



World Conference Religions for Peace (WCRP) / *Religions for Peace (RfP)* Japan
Statement concerning the situation in Myanmar

RfP Japan expresses deep concern regarding the seizure through military strength of all political authority in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar by the nation's armed forces, the crisis situation this has created for the new political structure built by the many people who have sought democratization thus far, and the unfair detainment of the leaders who stand at the forefront of that democratization, and expresses its strong solidarity with *RfP* Myanmar, which is working for inter-religious reconciliation and peace.

RfP Myanmar was established in 2012 by religious leaders representing the country's four major religions of Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. Amid the various difficulties that have accompanied the country's shift from a military to a civil government, *RfP* Myanmar has undertaken projects such as ethnic reconciliation through inter-religious cooperation, the protection of children, peace education and refugee protection.

Last month, on January 25, *RfP* Myanmar, including *RfP* International Co-President H.E. Cardinal Charles Bo, issued a statement together with the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) asking the new administration that was established in the general election as well as the leaders of various ethnic groups and political and military leaders, for solidarity among ethnic groups, the demilitarization of Myanmar and the enhancement of social welfare. The statement noted that "seeking true justice through dialogue and negotiation is the path to peace proposed by religious people."

Since 2015, *RfP* Japan has been undertaking environmental measures, youth education and other joint projects with *RfP* Myanmar toward realizing the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Additionally, in April 2016 it invited Myanmar's representative religious leaders to Japan, and strove to bolster cooperation between the two countries by implementing proactive dialogue with Japan's religious communities, politicians and news media in an effort to support *RfP* Myanmar's pursuit of peace-building based on inter-religious dialogue.

RfP Japan fully supports *RfP* Myanmar's call for a non-violent resolution and its advocacy of peace-building through dialogue and negotiation, and joins it in requesting that the relevant countries and organizations make every effort to promptly restore democracy and peace in Myanmar.

Based on awareness of the "shared well-being" of all the world's individuals, which was declared at the 10th *Religions for Peace* World Assembly, and from the standpoint of human dignity, respect for human rights and showing consideration for those most vulnerable, *RfP* Japan, together with the *RfP* International Network and the Asian Conference of *Religions for Peace* (ACRP), vows to seek a peaceful resolution in Myanmar through prayer and tenacious dialogue.

RfP Japan declares that it stands alongside its friend, *RfP* Myanmar, at all times.

February 4, 2021
Most. Rev. Makoto Uematsu
Chair, *Religion for Peace (RfP)* Japan