

## Shin-ikyo (New Japan Medical Association) Statement on The Persecution of Doctors and Health-care Workers by The Military Regime in Myanmar

Shin-ikyo (New Japan Medical Association)

<http://www.shinikyo.com>

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We, Shin-ikyo (New Japan Medical Association), strongly condemn the persecution of doctors and health-care workers in Myanmar by the military regime. As various international health organizations are calling for an urgent end to the persecution, we, health-care workers and members of Shin-ikyo, make a following statement.

Megan Tatum (2021) reported in The Lancet that a growing number of doctors and health-care workers face persecution in Myanmar since the military regime seized control of the country in February. At least 160 arrest warrants have been issued for doctors in Myanmar between April 13 and 20, according to Physicians for Human Rights.

Sandra Mon from the Center for Public Health and Human Rights, Johns Hopkins University (Baltimore, MD, USA) says that, as of April 23, 260 arrest warrants have been issued for doctors whom, the military suspects, are affiliated with the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM). Some physicians face arrest simply as a result of providing care to injured protesters. One emergency medicine physician working in the country spoke to The Lancet that as protests had increased, the military forcibly cracked down on any doctors suspected of treating the injured, with members of the armed forces even stationed at the emergency hospitals to prevent protesters from gaining entry and accessing care.

Arrest warrants are now issued for not only health-care workers, but also many citizens, like school teachers, poets, and Buddhist monks and so forth.

Arrest and persecution of doctors is in direct conflict with international rules, especially UN Security Council Resolution 2286. Resolution 2286, co-sponsored

by more than 80 member states including Japan, condemns any attacks on health workers in armed conflict.

The citizens of Myanmar must have safe access to medical care regardless of whether they support the military or not. Doctors and health-care workers must be able to provide care for those in need without fear of persecution. We, the members of Shin-ikyo, are deeply concerned for the infringements of human rights by the military regime.

We must stand in solidarity with our medical and health-care colleagues as well as citizens seeking democracy and justice in Myanmar.

Finally, we strongly urge Japanese government to pressure the military regime in Myanmar to release immediately doctors and health-care workers who have been detained, and to hold the military regime accountable for its inhumane treatment of the citizens of Myanmar.

#### Reference

Megan Tatum : Outcry over persecution of health workers in Myanmar, *The Lancet*, vol. 397 (20285), 1609, May 1, 2021