

March 29, 2021

Pastoral Letter from the EKD to the Myanmar Church Council, MCC

Dear sisters and brothers,

The Evangelical Church in Germany is dismayed to hear of the latest events in Myanmar. The escalating violence as a consequence of the military takeover fills us with pain and increasing concern for the life and community relations of people in Myanmar. As we have heard from many statements, churches, theological training centres and the Myanmar Church Council feel impelled to engage in peaceful, ecumenical and interreligious protest against the power takeover and to restore democracy.

Through your protest, you too have had to suffer direct acts of violence, or are at risk of this. Freedom of assembly is limited, at least one church college has been stormed and there is frequent intimidation such as physical violence and detentions.

We are deeply impressed by the courage, strong faith and cohesion among Christians of the churches gathered in the Myanmar Church Council, as expressed in official statements such as the ecumenical declaration of the Union of Myanmar of 9 February 2021. We share the hope it expresses for justice and peace in Myanmar. We support your appeal to all concerned to refrain from violence and, in striving for dialogue, to take responsibility for a peaceful future. Rest assured that we are at your side in cultivating partnership contacts, also under difficult conditions, and are doing our best to gain the active backing of the church membership in Germany for your commitment to a return to dialogue, peace and democracy.

Bound together in faith and prayer,
and praying for God's blessing on your struggle for the future of Myanmar,

I extend you warmest greetings
on behalf of the Evangelical Church in Germany

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Heinrich Bedford-Strohm'.

Bishop Dr. Heinrich Bedford-Strohm,
Chair of the EKD Council