

UK announces further sanctions on Myanmar military-linked companies

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab has announced further measures targeting the Myanmar regime today (Thursday 1 April) with sanctions against military-linked conglomerate Myanmar Economic Corporation (MEC).

The sanctions against MEC will be enforced immediately for its involvement in serious human rights violations by making funds available to the military, as well as its association with senior military figures. Designating MEC will prohibit funds and economic resources being made available to any subsidiaries 'owned or controlled' by MEC as defined by the Global Human Rights sanctions regime.

The sanctions come as the Foreign Secretary also announces extra funding today to bolster a mechanism to collect, investigate and preserve evidence of serious human rights violations in Myanmar. The UK is contributing half a million pounds to the 'Independent Investigative Mechanism' for Myanmar (IIMM) to increase evidence gathering capabilities, which may in future be used in criminal proceedings.

The 'Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar' was established by the UN Human Rights Council to collect and preserve evidence of serious human rights violations in Myanmar. The Open Source Investigation work will ensure that reporting on social media and elsewhere is identified and verified for use in future criminal proceedings, to hold to account those who are responsible for the killing and oppression of the people of Myanmar.

Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab, said:

Two months on from the start of the coup, the Myanmar military has sunk to a new low with the wanton killing of innocent people, including children.

The UK's latest actions target one of the military's key funding streams and impose a further cost on them for their violations of human rights.

The designation of MEC is in response to credible evidence that it has contributed funds to support the Myanmar military, known as the Tatmadaw who have committed serious human rights violations across the country, and that MEC is associated with senior military officers. The MEC Board of Directors is mainly comprised of serving or retired military personnel, including Chiefs of Staff of the Army, Navy and Air Force and the former Quartermaster General.

The asset freeze imposed by the sanctions prevents anyone from dealing with funds or economic resources which are owned or controlled by the sanctioned

individual or organisation. It also prevents others from providing funds or economic resources, directly or indirectly, to or for the benefit of the sanctioned individual or entity – in this case MEC.

Further information:

- The UK has led a strong, coordinated international response to the coup in Myanmar. This includes securing G7 statements on 3 and 23 February and urgently convened the UN Security Council following the coup with a statement on 4 February. In response to escalating violence, the UK convened the Council again on 5 March and secured a Presidential Statement on 10 March condemning violence against peaceful protestors.
- On 12 February, the UK co-led a Special Session of the UN Human Rights Council, securing a resolution, agreed by consensus, condemning the coup. On 24 March, we secured another HRC Resolution, again agreed by consensus, which condemned the military's actions and enhanced evidence collection on human rights violations. This demonstrates the strength of feeling in the international community in opposition to the coup.
- On 25 March, the UK sanctioned a key military conglomerate, Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd (MEHL), for their role in supporting serious human rights violations against the Rohingya in 2017. Working with the US and Canada the UK has sanctioned nine military officers, including the Commander-in-Chief, for their involvement in serious human rights violations in Myanmar. We are exploring further sanctions.
- MEC is a military conglomerate with interests spanning a range of sectors including banking, mining, real estate, metals and transportation.