



House of Commons  
Foreign Affairs Committee

---

# Government Response to the Committee's Fourth Report: The UK Government's Response to the Myanmar Crisis

---

Third Special Report of Session 2021–  
22

*Report, together with formal minutes relating  
to the report*

*Ordered by the House of Commons  
to be printed 21 September 2021*

**HC 718**  
Published on 23 September 2021  
by authority of the House of Commons

## The Foreign Affairs Committee

The Foreign Affairs Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and its associated public bodies.

### Current membership

Tom Tugendhat MP (*Conservative, Tonbridge and Malling*) (Chair)

Chris Bryant MP (*Labour, Rhondda*)

Neil Coyle MP (*Labour, Bermondsey and Old Southwark*)

Alicia Kearns MP (*Conservative, Rutland and Melton*)

Stewart Malcolm McDonald MP (*Scottish National Party, Glasgow South*)

Andrew Rosindell MP (*Conservative, Romford*)

Bob Seely MP (*Conservative, Isle of Wight*)

Henry Smith MP (*Conservative, Crawley*)

Royston Smith MP (*Conservative, Southampton, Itchen*)

Graham Stringer MP (*Labour, Blackley and Broughton*)

Claudia Webbe MP (*Independent, Leicester East*)

### Powers

The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the internet via [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk).

### Publication

© Parliamentary Copyright House of Commons 2021. This publication may be reproduced under the terms of the Open Parliament Licence, which is published at [www.parliament.uk/site-information/copyright-parliament/](http://www.parliament.uk/site-information/copyright-parliament/).

Committee reports are published on the Committee's website at [www.parliament.uk/facom](http://www.parliament.uk/facom) and in print by Order of the House.

### Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are, Lauren Boyer (Clerk), Clare Genis (Committee Operations Manager), Jonathan Hibbert-Hingston (Committee Specialist), James Jennion (Committee Specialist), Danniella Kinder (Committee Support Apprentice), Alice Lynch (Committee Specialist), Antonia McAndrew-Noon (Media and Communications Officer), Chris Shaw (Clerk), Daniela Sindrestean (Committee Operations Officer), Hannah Stone (Senior Committee Specialist).

### Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Foreign Affairs Committee, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 6106; the Committee's email address is [fac@parliament.uk](mailto:fac@parliament.uk).

You can follow the Committee on Twitter using @CommonsForeign.

## Third Special Report

---

On 16 July 2021, the Foreign Affairs Committee published its Fourth Report of Session 2021–22, The UK Government's Response to the Myanmar Crisis (HC 203). The Government's response was received on 14 September 2021 and is appended below.

## Appendix: Government Response

---

### Introduction

The Government welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Foreign Affairs Committee's July 2021 report on the UK's response to the Myanmar crisis. The UK Government is committed to ending the crisis. To this end we are pushing for a political resolution and the release of all political prisoners; working to build a practical common vision for a peaceful and inclusive Myanmar; and working to protect community resilience, including for the most marginalised and at-risk communities. The UK Government will continue to hold the military junta to account for serious human rights violations and the subversion of democracy.

The Committee makes a series of recommendations on how the UK Government can work to achieve these objectives, and we welcome these. The UK is committed to Myanmar's transition to an inclusive, democratic and peaceful country, and will continue to call for a swift restoration of the democratic process. We will continue to support the pro-democracy movement in Myanmar and deny the military junta the credibility they desire through coordination of international action, as well as efforts to undermine their financial interests and reputation.

This paper sets out the Government's response to each of the Committee's conclusions and recommendations.

### Diplomatic and multilateral action

**1. If the UK is to fulfil its unique potential to mediate, it has to demonstrate a willingness to take action beyond statements. A coherent and concerted response is needed by the United Nations if the junta is to feel any real pressure. Actions should be taken to de-legitimise the junta's authority, block its supply of arms, and encourage regional actors to take firmer measures.** (Paragraph 8)

The UK has been at the forefront of a strong, coordinated international response, through our G7 Presidency and our leadership role on Myanmar at the UN Security Council. On 10 March, the UK secured a unanimous Presidential Statement at the UN Security Council that condemned the violence against peaceful protestors. We have also secured strong statements from the G7, UN Human Rights Council and the UN General Assembly. These statements are vital in ensuring there is a broad, international coalition in opposition to the coup. They have also increased pressure on the junta and those supporting them economically or through arms sales.

