

Statement by Tom Andrews
UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar
On the Armed Forces Day Massacre in Myanmar
27 March 2021

Today the junta of Myanmar has made Armed Forces Day a day of infamy with the massacre of men, women and very young children throughout country. The numbers of people murdered continue to rise with some sources now reporting more than 100 have perished at the hands of Myanmar security forces.

Words of condemnation or concern are frankly ringing hollow to the people of Myanmar while the military junta commits mass murder against them.

The question now is where the international community stands. Some are literally standing with the military junta as they deploy weapons of war against their own people. Others cut and paste words of condemnation or concern. Some offer disparate and diffuse actions. Others remain silent.

The courageous people of Myanmar have responded to the junta's cowardly use of weapons of war with the deployment of powerful weapons of peace through the Civil Disobedience Movement. The world must respond in kind.

It is past time for robust, coordinated action.

The UN Security Council is the appropriate venue for a crisis of this magnitude to be examined and for appropriate action to be taken. If the Security Council cannot act, then an international emergency summit on Myanmar should be organized and convened immediately. Coordinated action should be taken to stop the junta from continuing to steal funds that rightfully belong to the people of Myanmar, including funds that are being stolen from the oil and gas sector. Security forces should be denied access to weapons or dual-use technology that can be weaponized and deployed against the people of Myanmar. Investigations and prosecutions should be initiated to hold those responsible for the horrors being inflicted on the people of Myanmar accountable.

The people of Myanmar continue to demonstrate awe-inspiring courage and tenacity as they stand against the evil that has descended on them. As Dr. Sasa, Myanmar's Special Envoy to the United Nations wrote today:

"We, the people of Myanmar, in responding to the cowardly acts of the junta, will show once again that the use of battlefield weapons will not put an end to our peaceful movement. Our weapons of peaceful protest stand proud in the midst of their acts of violence, and are the reason that we can still have hope for the future of Myanmar. In the face of the junta's murderous actions, we must stand ready and keep our resolve strong. We must recommit to the Civil Disobedience Movement and to our right to freely protest against this murderous regime. We will outsmart them and we will defeat them."

The people of Myanmar need the world's support. Words are not enough. It is past time for robust, coordinated action.