

Netherlands Myanmar Solidarity Platform Foundation

# ANNUAL REPORT

2022

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# Myanmar In Context

On 1 February 2021 a coup d'état by the army made an end to the democratically elected government led by Aung San Suu Kyi in Myanmar. This has not been accepted by the population. The military violently oppresses the population, including through airstrikes, killings of people and burning down villages. Through 2022, at least 1384 people were killed by the military and 11289 people arrested[1]. One of the most dreadful events of 2022 was the disgraceful execution of 4 political prisoners by the regime in July. This was strongly condemned by the international community including the EU [2]. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Volker Türk, was shocked that more than 130 people have now been sentenced to death by military courts behind closed doors, including many students [3].

According to the UN, there were an estimated 1,473,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) within Myanmar at the end of 2022, including 1,143,000 people who had been newly displaced since 1 February 2021[4].

In addition, there were more than a million refugees in neighbouring countries, including 930.000 Rohingya in Bangladesh [5] unable to return under current circumstances.

During 2022, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) confirmed its jurisdiction on the Rohingya genocide case initiated by The Gambia, and supported by (amongst others) the Kingdom of the Netherlands.[6] The case will therefore continue in 2023.





Meanwhile, the military have lost control over many parts of the country, further supporting the case for recognition of the National Unity Government (NUG), set-up by the democratically elected lawmakers in hiding after the coup[7].

By the end of 2022, the United Nations Security Council adopted its first Resolution (nr. 2669) on Myanmar since 1948, expressing deep concern at the “ongoing state of emergency imposed by the military in Myanmar on 1 February 2021 and its grave impact on the people of Myanmar” and at the “violence across the country, and attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, including educational, health and energy infrastructure and facilities, and attacks on businesses and public properties”. It condemned the military’s execution of pro-democracy activists, urged the military to “immediately release all arbitrarily detained prisoners,” including deposed leader Aung San Suu Kyi, and demanded an “immediate end to all forms of violence throughout the country.”[8]



# Who we are

The Netherlands Myanmar Solidarity Platform Foundation (NMSP) is a non-profit organization based in the Netherlands that is dedicated to promoting and supporting the people of Myanmar in their struggle for freedom and fight against oppression by the military dictatorship. We are a registered Public Benefit Organization in the Netherlands with an ANBI status.

NMSP began as a collective initiative from Dutch citizens and Myanmar diaspora in the Netherlands after the onset of the military coup d'état in Myanmar in February 2021. It was created with an intention to serve as a dynamic community for Dutch and Myanmar volunteers, who would collaborate in supporting the people of Myanmar in their strive towards a peaceful and just society.



# Our Vision

*We strive for a platform that, through the efforts of a dynamic community of volunteers and coordination by a small bureau, provides effective support to people and groups in Myanmar who stand up for an inclusive, federal democracy.*



# Our Mission

1

Promoting an inclusive, federal, democratic rule of law in Myanmar where the human rights of all Myanmar people are respected.

2

The performance of all further acts, related to the pursuance, directly or indirectly, of the above objective.

# Our Objectives

The Foundation shall endeavor to achieve its objective by:

- supporting, financially or otherwise, organizations, groups and individuals in Myanmar who are committed to this goal;
- lobbying, anywhere in the world, for this purpose;
- mobilizing support and raising funds to achieve the goal;
- research and publications that support the goal.

Institutional and private donations enabled us to undertake a number of activities described in this report as well as making a start with developing our small organisation, e.g. through the appointment of a part-time coordinator for the platform.

The platform continued to work along the lines of its Initial Plan 2021-2022, adopted by the Board in October 2021, which specified:

1. Obtaining funding for the foundation
2. Once funding is available, a part-time coordinator
3. Further elaboration of planning, depending on available funding
4. Continuing and developing platform activities, such as:
  - Regular (on-line) platform meetings
  - Fundraising
  - Disseminating information and asking attention for Myanmar in the Netherlands
  - Coordinating lobby activities in the Netherlands for support to the democratic forces in Myanmar
  - Identification of potential partner organisations in Myanmar





# Public Events



Dr. Perveen, H.E U Aung Myo Min, Ms. van den Assum, & our chair & Founder at the ICJ Press Conference in the Hague

On 21 February 2022, the platform organized a press conference by renowned speakers on the occasion of another session of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the Myanmar Rohingya case. The speakers were Mrs. Laetitia van den Assum, former Ambassador of the Netherlands to Myanmar, Dr. Ambia Perveen, Chair of the European Rohingya Council, and two members of the NUG, H.E U Aung Myo Min, Minister for Human Rights, in person, and Mrs. Zin Mar Aung, Minister of Foreign Affairs, on-line.