We have gone beyond statements. The UK has imposed targeted sanctions against the regime, built a coalition of countries who will not supply arms to the military, including through the G7 and UN General Assembly, and is actively working, bilaterally and through multilateral fora, to encourage regional partners to take further steps to put pressure on the regime. This has included sharing our experience on conducting aid reviews and pushing for regional divestment from military linked companies.

**2. The UK Government cannot be said to support democracy in Myanmar if it does not recognise the outcome of democratic elections in Myanmar. The National Unity Government comprises the legitimate representatives of the people of Myanmar, whose election has been found valid by third party observers. Rather than an exile government, the NUG should be treated as a government-in-waiting.** (Paragraph 10)

AND

**3. We recommend that the UK Government supports the democratically elected National Unity Government of Myanmar by working with its representatives to identify and push for peaceful outcomes and draw attention to the junta's illegal actions.** (Paragraph 14)

As the FAC acknowledges, the UK has a longstanding policy and practice of according recognition to States, not Governments. Nevertheless, we are clear that the National Unity Government (NUG) and the Committee Representing the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) are important voices for many in Myanmar. Both organisations hold a strong democratic mandate from the November 2020 elections. We have worked to amplify their voice on the international stage, including by reading out their statements at the UN Human Rights Council on 12 February and the UN General Assembly on 26 February. At the UK's initiative, representatives from the NUG, have briefed the UN Security Council in informal "Arria" meetings on 9 April and 29 July. We are also urging partners, including ASEAN, to engage with the NUG. Officials are engaging regularly with senior figures in the NUG. The Minister for Asia has met with both Dr Sasa and Daw Zin Mar Aung from the NUG, and reiterated the UK's shared ambition for a democratic, inclusive and peaceful Myanmar.

**4. This support should be contingent on the NUG's clear and continued commitment to the rights of different ethnic groups and minorities, and to delivering justice for past crimes. The UK should work to encourage other countries to do the same.** (Paragraph 14)

The UK Government is clear that we want to see a democratic, peaceful and inclusive future for Myanmar. The Minister for Asia used his meetings with Dr Sasa and Daw Zin Mar Aung from the NUG, to push the NUG to ensure they are truly inclusive and representative of all the people of Myanmar, including the Rohingya. The Minister for Asia also pushed for diverse representation, including of Muslims and the Rohingya, on the National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC). We welcome the NUG's recent policy paper on the Rohingya and urge the NUG to continue to build an inclusive coalition. We have also made clear to the NUG that they should not pursue violent means to achieve their objectives.

**5. It is essential that the UK Government's actions do not appear to legitimise the authority of the junta in any way. Any actions that do will be seized upon by the**

**junta and used as propaganda. Engagement should be strictly limited to increasing diplomatic and economic pressure to reduce the violence the junta is committing against civilians.** (Paragraph 15)

The UK is engaging with the regime bilaterally only where strictly necessary to ensure that we can deliver our political, humanitarian and development objectives in Myanmar. This is in line with our policy of recognising States, not Governments. Where the UK is present in multilateral fora with representatives of the military, we will continue to express our deep concern about the situation in Myanmar.

**6. Freezing the Tatmadaw's supply of arms should be the first priority of all those who wish to see violence in Myanmar come to an end.** (Paragraph 17)

AND

*7. We recommend that the UK draft a United Nations Security Council resolution calling explicitly for an arms embargo on Myanmar in order to gauge the current level of support and the type of diplomatic engagement that is required to establish an effective arms embargo. The ultimate objective of the UK should be securing a binding Security Council resolution on an arms embargo on Myanmar.* (Paragraph 17)

AND

**8. In the absence of a binding UN resolution on an arms embargo, we recommend that the UK works bilaterally and with groups such as the G7, the Quad, and the Five Power Defence Arrangements to build broader coalitions that will implement individual arms embargos, while also maintaining pressure and support for an official United Nations arms embargo. Pressure should also be applied to other countries to cease all training of the Myanmar military.** (Paragraph 18)

