



Foreign Trade Association
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Statement:

Foreign Trade Association of German Retailers (AVE) calls for restoration of democracy and the rule of law as well as compliance with human rights in Myanmar.

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The Foreign Trade Association of German Retailers (AVE) condemns the military coup in Myanmar as well as the increasing violence against the population, the curtailment of civil and human rights and the restrictions on freedom of speech and assembly.

The overthrow of the democratically elected government by the military and the violations of basic civil rights threaten the country's economic and social development. The progress made by companies and trade unions towards regular negotiations on wages and working conditions is being called into question by this military coup.

We, the Foreign Trade Association of German Retailers (AVE), stand in solidarity with the people of Myanmar in condemning the military coup, calling for the restoration of democracy, respect for the rule of law, and the immediate release of all those unlawfully arrested since the coup on February 1st.

Since 2015 AVE has been working very closely with the Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association (MGM). Together we have been working on the creation of essential structures which enable sustainable garment production.

The garments sector is vital to the economy and livelihoods of many in the country - with 700,000 people directly employed in the industry. Hence, we have asked our members to make all necessary and possible efforts to protect and support those suppliers who may have been impacted.

In the matter of due diligence obligations for business activities in Myanmar by German companies, the German Federal Government should urgently develop recommendations for action to reduce legal risks for said companies.

It is with growing and deep concern that we continue to observe the developments in Myanmar. Our primary concern is the safety, security, and wellbeing of all Myanmar people, our valued partners, esteemed colleagues, and all hard-working garment workers.

Therefore, we have also sought to adapt our operations. This means that for the time being, we will focus our project activities on "desk-work-activities" we can pursue, while ensuring the safety of our colleagues and respecting their individual right to freedom of expression.

MGMA has been our trusted partner for many years and we want to keep supporting the garment industry the best we can.

We hope to see a swift resolution to the current situation based on dialogue and reconciliation in accordance with the will and interests of the people of Myanmar.