

### Aung San Suu Kyi On Trial

On 14 May 2009, Aung San Suu Kyi was arrested and charged with breaking the terms of her house arrest, which forbids visitors, after John Yettaw, a United States citizen, swam across Inya lake and refused to leave her house. In effect, she is being prosecuted because someone broke into her home.

The trial began on 18th May and is being held in closed-door hearings inside Insein prison. If convicted, Aung San Suu Kyi faces a sentence of 3-5 years. Aung San Suu Kyi's two companions and John Yettaw are also on trial.

The dictatorship are using the intruder's visit as an opportunity to extend Aung San Suu Kyi's detention in an effort to silence voices of dissent in the run up to the regime's rigged elections next year. In March, the United Nations ruled that Aung San Suu Kyi's detention is illegal under international law, and also under Burmese law. The United Nations Security Council has also told the dictatorship that they must release Aung San Suu Kyi.

Following the announcement of the trial, the Burma Justice Committee immediately contacted the Burmese Embassy in London and sought visas for a top-level delegation of English barristers to go to Burma to monitor the trial. However, the Burmese Embassy refused to give them visas.

Aung San Suu Kyi's arrest and trial has sparked outrage around the world. Protests demanding the immediate release of Aung San Suu Kyi have been held in more than 20 cities worldwide. World leaders, including Prime Minister Gordon Brown, President Obama, the UN and ASEAN have all condemned the trial. For a list of global statements calling for the release of Aung San Suu Kyi, visit:  
<http://www.burmacampaign.org.uk/index.php/burma/news/statements-calling-for-the-release-of-aung-san-suu-kyi>

The Burma Campaign UK has called on governments to turn words into action to ensure that Burma's military dictatorship faces serious consequences if Aung San Suu Kyi is not released at the end of the current trial.



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### Security Council issues statement

On 22nd May the United Nations Security Council issued a statement calling on the dictatorship to enter into dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi and ethnic groups. It is the third statement on the situation in Burma from the Security Council.

While the statement is welcome, democracy activists called for concrete action, such as a UN arms embargo on Burma, if the dictatorship continues to defy the Council and keep Aung San Suu Kyi detained.

### Security Council Press Statement on Myanmar

22 May 2009

The members of the Security Council express their concern about the political impact of recent developments relating to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

The members of the Security Council reaffirm, in this context, their statements of 11 October 2007 and 2 May 2008 and, in this regard, reiterate the importance of the release of all political prisoners. The members of the Security Council reiterate the need for the Government of Myanmar to create the necessary conditions for a genuine dialogue with

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all concerned parties and ethnic groups in order to achieve an inclusive national reconciliation with the support of the United Nations.

The members of the Security Council affirm their commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Myanmar and, in that context, reiterate that the future of Myanmar lies in the hands of all of its people

### **Leading Jurists call for investigation into Crimes against Humanity and War Crimes**

Five of the world's leading international jurists, in a report commissioned from Harvard Law School, have called for the UN Security Council to act on more than fifteen years of condemnation by the UN of human rights abuses in Burma. The report, Crimes in Burma, concludes with a call for the UN Security Council to establish a Commission of Inquiry into crimes against humanity and war crimes in Burma.

The Harvard report is based on an analysis of scores of UN documents – including UN General Assembly and Commission on Human Rights resolutions, as well as reports from several different Special Rapporteurs. These indicate that human rights abuses in Burma are widespread, systematic, and part of state policy – legal terms that justify further investigation and strongly suggest Burma's military regime may be committing crimes against humanity and war crimes prosecutable under international law.



Major abuses cited by the United Nations include forced displacement of over 3,000 villages in eastern Burma, and widespread and systematic sexual violence, torture, and summary execution of innocent civilians. Yet, despite such documentation from multiple UN bodies, the UN Security Council has not moved to investigate potential crimes against humanity or war crimes in Burma, as it has in other areas of the world, including Darfur and Rwanda.

