



Republic of Serbia

By Vincent B. Schult

Myanmar

Serbia has not taken a prominent public stance on the Myanmar military coup or the Rohingya crisis, focusing instead on its diplomatic relationships within international forums. However, like many countries aligned with the EU, Serbia supports broad international efforts to address human rights violations. At the United Nations, Serbia often aligns with the EU's positions, which condemn Myanmar's military regime and call for accountability for crimes against the Rohingya people, as seen in international resolutions. In particular, Serbia joined consensus-backed measures in SOCHUM that condemned the ongoing human rights abuses against the Rohingya and other minorities in Myanmar following the coup in 2021. These resolutions demanded that the Myanmar military cease violence and allow safe conditions for the return of refugees, while also condemning the repression of political opposition in Myanmar.

The international community, including the EU and UN, has maintained pressure on Myanmar's military government while advocating for the Rohingya people's rights and security. Serbia, through its international alliances, thus contributes indirectly to these global efforts without a distinct national policy on the matter.

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<https://press.un.org/en/2023/gashc4401.doc.htm>
<https://www.eurasiareview.com/07102024-road-from-rakhine-t-he-uncertain-fate-of-rohingyas-analysis/>
<https://myanmar.un.org/en/244307-situation-human-rights-roh-ingya-muslims-and-other-minorities-myanmar-report-secretary>

DRC

Serbia's connection to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) primarily revolves around its indirect role in the global cobalt supply chain, which is essential for producing batteries for electric vehicles and electronics. The DRC, supplying over 70% of the world's cobalt, faces significant challenges with human rights abuses, particularly in artisanal mining, where child labor and unsafe conditions are common. International initiatives are working to formalize and improve these mining practices to ensure safer conditions and responsible sourcing. While Serbia itself is not a key player in DRC mining, it benefits from the global cobalt supply, which is crucial for Europe's green transition.

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<https://www.cfr.org/blog/why-cobalt-mining-drc-needs-urgent-attention>
<https://humantraffickingsearch.org/resource/why-cobalt-mining-in-the-drc-needs-urgent-attention/>
<https://www.spglobal.com/marketintelligence/en/news-insights/latest-news-headlines/cleanup-of-drc-artisanal-cobalt-mining-could-be-key-to-battery-supply-chains-80118021>



Lithium Triangle

Serbia's official stance on lithium mining reflects its strategic alignment with the EU, positioning itself as a key supplier of lithium for the green transition. While the Serbian government supports lithium mining as a crucial economic opportunity, particularly through the Jadar project (Пројекат Јадар) with Rio Tinto, it has faced substantial domestic and international criticism. Concerns revolve around environmental damage, displacement of communities, and the lack of transparency in the mining operations. Indigenous groups, particularly in the Lithium Triangle, share similar concerns regarding land, water rights, and the preservation of cultural heritage. In Serbia, opposition has grown due to weak environmental protections and a lack of public involvement, leading to widespread protests that temporarily halted projects like Jadar. These tensions highlight broader concerns about balancing economic development with the rights of indigenous and local communities affected by resource extraction globally.

Read more

<https://eu.boell.org/en/2024/07/19/lithium-mining-serbia-open-and-productive-debate-not-possible>
<https://www.irreview.org/articles/2023/10/11/lithium-extraction-and-its-impacts-on-indigenous-communities>
<https://revdem.ceu.edu/2024/08/29/a-green-powered-autocrcv/>

