

ILC 2025: STAND WITH THE PEOPLE OF MYANMAR

Standing in solidarity with the people of Myanmar

The ITUC Asia-Pacific expresses deep solidarity with the people of Myanmar, especially those who have been affected by the devastating earthquake that struck the country on 28 March. In this moment of crisis, we stand united with the workers, families, and communities suffering from the immediate and long-term impacts of this natural disaster.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to the families who have lost loved ones and call upon the international community to respond with compassion, urgency, and support for recovery efforts. As the region continues to face increasing climate-related and geophysical challenges, the importance of resilience, preparedness, and solidarity among workers and their organisations has never been more urgent and critical.

Military junta's continued atrocities: condemning the man-made disaster

At the same time, we must not forget the ongoing crisis in Myanmar that began on 1 February 2021, when the military staged a coup and overthrew the democratically elected government. This has plunged the country into a prolonged state of conflict, repression, and economic collapse. The people of Myanmar, including trade unionists and civil society actors, continue to face violence, imprisonment, forced labour, and the dismantling of democratic institutions.

We strongly condemn this man-made disaster. It is a gross violation of human rights and international labour standards. The military junta's actions not only destroy lives and livelihoods but also undermine the fundamental principles of freedom, democracy, and dignity.

ILC 2025: A crucial test of global commitment

The upcoming International Labour Conference (ILC) in Geneva in June this year is expected to mark a pivotal moment in the global labour movement's response to the ongoing crisis in Myanmar. Building on the ILO Governing Body's March decision which reinforced the conclusions of the Commission of Inquiry, the resolution invoking Article 33 of the ILO Constitution will be considered at the ILC. If adopted, it will reaffirm the international community's unwavering commitment to holding Myanmar's military junta accountable for egregious and systematic violations of freedom of association and forced labour conventions.

Such a resolution will aim to operationalise the call made by the Governing Body to **cease all direct and indirect engagement with the military junta**, in line with the recommendation to review cooperation and assistance to ensure it does not legitimise or strengthen the illegal regime. It will also advocate for sustained and concrete support to legitimate representatives of Myanmar's democratic forces and trade unions, particularly those aligned with the National Unity Government (NUG) and exiled trade unions.

“More than a symbolic gesture, the resolution represents a decisive step in the international labour movement's use of institutional tools to apply pressure. Article 33 allows for the taking of measures that are considered wise and expedient against member states that do not sincerely engage with the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry. The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) family is determined to make every possible effort to secure the resolution's adoption at the ILC in June.”

This moment in Geneva will underscore a vital message: that the International Labour Organization (ILO) and its constituents – governments, employers' organisations and trade unions – are determined to stand on the side of human rights, democracy, and workers' freedom in Myanmar. By advancing this resolution, the international community can make clear **that silence in the face of injustice is not an option – and that the world of work will continue to speak out for the people of Myanmar.**