A copy of the report is available here: [http://www.burmacampaign.org.uk/reports/Complete\\_Crimes-in-Burma.pdf](http://www.burmacampaign.org.uk/reports/Complete_Crimes-in-Burma.pdf)

### **Pinheiro calls for UN Commission of Inquiry**

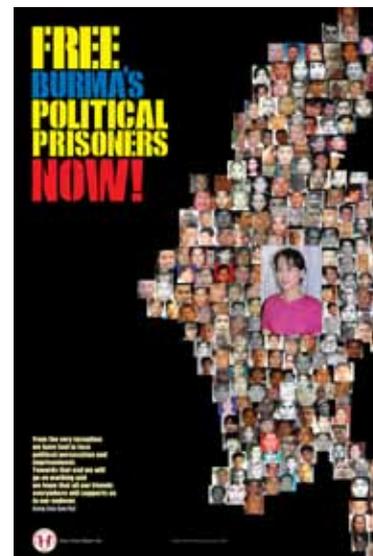
Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, who was the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Myanmar from 2000 to 2008, has called on the UN Security Council to set up a Commission of Inquiry into crimes against humanity in Burma.

Writing in the New York Times, he said, "U.N. representatives have visited the country 37 times in an attempt to facilitate dialogue and promote human rights ... And while the U.N. General Assembly and the U.N. Human Rights Council have passed over 35 resolutions regarding Myanmar, the U.N. Security Council has yet to pass a single one. The United Nations will not be successful until the Security Council acts to directly address our stagnant efforts. It is clear that the attacks in Myanmar will continue. It is equally evident that the country's domestic legal system will not punish those perpetrating crimes against ethnic minorities.

It is time for the United Nations to take the next logical step: The Security Council must establish a commission of inquiry into crimes against humanity and impunity in Myanmar."

### **Almost 700,000 urge Ban Ki-moon to take action**

The global campaign for the release of Burma's political prisoners has secured almost 700,000 petition signatures in just ten weeks, with signatures from over 150 countries. Since the campaign launched on 13 March, Burma's Human Rights Day, one person signed the petition every 10 seconds.



"This is the largest global coordinated action for Burma the world has ever witnessed," said Dr Naing Aung, Secretary-General of the Forum for Democracy in Burma.

The petition calls on the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to make it his personal priority to secure the release of all political prisoners in Burma, as the essential first step towards democratization in the country. Since October last year, more than 350 of Burma's 2,100 political prisoners have been given harsh sentences of up to 104 years.

The campaign has been led by the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma) and Forum for Democracy in Burma, representing former political prisoners and pro-democracy activists, with the support of Burma exile and solidarity groups around the world.

### **One year on from Cyclone Nargis – More money and more pressure needed**



2nd May marked the first anniversary of Cyclone Nargis, which killed more than 140,000 and affected 2.4 million people in Burma. One year on, conditions for Nargis survivors are still dire. It is estimated that over 500,000 people, including 200,000 children, in the devastated Irrawaddy delta are still living in flimsy makeshift tarpaulin shelters, exposed to the elements.

The Burma Campaign UK called on the international community to provide more humanitarian assistance but also to do more to challenge restrictions on aid delivery in the country. The dictatorship has been gradually reintroducing restrictions on aid workers in the Delta, and has made no significant moves to drop restrictions in other parts of the country.

The Burma Campaign UK has recorded first hand testimony from people in the Delta describing how the dictatorship stole aid intended for Cyclone

victims, recruited child soldiers, forced people to vote yes in a referendum on the new constitution in order to receive aid, and were fined for trying to deliver aid. There have also been reports of forced labour and land confiscation since the Cyclone struck. One year after cyclone Nargis, 21 people remain in jail, with sentences ranging from two to 35 years for delivering aid to the victims, reporting on the cyclone, and burying the dead.

### **Kachin schoolchildren beaten and hospitalised by Burmese Army**

Around 15 schoolchildren and young men have been beaten, and some hospitalised, after Burmese Army soldiers went on a rampage through Mayan village in Kachin State, Burma.

According to Burma Campaign UK sources, the attacks happened after youths in the village prevented soldiers from gang-raping a 17 year old girl. When a group of young men saw the same soldiers who had attempted the rape, they attacked them and beat them. Battalion commander Lt-Col Ye Yint Twe then ordered 30 of his soldiers to “kill all Kachin young men in the village.” The soldiers rampaged through the village for three hours, dragging boys and young men from their homes, from public transport, and from a video theatre, and beating them.

“This incident is typical of the kind of things going on in villages and towns across Kachin State,” said Nang Seng, Campaigns Officer at Burma Campaign UK. “Since the ceasefire in 1994 more Burmese troops have come to Kachin state and human rights abuses are part of daily life. This will continue after elections next year, as ethnic people have been given no rights, no level of autonomy, and Burmese Army soldiers will still occupy our villages.”

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FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
AND DEMOCRACY IN BURMA**