



**Info Birmanie, Justice For Myanmar, Reporters Without Borders and Sherpa
welcome the withdrawal of Voltalia after a year of discussions**

Paris, April 1, 2021 - The French multinational has just announced its upcoming withdrawal from Myanmar, after nearly a year of NGO campaigning. The NGOs will take all possible measures to ensure that this withdrawal is implemented quickly by the company.

As early as May 2020, Info Birmanie, Sherpa, Reporters Without Borders, and Justice For Myanmar had questioned Voltalia on its business with companies linked to the Myanmar military¹, and on the fact that the electricity it supplies to a local operator profits the bloody repression of the junta.

This French company in the renewable energy sector was explicitly alerted to the fact that the electricity supply contract it had concluded with Myanmar National Telecom Infra Company (MNTI) benefited the operator Mytel², identified by the UN as supporting the Myanmar military³ and as implicated in crimes against humanity and war crimes perpetrated in Myanmar.

On March 31, 2021, Voltalia announced its withdrawal, after nearly a year of activism and negotiations of the NGOs with the company. While the NGOs welcome this announcement, they deplore however that the company did not take any measures earlier, and recall that, according to them, Voltalia could not ignore the risks attached to its activities given the information at its disposal, and that it should therefore have taken all necessary measures to provide remedy, in compliance with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights⁴.

Two months after the coup, Voltalia's withdrawal confirms that it is urgent for other Western companies, including Total for example, to stop supplying the junta, and for France to push for the adoption of targeted sanctions on the economic interests of the military.

¹ https://www.liberation.fr/planete/2020/05/25/les-liaisons-dangereuses-du-francais-voltalia-avec-la-birmanie_1789332/

² https://www.voltalia.com/uploads/08_Not%C3%ADcias/Press_Releases/2018/180221-Voltalia-Myanmar-towerco-FR.pdf

³ The Economic Interests of the Myanmar Military, 12 September 2019, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/MyanmarFFM/Pages/EconomicInterestsMyanmarMilitary.aspx>

⁴ Principes directeurs de l'ONU : https://www.ohchr.org/documents/publications/guidingprinciplesbusinesshr_fr.pdf

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