



135th May Day Statement

Date – May 1, 2025

On this 135th International Workers' Day, the Federation of General Workers (FGWM) pledges to continue striving for the formation of worker-led labor unions in workplaces and for democracy in the country.

More than 130 years ago, workers themselves demanded and fought for the right to work eight hours, rest eight hours, and have eight hours for personal time. However, this goal remains unfulfilled for factory workers in Myanmar, who are still struggling for these basic rights. Under various forms of oppression from employers and the military government, many workers are forced to work more than 12 hours a day just to survive, and even then, their daily wages are not enough to meet their basic needs. Industrial zones in Myanmar, which remain under military rule, have become places of severe oppression. Employers continue to exploit workers with forced labor practices, using child labor, and systematically crushing workplace union organizing attempts. In addition to various divisive tactics used against workers, employers often misused the labor laws to form employer-led yellow unions and further oppress the workers.

The arrest, killing, and targeted persecution of CDM (Civil Disobedience Movement) workers and workers' leaders who opposed the military dictatorship continues to happen till today. In 2024, after the enactment of the military conscription law, male and female workers of working age have been forced to leave their workplaces and migrate to foreign countries, where they must work in dangerous conditions without protection or guarantees. Myanmar migrant workers abroad not only face exploitation and abuse from the governments and employers of host countries, but also continue to suffer from the oppressions of the military dictatorship back home. The FGWM believes that the only way to overcome such widespread and multifaceted oppression is to bring a complete end to the military dictatorship in Myanmar. Therefore, the FGWM reaffirms its commitment to workers' solidarity in Myanmar and across the world and to striving for democracy in Myanmar. With this pledge, we honor and commemorate the 135th International May Day.

**Resist Empty Rhetoric, Rise When Oppressed, Fight When Attacked,
Workers of the World Unite!**

135th May Day Demands

To the factory owners who profit from workers' labor:

1. Pay a minimum daily wage of 20,000 Kyats for an 8-hour workday (excluding overtime) to ensure decent income.
2. Provide sufficient workplace healthcare and implement occupational safety and security measures.
3. Immediately stop forced labor practices, including compulsory overtime without consent.
4. Provide free sanitary pads for female workers in the workplace and drop compulsory production targets for pregnant and menstruating workers.
5. Stop forming employer-controlled "Yellow Unions" (fake labor organizations that do not represent workers), end coercing the unions to register under the military-controlled Ministry of Labor and stop collecting personal information of labor leaders.

To international brands who gain highest profit from outsourcing labor exploitation in factories (directly or indirectly through subcontracting):

1. Take serious responsibility and accountability for workplace violations committed by factory owners in your supply chains.
2. Take collaborative responsibility with factory owners to ensure workers receive a minimum daily wage of 20,000 Kyats for an 8-hour workday and be accountable for the actual implementation of the aforementioned demands in your supplier factories.

To international workers organizations, human rights groups, and political entities:

1. Pressure the military junta to end forced military conscription of industrial zone workers and stop forced recruitment of migrant workers who are returning home into military service.
2. Support the formation of independent, worker-led labor unions both within the country and in countries where workers have migrated while ensuring their right to work safely under relevant labor laws.
3. Provide support to the civil servants who opposed the military rule and assist civil servant unions to become strong.

The Federation of General Workers Myanmar (FGWM) hereby declares and urges these demands.