



**His Excellency Antonio Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations
United Nations Headquarters
New York, NY
USA**

URGENT
29 March 2021

Dear Secretary-General,

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chairman of the Global Leadership Foundation (GLF), an organisation that I set up in 2004. It consists of 45 former leaders from around the world who are available to offer peer-to-peer advice to current leaders on a confidential basis (www.g-l-f.org).

I write about the deeply disturbing and explosive situation in Myanmar. You may recall that our Vice Chair, former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark, wrote to you about this matter on 8 March, urging you to use your authority as Secretary-General to invoke Article 99 of the UN Charter. On 24 March, following a sharp increase in the number of deaths in Myanmar at the hands of the security forces, she also wrote to the President of the Security Council, making the case for applying the principle of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) to the Myanmar crisis.

Secretary-General, as we are now all painfully aware, 27 March was a day of mass murder and mayhem in Myanmar, with well over 100 persons reportedly killed by the armed forces in a single day, bringing the total death toll to more than 400 since the 1 February military coup. I have seen your statement in this regard, strongly condemning the killing of civilians, including children and young people. As you have stated, the continuing military crackdown is unacceptable and demands a firm unified and resolute international response, and it is critical to find an urgent solution to the crisis.

In our view, Secretary-General, the use of military force against civilians in this way is totally unacceptable in our world and the international community can surely not turn a blind eye to it. The R2P principle, agreed by the World Summit in 2005, seeks to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against

humanity and its third pillar makes it the responsibility of the international community to protect when a State is manifestly failing to protect its own population. If ever there was a case for R2P to be invoked, this is it. The military junta in Myanmar cannot be permitted to persist with this carnage and defy the wishes and aspirations of the people of Myanmar. The United Nations has a clear responsibility to stop them from doing so.

On behalf of our Foundation, I therefore urge you to use Article 99 to call for an immediate formal meeting of the Security Council, as well as to urge the Council to invoke the principle of Responsibility to Protect.

I should also let you know, Secretary-General, that we shall put this letter on our website and disseminate it as appropriate.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Original signed by

FW DE KLERK
FORMER PRESIDENT OF SOUTH AFRICA

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