The UK is a longstanding supporter of an arms embargo on Myanmar. We are clear that countries should not sell arms to the Myanmar military. The UK helped secure and strengthen a comprehensive EU arms embargo on Myanmar following the 2017 Rohingya crisis. Since we left the EU, we have transitioned this into domestic law. The UK autonomous Myanmar sanctions regulations also prohibit the provision of military related services, including the provision of technical assistance, to or for the benefit of the Tatmadaw. We are working closely with partners to pressure those who sell arms to the military, and have used our leadership role at the G7 and UN to this end. There is currently a lack of support for a binding arms embargo from the UN Security Council, so the UK has focused its efforts on building a broader coalition of countries who are committed to preventing the flow of arms to Myanmar. Nevertheless, we continue to work with partners on the UN Security Council to explore opportunities to push for stronger action.

On 5 May, the UK secured a G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting Communiqué that committed G7 members to continue to prevent the supply of arms and technical assistance to the military. The G7 Leaders' Communiqué of 13 June reaffirmed G7 unity on pursuing additional measures should they prove necessary. On 18 June, the UK worked with partners to deliver a UN General Assembly Resolution which urged member states to prevent the flow of arms to Myanmar. We publicly welcomed the announcement by the Republic of Korea to impose an arms embargo on Myanmar and call on others to do the same.

**9. If ASEAN's mediation efforts are to have any chance of succeeding, they must be much more assertive, with a focus on holding the leaders of the junta to account. The UK has a responsibility to amplify the importance of human rights and international law in ASEAN deliberations.** (Paragraph 20)

AND

**10. Using its new status as an ASEAN Dialogue Partner, the UK should work with ASEAN to avoid any member states legitimising the junta's authority, and should make the release of political prisoners and the cessation of all violence a fundamental part of the mediation process. The UK should also encourage ASEAN to impose a strict timeline on the junta for adoption of the five-point consensus, expediting a decision on the appointment of an ASEAN envoy to lead mediation efforts.** (Paragraph 20)

We welcome the ASEAN Five Point Consensus and the commitment to its "swift and complete implementation" expressed by ASEAN Foreign Ministers at their meeting on 2 August. The appointment of Foreign Minister II, Dato Erywan, as ASEAN Special Envoy to Myanmar on 3 August is also an important step. We convened the UN Security Council on 17 August and invited the ASEAN Special Envoy to brief members on his next steps. We welcome ASEAN's commitment to their Charter principles of "democracy, the rule of law and good governance, respect for and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms" in the Chair's statement of 1 February. We will continue to work closely with ASEAN and the Special Envoy to stress the urgency of addressing the deteriorating situation in Myanmar. ASEAN's Five Point Consensus is an important foundation, but urgent implementation is now key to ensure that the crisis is not perpetuated. We will continue to advocate for the Special Envoy to be given access to all stakeholders in Myanmar. The UK secured ASEAN Dialogue Partner status on 4 August, after the publication of this report. We welcome our strengthened relationship with the region and will continue to work to support their efforts to resolve the crisis. We are working closely with ASEAN, the UN and the donor community present in Myanmar to address the current humanitarian and COVID-19 crisis in Myanmar.

**11. If the crisis continues to worsen, and in the absence of meaningful action through other United Nations mechanisms, the Uniting for Peace option may be another viable avenue for action, as the General Assembly has already shown consensus on an arms embargo.** (Paragraph 22)

AND

**12. We recommend that the Government explore the feasibility of moving for a Uniting for Peace resolution if there is a failure to reach consensus in the Security Council within the next three months.** (Paragraph 22)

