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## **Condemnation of Myanmar's Military Coup and Concern Regarding the Destruction of Democracy**

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There are various challenges to democracy in many countries and regions around the world, but the military coup in Myanmar that occurred in February 2021 is a challenge not only to democracy but also to human rights and humanity itself. The inhumane situation in Myanmar, where democratic governance had just begun to move after the end of a long period of military government rule, has been denounced around the world. The United Nations Secretary-General and Security Council have both issued statements of deep concern, and some reports indicate that the extremely malicious violence of Myanmar's military against civilians (which even led to the death of a 7-year-old girl) can be charged as crimes against humanity in the International Criminal Court. Many NGOs around the world have also issued statements in protest, and even some multinational companies operating in Myanmar have participated in protest activities. In addition, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank have partially suspended lending to Myanmar.

This is a situation for which the Kyoto Museum for World Peace, Ritsumeikan University which longs for peace and provides a framework for making decisions on creating peace based on historical lessons, cannot remain an idle spectator. Universities with many international students from Myanmar, including our university, are also directly affected. While freedom of movement is constrained by the COVID-19 pandemic, online learning is essential in the continuation of the university education. And that also is largely obstructed by the military. We are appalled by the reports and images of the damage that are coming in hour by hour from students and graduates via Facebook, which is still operational at the moment. There are those whose siblings and relatives have been killed by the military.

In solidarity with the students who are dealing with this unbearable situation, the Kyoto Museum for World Peace issues a statement of outrage against Myanmar's military, which continues to repeatedly commit atrocities, and urges it to immediately halt its actions in violation of human rights. The Museum also requests that the Japanese government take appropriate measures to reach a peaceful solution in cooperation with the international community without delay.