

8 June 2021

By email: public.enquiries@homeoffice.gov.uk

Chris Philp MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Minister for Immigration Compliance and Justice
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Dear Minister

Re: people from Myanmar in the UK with leave to enter or remain

We are writing to you in view of your Ministerial responsibilities for asylum.

As you will be aware, around four months ago the Myanmar government was overthrown by a military coup. This has sparked massive protest across large parts of the country and the security forces have responded to this by a brutal crackdown that has included bloodshed, abductions, imprisonment and torture.

The ongoing persecution of the people of Myanmar has been widely condemned including by the UN Security Council and separately by the UK Government. Indeed, the UN Security Council statement of 2 April 2021 was initiated by the UK. Whereas that statement did not extend so far as the UK had sought, nonetheless, among other things, it *“strongly condemned... the use of violence against peaceful protesters and the deaths of hundreds of civilians, including women and children.”*

Current events are, of course, additional to the persecution of many people of Myanmar that long preceded the coup, including though not solely of Rohingya people.

Amnesty International has been made aware of the situation of several students in the UK whose visas are soon due to expire after these were extended due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the measures needed in response to that. There may be other people of Myanmar similarly facing uncertainty concerning their stay in the UK.

Accordingly, we write to ask what steps your department is taking to ensure that:

- people of Myanmar in the UK are not expected or required to return to the country at this time; and
- people’s lawful stay can be confirmed and extended, as necessary, as quickly and easily as possible and without any new or continuing conditions restricting their capacity to adequately maintain themselves at this time?

In this regard, Amnesty International recognises both that it remains necessary to ensure that the UK's asylum system is accessible to anyone who wishes to seek asylum here; and that effective arrangements may be made to avoid the need for someone to seek asylum where she, he or they would prefer not to do so, e.g. where someone may yet hope the situation in the country may improve sufficiently for them to be able to safely return.

We look forward to your response and early confirmation as to the means, by which the department is facilitating people's lawful stay in the UK in view of the grave human rights abuses currently taking place in the country.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Valdez-Symonds', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Steve Valdez-Symonds
Programme Director – Refugee and Migrant Rights
Amnesty International UK