We note the Committee's suggestion on the possibility of using the "Uniting for Peace" (UfP) procedure, which, if there is sufficient support, allows the UN General Assembly (UNGA) to meet, if necessary in an Emergency Special Session (ESS), to consider a matter on which the Security Council is essentially blocked by a veto from acting upon. In practice, however, the General Assembly is already seized of the Myanmar crisis and is already exercising its prerogatives in respect of the crisis. This would not be changed by invoking the UfP procedure. On 26 February, the General Assembly convened to discuss the situation in Myanmar and the UK used this as an opportunity to provide a platform for

the NUG. On 18 June, the UK worked closely with partners to deliver a General Assembly resolution, adopted with 119 votes in favour, on the situation in Myanmar. This resolution strongly condemned the crisis in Myanmar and included a commitment to prevent the flow of arms to Myanmar. The UN Secretary General's Special Envoy on Myanmar also takes her mandate from, and reports to, the General Assembly. UNGA also addresses Myanmar's human rights situation annually. While UfP allows UNGA to discuss the issue and to make recommendations, it does not allow UNGA to authorise measures that it cannot otherwise do under the UN Charter.

**13. To draw further attention to the challenges faced by different groups, the Government should consider raising the issue of Myanmar at the UN treaty bodies. This may include, but not be limited to, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, due to the Tatmadaw's reported use of rape as a weapon of war; the Committee on the Rights of the Child, due to the number of children killed by the Tatmadaw; and the Committee against Torture, due to the reported torture and extrajudicial detention of protestors.** (Paragraph 23)

The UK will continue to use our leadership role within the UN to ensure that the spotlight stays on the situation in Myanmar. In relation to children in conflict we will ensure that the UN Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict continues to review the situation in Myanmar. It is not possible for the UK or other States to raise the situation in Myanmar through the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) or the Committee on the Rights of Children (CRC), as there is no inter-state mechanism under CRC and Myanmar has excluded the mechanism under CEDAW. States have no role in the treaty body examinations of other States Parties, or the meetings of the Committee. Myanmar has not ratified the Convention against Torture (CAT). The UK will continue to speak up publicly and to condemn serious human rights violations in Myanmar.

## Sanctions

**14. We welcome the Government's willingness to sanction individuals and Tatmadaw linked companies in critical sectors. This should be taken further by freezing the military's revenue sources on all possible fronts. The UK has the economic and technical capabilities to help significantly undermine the junta's business in crucial industries.** (Paragraph 28)

AND

**15. *The Government should implement sanctions on Myanmar businesses and organisations in key industries on which the junta is dependent at a much faster pace, while encouraging countries which are not currently introducing sanctions to do so.*** (Paragraph 28)

The UK has been at the forefront of the international sanctions response. We agree with the Committee's recommendation that we should pursue sanctions on businesses and organisations on which the junta is dependent. The UK does not support a return to blanket sanctions, favouring a targeted approach to minimise impacts on the wider population. Since 1 February, the UK has worked quickly and in partnership with the US, Canada and the EU, to impose sanctions on the junta. We have sanctioned the junta's

ruling body and its military leadership; as well as key revenue streams for the military, including three State Owned Enterprises, a high profile business associate, and Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd (MEHL) and Myanmar Economic Corporation (MEC), the two largest military conglomerates. These sanctions send a strong political message in opposition to the coup and undermine the credibility of the junta. They also target the military's funding streams and show solidarity with the domestic boycott movement. We worked quickly to introduce the Myanmar (Sanctions) Regulations 2021 on 29 April. These regulations increase our ability to impose targeted and impactful sanctions on the military. The UK will continue to work closely with partners, including the US, Canada and the EU on further sanctions. In addition to sanctions, the UK's trade review has suspended trade promotion in Myanmar and strengthened advice to British businesses on avoiding exposure to the military. We will continue to support responsible businesses contributing to job creation and poverty alleviation in Myanmar. We will also encourage other countries to consider sanctions, arms embargoes and trade reviews to ensure there is a concerted international effort to target the military's revenue streams.

