

Forum: United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

Issue #29-01: Measures to address the political conflict in Myanmar.

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Guiding Questions as you Read

How does the Myanmar coup affect your country?

What position did your country take on the coup?

Does your country have good relationships with Myanmar?

Has your country done anything about the coup?

Introduction

Key Terms

Coup d'etat
Military
Protesting
Custody
Civil War
Lockdown
Citizens

On the 1st of February, 2021 the **military** of Myanmar seized control of the country, discarding the elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi. This action is called a coup or **coup d'etat**. In the 1960s the Military seized power of Myanmar, and that lasted until 2011 when Aung San Suu Ski was elected. From 2011 to 2021 Aung San Suu Ski was the leader of Myanmar but that changed. Since the successful coup, **protests** have erupted around the country, and around 600 people have been killed by the military while **protesting**.

The Military cut off all internet connections, social media, and international flights which means Myanmar is in **lockdown** with nobody being able to come in or out. The new acting leader of Myanmar is Lieutenant General Myint Swe. Aung San Suu Ski and other important figures of her political party are in **custody**. Civilians have taken to the streets protesting against the coup and demanding that they release elected leaders and others that did nothing wrong. Many people - around 600 - have been killed by the military while protesting, the youngest being 6 years old. This is in clear violation of the convention of the rights of a child, and **Citizens** have started arming themselves with weapons such as slingshots, rocks, firebombs, and old rifles. If no action is taken by the

UN then the tension in Myanmar has the potential to escalate into a **civil war**, where a lot more lives will be lost, hurt or damaged.

Comprehension Question(s): How and why has the coup in Myanmar affected people, countries and businesses? Why is this issue important?

Definition of Key Terms

Coup d'etat: The sudden overthrow of an existing government committed by a small group of people, the overthrow of the government is often violent.

Military: A collection of armed forces that are heavily armed and are intended for warfare. Under the control of a given state by sovereign power.

Protest- Protesting: The action of a group and/or a single individual publicly opposing an action, typically a political action of some sort.

Lockdown: The state of isolation or limited access that was placed by a higher power such as a government or military

Custody: A person or people that are imprisoned by the government.

Citizens: A person who is legally recognized to be part of a given country.

Civil War: A war with opposing groups within the same country.

Current Situation

Key Terms

Coup d'etat
Military
Protesting
Lockdown
Citizens

Since February 1st, 2021 the **military** in Myanmar has been killing hundreds of unarmed pro-democratic **protests**. At least 745 people have been reported killed and another 3,300 have been reported detained, as the military continues to loot and raid people's homes.

At the moment Myanmar is in total **lockdown** as connection with the outside world for **citizens** is very scarce as the internet is cut off

and all flights that go in or out of Myanmar have been canceled. The only person who has access to the international flights is the army general; Myint Swe and his council.

The army general who has ruled Myanmar since the **coup d'etat** met with the ASEAN Summit on April 24, 2021. ASEAN is the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations, it is an economic union that has a total of 10 member states. Members of ASEAN were unsure to meet with the army general as it would legitimize his rule, but they needed to plead for the halt of the killings that are happening at protests.

There have been very few stints of the Army General leader communicating with any other foreign power, besides the ASEAN Summit. This builds up more tension as the outside world tries to peer into Myanmar to understand what really is going on inside its borders.

Comprehension Question(s): How and why has the coup in Myanmar affected people, countries and businesses? Why is this issue important?

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

Myanmar

The coup was carried out in Myanmar and the military is in favor of it, while the citizens are very much against it. Myanmar has a rough history with repressive military rule and had decades in which civil rights were unavailable. The military of Myanmar continues to kill and detain innocent protestors and other countries are imposing sanctions, cutting off diplomatic relationships, or condemning the Myanmar military. The Myanmar military says that the democratic party of Myanmar committed fraud and faked the election to win, and believes the army has the rightful power.

India

India has a good relationship with Myanmar, they share a border. With the current situation, many people are trying to flee Myanmar, but they can't fly out due to the fact that all flights are canceled so many try to escape through the borders of

neighboring countries. India has stopped accepting refugees for Myanmar but many immigrate illegally.

China and Russia

China and Russia have good relationships with Myanmar but they did not comment on the coup. Many countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada have imposed sanctions on Myanmar and many more countries condemning Myanmar but neither Russia nor China have commented. What is understood from the information available to the public is that they cannot openly support Myanmar nor can it condemn them due to relationships between them.

United States:

President Joe Biden of the United States has condemned Myanmar's actions and imposed sanctions on leaders and the acting president of Myanmar by blocking nearly \$1 billion in Military Funds. This is hoping that he can defund the military so they can't keep killing innocent protestors and hopefully return to democratic rule in Myanmar.

Timeline of Events

Date	Event	Affect on issue
1885- 1948	The British are in control of Myanmar, as one of many British colonies.	Although Myanmar's economy was boosted under British rule, there was also a lot of tension since the British removed the Monarchy and much of what the people of Myanmar stood for. This created a lot of tension that is still rooted in Myanmar today, a fight for independence so it is unlikely Myanmar will accept help from other nations due to the fear they will take over again .
1948-1962	Myanmar experienced a	This shows how a country

	period of brief democracy which served to reconstruct the country due to the damage the British had done.	can recover and can be independent and democratic.
March 1962	Myanmar is controlled by the military again, by a coup that happened by Ne Win.	Myanmar has experienced a coup before, this strengthens their will to fight as they do not want to be oppressed once more.
Summer 1988	Thousands take to the streets to protest the unjust rule of Myanmar and thousands of unarmed protestors are killed.	The similarities between this and today's situation show that Myanmar is a repeat offender of Human Rights. This is important as countries should see this as a sign to take action against Myanmar as the problem will not resolve itself.
1990-2011	Myanmar is ruled by the SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council)	This is a period in Myanmar where military rule was present as the SLORC was in control.
2011-2021	The National League for Democracy (NLD) wins elections and rules Myanmar.	Another brief period of democracy.
February 1st, 2021	The military of Myanmar take control through a coup and announce a year-long state of emergency	Once again Myanmar is being controlled by its own military after 10 years of democracy.