The meeting was held at the international press centre Nieuwpoort in The Hague. It was attended by international press and (through them) followed online by the broader public, including more than 400,000 viewers in Myanmar through DVB. Main message from the NUG was that it does not support the objections against the proceedings raised by Myanmar's previous government and still maintained by the current military junta.



*All speakers stressed the need for justice for the Rohingya victims of the atrocities in Myanmar. [In July, the ICJ announced its rejection of the junta's objections and confirmed its jurisdiction, leading to a continuation of the case.] The event also resulted in the publication of a long interview with Aung Myo Min in De Volkskrant[9].*

*Views from the platform were shared during three public discussions organized during the "Movies that Matter" Festival (on Tour) when the movie "Myanmar Diaries" was screened.*

*At the end of the year most efforts of the platform were focussed on the organisation of the public commemoration of 2 years coup, held on 29 January 2023.*

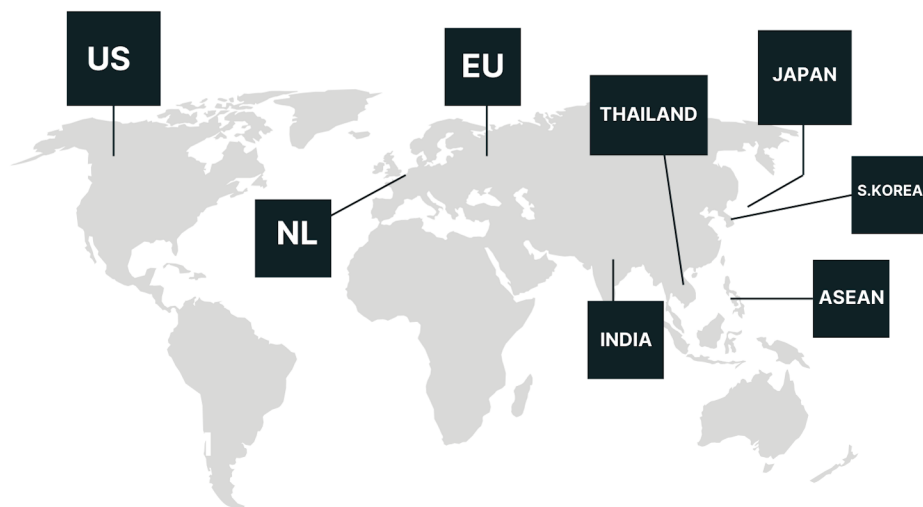


*Platform members and audience pictured together raising the three finger salute in solidarity with Myanmar at the "Movies that Matter" Festival*



*Platform members also took part in various demonstrations in support of Myanmar's democracy movement held during the year. Pictured on the left is a pro-democracy demonstration joined by our members outside the ICJ in February 2022.*

The platform had three meetings with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to urge for support to the democratic movement, including (recognition of) the NUG. We also stressed the need for stronger sanctions against the Myanmar military and their interests. This should include prevention of supply of aviation fuel to Myanmar to impede the air force's bombardments on the population. Our advocacy also included sending letters to the Ministry, from whom we received a supportive response, and two to the Dutch Parliament.



# Advocacy

In the framework of the European network, we support the drafting and dissemination of another 11 letters, related to e.g. calls for sanctions and non-recognition of the military junta (see infographics above and next page for a full list). Indeed, several rounds of new sanctions by e.g. the EU, UK, and USA occurred in the course of the year.

# Open Letters



1

Call on the US government to take urgent actions towards justice and accountability among other calls, following the official announcement of the US State Department determining the violence perpetrated by the Myanmar military against the Rohingya in 2017 in Rakhine State amounted to genocide and crimes against humanity (March)

2

Open Letter to the European Union concerning death sentences against political prisoners in Myanmar (June)

3

Letters to the Ambassadors of Japan and India calling for diplomatic actions against the death sentences in Myanmar (June)

4

Letter to ASEAN against junta participation in ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (June)

5

Letters to USA, South Korea and Japan to boycott ASEAN Defence Ministers meeting because of junta attendance (July) (These countries followed Australia and New Zealand's decision to withdraw from the meeting.)