**16. We heard that banks operating in countries including Singapore and Thailand can be compelled by UK regulators to enforce UK sanctions, as they conduct transactions in British pounds. This would cut off a key intermediary for the junta's revenues, shutting down another line of income.** (Paragraph 29)

Each of our sanctions regimes provides that, in accordance with section 21 of the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018, the prohibitions and requirements imposed by sanctions regulations apply to persons in the UK, and extra-territorially to UK persons, i.e. UK nationals and bodies incorporated or constituted under the law of any part of the UK. UK nationals and companies, wherever they are in the world, are prevented from dealing with funds or economic resources in relation to anyone who is subject to an asset freeze. This is known as a 'UK Nexus'. Such a nexus might be created by such things as a UK company working overseas, transactions using clearing services in the UK, actions by a local subsidiary of a UK company (depending on their governance structures), action taking place overseas but directed from within the UK, or financial products or insurance bought on UK markets but held or used overseas. These examples are not exhaustive or definitive. Whether there is a UK nexus or not depends on the facts of each particular case.

This is a longstanding approach to the extent of our sanctions, and one which is in keeping with that of many of our international partners, including the EU.

**17. We recommend that the UK seeks to ensure that relevant third country financial institutions and regulators support sanctions placed on Tatmadaw-linked businesses and individuals.** (Paragraph 29)

The UK has used both sanctions and a review of our trade and investment approach to ensure we are increasing pressure on Tatmadaw-linked businesses and individuals. We continue to engage with partners in the region to encourage responsible investment in Myanmar, and divestment from military-linked businesses and projects.

The UK has no power to enforce sanctions extra-territorially where there is no UK nexus.

## Humanitarian support

**18. The UK should use the UN system to build consensus on the need for humanitarian assistance within Myanmar, emphasising fundamental requirements such as healthcare and basic provisions.** (Paragraph 32)

The humanitarian situation in Myanmar is dire. The UN estimates that 220,000 people have been displaced since 1 February. Military blockades are creating severe restrictions on the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The UN World Food Programme is warning that 3.4 million people could be food insecure in six months. The World Bank's recent report on the economic situation forecasts an 18% cut in the economy this financial year and estimates the number of people living in poverty is expected to double compared to 2019. UK funding is contributing to the analytical work, which underpins the shared understanding of these needs.

The UK has a twin track approach on access: i) We directly support the UN approach on access (we funded access specialists and the UN's access tracker and have repeatedly raised concerns about restrictions on humanitarian access at the UNSC); ii) On the ground we increasingly work through networks of civil society organisations and national NGOs. This has ensured UK aid continues to meet the needs of some vulnerable people, even when others have been unable to.

We have repeatedly raised our concerns about Myanmar's humanitarian outlook with international partners, including at the UN Security Council, UN General Assembly and in our engagement with ASEAN and other partners.

At the same time, the UK has shown practical leadership on the humanitarian response. We have programmed and reprioritised over £15.3m of humanitarian support in response to the coup. We are working through a range of partners including the UN, ICRC, international and national NGOs, ethnic health organisations and local civil society to reach affected communities. We are providing £11m to support access to basic health care including COVID support.

**19. This should be done using a mechanism that will compel or encourage other countries to act, such as a resolution or statement at the Security Council or the General Assembly. Doing so will reaffirm certain countries' commitment to provide humanitarian support and apply pressure to those who have not done so as yet.** (Paragraph 32)

The UK will continue to use our leadership role at the UN, and particularly at the UN Security Council to keep a spotlight on the humanitarian crisis in Myanmar. We convened an informal "Arria" meeting of the Security Council on 29 July and a formal Council meeting on 17 August, which focused on the humanitarian situation. We will continue to work with partners on the UN Security Council to explore the possibility of further statements by the Council on the humanitarian situation. The Presidential Statement of 10 March, which the UK worked to secure, included the following: "The Security Council continues to call for safe and unimpeded humanitarian access to all people in need, and highlights that the current situation has the potential to exacerbate existing challenges in Rakhine state and other regions. The Security Council expresses concern that recent

developments pose particular serious challenges for the voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return of Rohingya refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). It is vital that the rights of minorities are fully protected.”