Past International Action

UN Tries to spark dialogue

The United Nations has tried countless times to spark a dialogue between themselves and the Army General leader, but the military has made it their mission to not communicate with the United Nations at all. The United Nations have been trying to negotiate with the Army General leader, to stop the mass killings of unarmed protestors. In past coups, such as the “Coups ‘d’etat in Honduras - 2009” the UN was able to spark dialogue and negotiate representatives from the new party that led the coup and restore power back to the elected government officials of Honduras.

ASEAN Summit Meeting

The Army General leader met with the ASEAN on April 24, 2021, the assembled leaders were all in consensus as they agreed that the actions from the military were unacceptable. They asked for the violence by the military to stop, to release any political prisoners as it was unjust, and to open the country to humanitarian aid. On top of that, they asked the Army General leader to spark dialogue with global actors, such as the UN and other countries. The Army General began dialogue with multiple global actors such as the UN, but they did not go far.

UN involvement:

So far the UN has taken democratic action towards stopping the crisis in Myanmar, meaning that the UN has sparked dialogue on the matter, but has not found a solution. The security council has looked into different options that were previously used in order to solve different global issues. These sanctions include but are not limited to: sanctions, arms embargoes, travel bans, and judicial action from the International Criminal Court. The Security Council is trying to communicate with the Army General Leader that all of these options are viable and are ready to be put in effect.

The Human Rights Council is calling for the release of all detainees that were arbitrarily arrested, the immediate removal of the restrictions that have violated human rights and calling for the restoration of the democratically elected government of Myanmar.

Both, Security Council and Human Rights Council alike have not taken any affirmative action against the military rule in Myanmar. The United Nations is left to watch the atrocities unfold in Myanmar, like other global actors.

Possible Solutions

As the United Nations security council, you have more power than any other body in the United Nations. You must try to resolve this issue diplomatically and not escalate this situation of extreme tension, although you do have the option of declaring war and imposing sanctions if necessary (this should be your last option). Keep in mind that you are representing your country's point of view, not yours.

The best way to resolve this issue would be through coordination and standing a common ground. For Myanmar to listen, countries must stand on a united front and not have any slip-ups to be taken seriously. Other countries might not want to resolve the coup, having economic interests in Myanmar or the military, but no country wants violence so even though your countries may not agree, all must stop the bloodshed.

It is highly likely that the Military Junta of Myanmar refuses to cooperate with nations and the United Nations and you may have to escalate the pressure. The next step would be to impose sanctions on the government, trying to defund them. The final and most drastic stage would be to declare war on Myanmar but it is vital you try to negotiate first, to save lives.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)

16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

- This relates to the political issue because Myanmar is in complete chaos. There is no peace between the citizens of Myanmar and the military rule. There is no justice as the Military rule in Myanmar is killing innocent and unarmed people, with no repercussions. There are no strong institutions, there are no solidified democratic institutions. Due to the lack of democratic institutions, Myanmar is facing a backslide to high poverty levels.

8: Decent Work And Economic Growth

- Due to the lack of democratic institutions, the economic stability of the country has gone to an all-time low that hasn't been seen in generations. We can see how this SDG and Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions relate to one another. To get economic growth, Myanmar will have to grow its strong institutions to stop this economic collapse.

3: Good Health And Well-Being

- This SDG relates to Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, because Myanmar citizens are being slaughtered and mistreated, without being held accountable. The military has been accused of looting, stealing, sexual violence, and mass murder. Due to this, the well-being of the Myanmar citizens has been compromised as they are being hurt daily by their government.

Appendix

I. Links

- A. <https://www.nytimes.com/article/myanmar-news-protests-coup.html>
 1. This link is a general overview of the Myanmar coup by the New York Times. It has everything you need to know to have a general grasp of the situation.
- B. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-56015749>
 1. This link is the sanctions the US put on Myanmar. It will be helpful for any country that believes the Myanmar coup is bad and also for countries that have good relations with the US.
- C. <https://www.bbc.com/news/topics/c302m85q5vzt/myanmar>
 1. This is an archive of all BBC articles on the situation in Myanmar. This will be helpful to keep an eye on the situation.
- D. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Myanmar>
 1. This is an article all about Myanmar. It is important to understand its political history to consider solutions to this pressing problem.

II. Tips

- A. **Keep an eye on the news.** Since this situation is highly critical and rapidly developing, delegates are recommended to constantly check a reliable news source (BBC, New York Times, The Guardian, etc) to make sure new information is incorporated into debate preparation. This can be in the form of downloadable apps on your phone or even following news

sources on social media (but make sure your information is not solely from social media)

- B. Make sure you're using **reliable sources**. You want to make sure that your information is reliable, facts, and comes from a trustworthy source. Reliable sources end in .edu, .gov or .org
- C. **Remember to cite your sources**. Whether you're using a statistic in your opening speech, to write your position papers, or to prove a point you have to cite where you got your information, as plagiarism is not accepted in Panamun and will have serious consequences.

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