6

Statement on the execution of four political prisoners (July)

7

Letter to INGOs that invited junta government to international education conference (Aug)

8

Statement commemorating 5 years after Rohingya's genocide (Aug)

9

Open Letter to Thai MoFA to urge disengagement of PTT with Myanmar oil & gas sector (Nov)

10

Letter calling for international sanctions on aviation fuel supplies to Myanmar (Dec)

11

Letter to Swiss President asking for more action against the junta (Dec)



# Supporting Myanmar's Democracy Movement

In August 2022, we invited six leading Myanmar activists in exile from around the globe for a three day reflection and strategizing meeting in The Hague. Afterwards, conclusions and recommendations were presented to the platform, in particular focussing how better connecting to the global movement for Myanmar's democracy. These are taken into account in our further planning.

In the meantime, we are working to develop a network of partners in Myanmar, which we will financially support. A first small grant was provided to the Karenni New Generation Youth (KNGY) group for conducting trainings on Federalism and Democracy and a youth exchange workshop in Kayah State. Other small grants were in the pipeline at the end of the year.

Some 14 internal meetings of the platform, in different composition and with different purposes, were held, mostly on-line. This included three formal meetings of the Foundation Board. Very special were the encounters with the NUG Minister for Human Rights, Aung Myo Min, and with the global Myanmar activists who came to The Hague.



*Young Karenni women participating at KNGY's 'Federalism & Democracy Awareness Training'*



*Karenni youths seen at the 'Youth Exchange Workshop'*



*Participants attending KNGY's 5 day Political Awareness ToT training*

# Organisation

Our organisation is made up of a board and volunteer pool from the Dutch and Myanmar diaspora community in the Netherlands.

In May, the Netherlands Tax Authorities responded positively to our request and granted us the official status of Public Benefit Organisation (ANBI), with its tax benefits [10].

During 2022, the Board of Netherlands Myanmar Solidarity Platform Foundation comprised:

- Frank van der Falk, Chair
- Ester Veldhuis, Secretary
- Ruud Keulen, Treasurer
- Thin Thin Swe, Member
- Sai Sam Kham, Member

As of 16 July the platform was supported by a paid part-time (1 day/week) coordinator, Ms. Laurien Petri.

Official information:

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Charity registration number Chamber of Commerce: 83784055

Netherlands tax number: 862987994  
(Official ANBI Charity Status)



# References

- [1] <https://aappb.org/?p=19515>
- [2] <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/07/25/myanmar-burma-declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-execution-of-pro-democracy-and-opposition-leaders-in-myanmar-burma/>
- [3] <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/12/myanmar-un-human-rights-chief-alarmed-death-sentences-secretive-military>
- [4] <https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/myanmar-emergency-update-5-december-2022>
- [5] <https://reporting.unhcr.org/document/3993>
- [6] <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/178>
- [7] <https://specialadvisorycouncil.org/2022/09/statement-briefing-effective-control-myanmar/>
- [8] <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/N2276733.pdf>
- [9] <https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/schaduwminister-myanmar-militaire-junta-moet-voor-strafhof-in-den-haag-verschijnen~b02cce1f/>
- [10] - An ANBI does not pay Dutch inheritance tax or gift tax on inheritances.  
- An ANBI does not pay Dutch gift tax on gifts that the organisation awards to the public benefit.  
- Natural and legal persons who donate to an ANBI can deduct their gifts from their Dutch income tax or corporate income tax

Photos sourced from Stockphotos and from our database



# Annex

Balance sheet							
in Euro		31/12/2022	31/12/2021			31/12/2022	31/12/2021
<b>ASSETS</b>					<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Current assets					Equity	885	
- Cash and cash equivalents		23,291	195		Provisions	9,000	195
					Current liabilities	13,406	
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>23,291</b>	<b>195</b>		<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>23,291</b>	<b>195</b>

2022 operating result		
2022 profit and loss statement		
in Euro		
<b>Income</b>	<b>Actuals 2022</b>	<b>Actuals 2021</b>
Grants from non-profit organisations	21,250	-
Private donations	210	195
<b>Total income</b>	<b>21,460</b>	<b>195</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Grants to other organisations	4,042	
Communication costs	201	
Staff costs	3,000	
Financial costs	100	
Other expenses	4,427	
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>11,770</b>	<b>0</b>