**20. *The Government should use its diplomatic influence to encourage border countries such as Thailand and India to accept more refugees from Myanmar, and to meet their commitments of non-refoulement and support them as they do so, through channels including human rights and governance focused aid projects. It should also encourage these countries to allow cross-border aid to reach Myanmar citizens impacted by the coup.*** (Paragraph 34)

We are actively engaging with countries in the region and recognise both the critical role that Myanmar's neighbours play in responding to the humanitarian impacts of the crisis within Myanmar, and the consequential burden that the actions on the Myanmar military have imposed upon their border areas. Thailand, for example, has provided a space for refugee populations over many years. We have raised with our partners, when required, the importance of their meeting commitments around issues such non-refoulement.

UK aid provides life-saving humanitarian assistance to around 500,000 conflict affected and displaced people in Myanmar and inside the Thai border. This includes work with The Border Consortium to support around 90,000 Myanmar refugees on the Thai Border and support to other NGOs to reach 82,000 IDPs in Kachin and Northern Shan. Reaching these people and improving the conditions for return of refugees mean we work on both sides of the borders through our partners. We are closely monitoring the impact of the military coup including supply routes to ensure this support reaches those in most need. Actual cross-border work remains extremely sensitive and is not appropriate to discuss in detail in this report.

**21. *We recommend that the Government explore innovative ways of providing financial support to of civil society organisations.*** (Paragraph 38)

AND

**22. *Aid spending should be funnelled to civil society and grassroots organisations who are doing invaluable on-the-ground work to support those suffering under the junta. Organisations providing tailored support to different ethnic groups should also be specifically targeted for assistance.*** (Paragraph 38)

The UK is committed to supporting civil society to ensure aid gets to those who need it. The process of building democracy in Myanmar cannot just be top down, it must be founded on strong democratic practices within resilient local communities. Our humanitarian programme is highly 'localised' to build up national humanitarian actors, and to be able to reach isolated and vulnerable communities that the international community, including the UN, cannot reach. We have many diverse civil society partners managed through our programme partners. We provide both flexible funding, specialised financial support, and capacity training to better help local partners cope with the crisis in the financial sector, bureaucratic obstacles, and the security situation. The UK has also led an effort with our international partners and fellow donors to develop new flexible and localised modalities for civil society support that will enable them to secure funds quickly to support community resilience in areas outside of international humanitarian reach.

## Accountability and transparency

**23. At the heart of this coup is the belief in impunity. The generals leading the junta believe they can act without consequence. It is vital that the international community demonstrates that this is not the case. Not only is it important that those responsible for crimes against civilians in Myanmar are held accountable, but also that others who would commit similar crimes in future can see that violations of international law have real consequences. The Government should not allow the military leaders to operate with impunity, and without the prospect of facing justice.** (Paragraph 39)

The UK Government agrees that the culture of impunity is deeply embedded within the Tatmadaw. We are clear that there must be justice and accountability. We continue to work to ensure that evidence of violations of international law is collected and preserved for use in future prosecutions. On 1 April, the UK committed £500,000 to the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar to bolster their evidence gathering capabilities. We have also established the “Myanmar Witness” programme which is gathering evidence from individuals and civil society, verifying and preserving it to a prosecutorial standard. We hope that this added spotlight on the military’s actions will serve as a deterrent. It also increases the prospect of genuine accountability and criminal prosecutions in the future.

**24. We recommend that, should other accountability efforts fail, the Government publicly state its support for referring those responsible for the situation in Myanmar to the International Criminal Court.** (Paragraph 40)

The UK is clear that there must be accountability for the actions of the Tatmadaw, both during and since the coup, and previously against ethnic minorities, including the Rohingya. The UK continues to raise the issue of accountability, including at the UN Security Council. There is currently insufficient support at the UNSC for a referral to the International Criminal Court. An unsuccessful referral will only embolden the Tatmadaw, and feed their culture of impunity.

**25. We recommend that the UK Government announce its intention to intervene in the Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (*The Gambia v. Myanmar*) at the International Court of Justice.** (Paragraph 41)

The UK strongly supports the International Court of Justice (ICJ) process which is putting pressure on Myanmar to protect the Rohingya. We are clear that Myanmar should comply with the provisional measures ruling. We have reiterated our support to the ICJ process in Parliament, at the UN Security Council, and through public statements. We provided funding to enable Rohingya refugees to attend the ICJ hearing in December 2019. The case will develop significantly in the coming months. We are monitoring developments closely and will consider the legal arguments once they are made available to establish whether a UK intervention would add value.

