

Media Statement



Wednesday, 3 March 2021

Law Council condemns violence in Myanmar

All comments to be attributed to Law Council President, Dr Jacoba Brasch QC.

"The Law Council of Australia joins with the international legal community in condemning the continued and escalating violence in Myanmar and calls for the reinstatement of the country's democratically-elected government.

The military coup d'état, which is unconstitutional under the 2008 Constitution drafted by the military, jeopardises Myanmar's fragile democratic transition, and undermines the hard-fought gains of Myanmar's people.

The Law Council is also disturbed by reports that the military has used live ammunition against peaceful protesters, which is totally unacceptable under international human rights law.

More than 1,000 people have been arrested since the coup, including elected leaders of Myanmar's civilian government, lawyers, journalists, and medical professionals as well as protesters.

Many of those arrested and detained are being held in unknown locations, without official charges or acknowledgement of their detention. Most have received no due process and permitted no legal representation, contrary to international human rights standards.

The Law Council joins the international legal community in calling on the military to end the use of force against protesters, guarantee all person's due process rights in accordance with the rule of law, and immediately release all civilian leaders and others detained unlawfully. It must also allow the democratically-elected National Assembly to reconvene, respect and uphold the rights of freedom of assembly and expression, and undertake to resolve disputes through lawful mechanisms."

ENDS

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The Law Council of Australia is the national voice of the legal profession, promoting justice and the rule of law.