

Netherlands-Myanmar Solidarity Platform  
Stichting Nederlands Myanmar Solidariteitsplatform

Annual Report 2021



March 2022



On 1 February 2021 a coup d'état by the army made an end to the democratically elected government led by Aung San Suu Kyi in Myanmar. Since then the population has protested against the newly installed military regime. The military violently oppresses the population, including through airstrikes, killings of people and burning down villages. Over a thousand people were killed by the military, thousands arrested and many more displaced.



Yangon

The situation also led to international protests, including in the Netherlands. In particular the Myanmar diaspora in the Netherlands organized many protest demonstrations, mostly in Amsterdam and The Hague. During one of these demonstrations in Amsterdam, in April, some of the participants brought up the idea to try and bring together the supporters in the Netherlands for the democratic movement in Myanmar.



The Hague

Given the Covid-19 pandemic, this led to a first Zoom meeting on 7 May 2021, and several more throughout the year. These zoom meetings and accompanying social media contacts virtually brought together people interested to support the population in Myanmar in their struggle for return to democracy.

During the meetings, options for action were inventoried. In addition to the regular protest demonstrations in Amsterdam and The Hague, two priority actions were identified. Firstly, because of the acute, horrible Covid pandemic situation in Myanmar, a fund raising effort for funding oxygen equipment was launched. Secondly, the establishment of a formal Dutch foundation (stichting) was initiated in order to provide a sustainable basis for the platform and its activities.



From July publicity was generated mainly through social media for the fund raising effort, firstly under the name "Oxygen for Myanmar" and culminating in the Bike for Burma event (B4B) on 18 September 2021. On that day, participants cycled to a central point in Utrecht as part of the fund raising efforts. In total, more than € 75,000 was raised for our partner in Myanmar to buy an oxygen generator. Next to the fundraising element, the event in Utrecht again demonstrated protest and speeches against the military dictatorship in Myanmar. During



Bike for Burma, Utrecht

the event the just established foundation was also launched. Furthermore the around 100 participants brainstormed during “world cafe” sessions on potential actions to fight the military rule and support the people in Myanmar in their struggle and hardship caused by the daily military terror in the country.

The foundation Netherlands-Myanmar Solidarity Platform (Stichting Nederlands Myanmar Solidariteitsplatform) was formally established at the notary on 19 August 2021. The initial Board comprised:

Frank van der Valk, chair,  
Ester Veldhuis, secretary,  
Ruud Keulen, treasurer, and  
Thinn Thinn Swe, member.

The Board soon added a fifth member, Sai Sam Kham.

It established an initial Development Plan (Beleidsplan 2022-2024) to guide the first development of the foundation through 2024.

Electronic communications have been key to the platform. A Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/Netherlands-Myanmar-Solidarity-Platform-100336392408363](https://www.facebook.com/Netherlands-Myanmar-Solidarity-Platform-100336392408363), and group, [www.facebook.com/groups/nlmmssolidarity](https://www.facebook.com/groups/nlmmssolidarity), were started as well as a dedicated email list.

Members of the platform also took part in several solidarity zoom meetings at European level as well as amongst the many Myanmar diaspora solidarity groups around the globe.

#### Finance

The financially most important event, the fundraising for oxygen equipment “Oxygen for Myanmar” combined with Bike for Burma started before to official establishment of the foundation and was hence handled separately from the foundation. After that, financial transactions were minimal. Donations were received in the amount of € 195. A formal financial report is attached separately.



World cafe