**26. Assistance should be provided to local media organisations which continue to provide information and hold the junta to account at serious personal risk. Ethnic media agencies in particular, which broadcast and provide information in different languages throughout Myanmar, require particular support.** (Paragraph 43)

The FCDO is providing funding to initiatives designed to help journalists and media organisations protect their identity and safety in Myanmar. The FCDO is also providing funding to media partners through the Joint Peace Fund. Further information cannot be provided on these projects in order to ensure the ongoing security of our partners.

**27. We recommend that the Government explore ways to provide core funding and resourcing support to independent ethnic language media organisations.** (Paragraph 43)

The UK recognises the important work done by local media in Myanmar, including ethnic media organisations who share key, verified information in local languages. Through the PROTECT programme the UK supports smaller ethnic media partners. It has responded flexibly to the coup by providing emergency funds to support the changing media needs. In particular, it will seek to support female journalists due to the additional threats they face.

**28. *The Government should target funding and resources such as protected communications and data storage equipment to civil society organisations on the ground in Myanmar, who are collecting evidence of human rights abuses committed by the Tatmadaw, for future due process.*** (Paragraph 45)

On 1 April, the UK announced a funding boost of £500,000 to the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar to bolster their work on collecting and preserving evidence of serious human rights violations. The UK has also established and funded the Myanmar Witness programme which is independently collecting, preserving, verifying and investigating incidents of possible interferences with human rights.

## Myanmar nationals in the UK

**29. While we commend the Government's decision to provide support to the recently deposed Myanmar ambassador, Kyaw Zwar Minn, we recognise that there are other Myanmar nationals in the UK requiring assistance. These people do not have access to the proper channels for extending their UK visas.** (Paragraph 48)

AND

**30. *We recommend that the Government introduces 'protected status' lasting the duration of the violence for Myanmar nationals who are currently based in the UK but are unable to renew their visas due to the military's occupation of the embassy in London.*** (Paragraph 48)

The UK has a world-leading immigration system in terms of the number and flexibility of routes offered. Myanmar nationals who are currently in the UK can access the UK's strong immigration package according to their personal circumstances.

Since 1 December 2020, it is now simpler to switch visa categories from within the UK and in most cases, individuals will not have to re-submit evidence of finances or English ability. Visa options include the Skilled Worker route, Graduate Route and Student Route. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have also introduced Exceptional Assurance, which acts as a short-term protection against any adverse consequences of overstaying. The UK has extended the Exceptional Assurance provisions until the end of September 2021.

Where there are compelling compassionate factors, individuals can apply for Leave Outside the Immigration Rules. It is also open to individuals present in the UK who fear persecution on return to their home country, to claim asylum.

## Conclusion

**31. It is the duty of the international community to support the Myanmar people in their efforts to stop the violence and bring about the democracy for which the country has fought so long. The Government has made positive steps on Myanmar, but there is far more it can do, given its lead role at the UN and upcoming status as an ASEAN Dialogue Partner. Through delegitimising the authority of the junta, applying severe and widespread economic pressure, stemming the flow of arms, and building broad coalitions to condemn the violence and support humanitarian assistance, the UK can have a real impact on resolving the violence and preventing the deaths of more people.** (Paragraph 49)

The UK Government agrees with the conclusion of the Foreign Affairs Committee report that the response to the Myanmar crisis requires a concerted and coordinated effort by the international community. We are clear that the UK has a leading role to play through our leadership at the UN and through our new status as an ASEAN Dialogue Partner. We stand in solidarity with the people of Myanmar in their struggle for peace and democracy. We will build on the steps we have taken so far; extending targeted and proportionate sanctions against the military and its associates, working with partners to reduce the number of countries selling arms to Myanmar, and providing vital humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable. We will continue to use our leadership role at the UN to ensure that the spotlight stays on the situation in Myanmar and the actions of the military. We will also provide a platform for pro-democracy voices, including the NUG and ethnic organisations, and work with ASEAN to ensure the quick implementation of their Five Point Consensus.