

Joint Letter to Ambassadors to Myanmar

25 March, 2021

Re: Attendance to the Myanmar Armed Forces Day

Dear Ambassadors,

The undersigned civil society organizations would like to strongly urge you to turn down the invitation you may have received from the illegitimate military junta to attend Myanmar's Armed Forces Day. March 27 is Myanmar Armed Forces Day, which was originally Revolution Day to commemorate the Burma Independence Army-led movement against Japanese occupation. It is a day that is supposed to honour Myanmar resistance but has been co-opted by the military for their own propaganda.

The Myanmar military illegally staged a coup on February 1 and is committing crimes against humanity by deliberately killing unarmed peaceful protestors and civilians and terrorizing the population. The coup follows decades of military attacks against ethnic people that have included campaigns of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The military's history of atrocities and illegitimate attempted coup that crushes the hopes and dreams of our people must not be rewarded with recognition.

The military junta may have invited you to attend an official Armed Forces Day event. Attendance of any diplomatic representatives at the Armed Forces Day event would give the military the legitimacy they desperately want and are struggling for, as our people have been resisting since they attempted this coup on February 1st.

We call on you to stand with the people of Myanmar who are peacefully resisting the illegitimate junta, striving to restore democracy. We urge you to lend your assistance in protecting the people of Myanmar and those who are peacefully protesting the military junta. This includes monitoring the ongoing trials of those who have been arbitrarily detained by the illegitimate junta. More than ever before, we need you to take a stand with us – not with those who have been terrorizing the peoples of Myanmar. Please turn down the invitation to attend the Armed Forces Day. Our people's lives depend on your action.

Sincerely,

416 Myanmar Civil Society Organizations, working on human rights, peace and democracy