



# LAST MONTH IN PARLIAMENT

A summary of Burma-related issues  
in the British Parliament and Europe

JUNE  
2010

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

### ANSWERS TO WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

#### FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH

##### *Burma: Elections*

**07 June 2010 Angus Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the security situation in Burma in respect of the forthcoming elections. [1157]

**Mr Jeremy Browne:** Burmese elections planned for later this year are set to be held under deeply oppressive conditions. Recently passed election laws and existing security provisions place severe restrictions on campaigning and participation in the process. Over 2,100 political prisoners, including Aung San Suu Kyi, remain under detention, and arbitrary arrests continue. The regime has rejected offers of international election observers. In such circumstances, elections will not have legitimacy or international credibility. Tensions between the military government and Burma's ethnic ceasefire groups have also increased, as they resist the regime's attempt to absorb their armed wings into the Burmese army.

##### *Aung San Suu Kyi*

**23 June 2010 Glenda Jackson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Burmese government on the detention of Aung San Suu Kyi. [3618]

**Mr Jeremy Browne:** I raised Burma with ASEAN Ministers at the EU-ASEAN Ministerial on 26 May 2010 at which the Burmese Foreign Minister was present.

I made clear that without the release and participation of all political prisoners including Aung San Suu Kyi, Burma's elections will not be free and fair. The subsequent summit statement reflected the EU's concern. To mark Aung San Suu Kyi's 65th birthday, my right hon. Friends the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary and I called on the military regime to end her detention. Our ambassador in Rangoon repeatedly raises the need for the release of prisoners of conscience, including Aung San Suu Kyi, with Ministers in the Burmese military government.

We will continue to raise the plight of Burma's political prisoners including Aung San Suu Kyi through the EU, with Burma's neighbours, and we will highlight the issue in the UN Security Council and UN's human rights bodies. We endorse the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention's recent observation that the ongoing detention of Aung San Suu Kyi is illegal and in violation of international human rights law.

**24 Jun 2010 Mr MacShane:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he has taken to seek to secure the release of Aung San Suu Kyi since his appointment. [3870]

**Mr Jeremy Browne:** I raised Burma with ASEAN Ministers at the EU-ASEAN Ministerial on 26 May 2010 at which the Burmese Foreign Minister was present. I made clear that without the release and participation

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### **Burma: Elections**

**24 June 2010 Mr MacShane:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he plans to take to seek to increase the level of access for people in Burma to free media and information networks before the forthcoming election in that country. [3896]

**Mr Jeremy Browne:** The forthcoming elections are set to be held under deeply oppressive conditions. The Burmese regime limits public access to media information. Election literature is censored and public gatherings, political banners and flags are banned. Most people are unable to access the media to voice political views and those who do so risk draconian measures imposed by the military junta including long prison sentences. Under these conditions, Burma's people will not have reasonable access to free and impartial media.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) provides funding to the BBC World Service to enable it to run a Burmese service, which provides objective coverage of politics in Burma. BBC World Service reports that it reaches 8.5 million listeners every week inside Burma. Although internet use is limited in Burma, the FCO's digital communications work also plays its part in the flow of information to the country. As elections approach in Burma, the FCO will continue to work closely with the BBC World Service and others to increase access to political information.

## **HOUSE OF LORDS**

### **WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS**

#### **Burma**

**28 Jun 2010 Lord Alton of Liverpool:** To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their response to the conclusion of the United Nations Human Rights Council's Working Group on Arbitrary Detention that Aung San Suu Kyi is being held in violation of international law.[HL601]

#### **The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford):**

The Government endorse the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention's recent observation that the ongoing detention of Aung San Suu Kyi is illegal and in violation of international human rights law. On 18 and 19 May 2010, my right honourable friends the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary and the Minister of State responsible for South-East Asia called on the military regime to end Aung San Suu Kyi's incarceration.

The Government will continue to raise the plight of Burma's political prisoners, including Aung San Suu Kyi, through the EU, with Burma's neighbours, and we will highlight the issue in the UN Security Council and UN's human rights bodies.

## Early Day Motion

### Early Day Motion 112: Human Right in Burma

John Pugh  
29.05.2010  
Signed by 114 MPs

That this House sends its best wishes to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who will spend her 65th birthday in detention on 19 June 2010; calls for the immediate release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners in Burma; rejects the elections planned by Burma's generals later this year which, due to election laws and ongoing repression in Burma, cannot be free and fair; condemns Burma's new constitution which is designed to maintain dictatorship in civilian guise and does not grant rights or protection to Burma's ethnic minorities; notes that all diplomatic efforts to reform the dictatorship's sham roadmap to democracy have failed; recalls that the United Nations Security Council, General Assembly, Secretary General and Human Rights Council have all stated that the solution to the problems in Burma lies in dialogue between the dictatorship, Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy, and ethnic representatives; and calls on the Government to support a United Nations-led effort to pressure the dictatorship to enter into such dialogue.

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**for Human Rights, Democracy  
& Development in Burma**