti-coup protests on March 2, 2021. Photo: FGWM [2].

We know from extensive experience that apparel brands have very significant leverage over the behavior of their suppliers. **Therefore, we call on all apparel brands using Myanmar suppliers to immediately issue a public statement demanding that no workers in Myanmar factories are to be dismissed, disciplined, or discouraged in any way from participating in the Civil Disobedience Movement.**

We believe that given the current political situation in Myanmar, and given the brands’ publicity around “Corporate Social Responsibility,” this defense of our basic right to political expression is the least global apparel brands can do. We also believe that refusing to do so will equate with being silent against the crimes of the Myanmar military junta. The ACT statement issued by brands does not in any way explicitly demand that no workers be dismissed for participating in the Civil

Disobedience Movement. We call on your explicit public statements and actions to ensure any employer resistance to workers' participation in the Civil Disobedience Movement ceases immediately.

Federation of General Workers Myanmar (FGWM)

March 4, 2021



BRANDS DOING BUSINESS IN MYANMAR

The Industrial Workers' Federation of Myanmar is demanding that brands and suppliers publicly denounce the coup and agree that no workers making their clothes will be disciplined or dismissed for participating in the Civil Disobedience Movement. Below is a list of brands with business in Myanmar [Labor Notes]:

Adidas (Germany)
Aldi Nord (Germany)
Benetton (Italy)
Bestseller (Denmark)
C&A (Netherlands/Germany)
Calvin Klein (U.S.)
Columbia Sportswear (U.S.)
Cotton On Group (Australia)
David's Bridal (U.S.)
Eddie Bauer (U.S.)
Fruit of the Loom (U.S.)
Gap (U.S.)
H&M (Sweden)
Hunkemoller (Netherlands)
Inditex (Spain)
Itochu (Japan)
JCPenney (U.S.)
Justin Alexander (U.S.)
Kappahl (Sweden)
Le Coq Sportif (France)
Lidl (Germany)
Lindex (Sweden)

Mango (Spain)
Marks & Spencer (U.K.)
Matalan (U.K.)
Mizuno (Japan)
Muji (Japan)
New Look (U.K.)
Next (U.K.)
OVS (Italy)
Primark (U.K.)
Sportira 1998 (Canada)
Tally Weijl (Switzerland)
Tchibo (Germany)
Tesco (U.K.)
VF (North Face) (U.S.)
Wilson Sporting Goods (U.S.)

P.S.

• LaborNotes. March 6, 2021:
<https://labornotes.org/blogs/2021/03/burmese-union-federations-call-international-support-against-co-up>

Footnotes

[1] <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=10105734817291972&set=a.511422228592>

[2] https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1077825512706064&id=260306361124654