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## MYANMAR: ITUC DENOUNCES SHAM ELECTION PLANNED BY MILITARY JUNTA

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) strongly condemns the announcement by Myanmar’s military junta to end the state of emergency and proceed with so-called “elections” in December 2025.

“These moves are nothing more than a strategic fraud to disguise the military dictatorship as democratic rule.”

The decision to invoke Article 33 of the ILO Constitution marked a historic escalation in global pressure on Myanmar, demanding an immediate end to repression and the restoration of freedom of association and democratic governance. The move followed earlier recommendations from ILO supervisory mechanisms and UN bodies.

As recalled in the ILO resolution, the repeated extensions of the state of emergency under military rule have directly obstructed the



restoration of a democratically elected government. There can be no recognition of elections under military dictatorship. Any electoral process must be inclusive, transparent, and free from intimidation. All trade unionists and political prisoners must be unconditionally released.

Freedom of association and freedom of expression must be restored in full and the use of forced labour must end.

The 2008 military-imposed constitution must be replaced through a democratic process reflecting the will of the people, including their legitimate representatives in the National Unity Government and the Confederation of Trade Unions, Myanmar (CTUM).

Luc Triangle continued: “The regime’s decision to end the

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Source: [ituc-csi.org](http://ituc-csi.org)

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■ Malaysia has set a condition for Myanmar — no new attacks — as a prerequisite for a ceasefire between the junta and rebels, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim. Source: [nst.com.my](http://nst.com.my)



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Column of M Humayun Kabir  
Former Bangladesh Ambassador to the US

# HESITANT DIPLOMACY, DISJOINTED ACTIONS

The July Uprising is not merely a political transition. It is a clear sign of a potential realignment in Bangladesh's geopolitical positioning. The voices of the new generation that took to the streets, echoed demands for democracy, transparency, accountability, and equality, demands that have not only reshaped domestic politics but also compelled a rethinking of the country's foreign policy and international orientation.

This generation no longer desires dependency on any geopolitical bloc. What they seek is a principled, dignified and equality-based diplomatic outlook. However, in stark contrast to these aspirations, Bangladesh's current diplomatic stance appears trapped in a crisis of hesitation, ambiguity and lack of coordination.

Historically, Bangladesh has pursued a vacillating policy between its two neighbours, India and Pakistan. It sometimes leaned towards India, at other times tilted towards Pakistan, depending on the political camp in power. But today's generation envisions a Bangladesh whose foreign policy is grounded not in bloc

dependence, but in principled positions, national dignity and self-defined interests.

The demands of this transformed generation, and the urgency for a non-aligned, values-driven policy, have become even more pronounced amid the rapidly changing geopolitical landscape of South Asia and its surrounding regions. The electoral process and military-ethnic conflicts in Myanmar, the Rohingya crisis, India-Pakistan tensions, and the growing China-US rivalry over the Bay of Bengal, all contribute to an increasingly volatile regional context. Against this backdrop, the real question is: how coherent, self-reliant and professionally competent are Bangladesh's positions, decisions and diplomatic strategies?

In 2016, Bangladesh joined China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). And in 2023, through the announcement of its Indo-Pacific Outlook, Bangladesh expressed interest in working with the United States and its allies in the Indo-Pacific region. As a result, a framework for a kind of balanced diplomacy began to emerge. But the question remains: was this balancing strategy genuinely

well-planned and coherent, or was it confined to grand declarations alone?

Many observers believe that the current foreign policy suffers from a serious lack of coordination, vision and professionalism. Although there have been some initiatives at the highest levels of government, their implementation appears largely absent. The role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs seems rather marginal. In the face of geopolitical crises, our responses often appear erratic and contradictory. For instance, on the issue of communication with Myanmar's Arakan Army, different sources within the government have offered varying and unclear statements at different times. This has further complicated the already critical matter of Rohingya repatriation.

This policy ambiguity, some argue, is partly tied to the question of political legitimacy.

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■ Source: [en.prothomalo.com](https://en.prothomalo.com)