



LAST MONTH IN PARLIAMENT

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

NOV
2013

ANSWERS TO WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

Rohingya

18 November 2013 Dr Offord: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the government of Burma regarding the lack of citizenship for the Rohingya community and the incitement of inter-communal violence affecting Muslim communities in Rakhine.

Mr Swire: The British Government has been among the most vocal in the international community in raising our concerns regarding violence against Muslim communities across Burma and the plight of the Rohingya community. During the visit of President Thein Sein to the UK in July 2013, the Prime Minister, and the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Richmond (Yorks) (Mr Hague), raised our concerns on both issues.

Following the most recent outbreak of violence against Kaman Muslims in Thandwe, Rakhine State, I called publicly for action to restore security and the rule of law. We welcomed both the President's visit to Rakhine State and arrests of suspected perpetrators. It will be important to ensure that those arrested and found guilty are held accountable for their crimes.

We will continue to call for a sustainable solution to be found for the citizenship status of the Rohingya community which is consistent with their human rights. Together with the UN, EU, US, Australia, France and Japan, British Ministers and officials will continue to lobby key Burmese Ministers with responsibility for Rakhine State on the full range of issues, including the need to resolve the citizenship status of the Rohingya community.

Kachin State

18 November 2013 Dr Offord: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department is taking with the Department for International Development to ensure that the UK's response to the problems in Kachin State is comprehensive.

Mr Swire: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development have been working closely together for many years to ensure the UK's response in Kachin State is comprehensive. As I set out to the House on 8 October 2013, Official Report, columns 138-140, while we continue to be concerned by recent fighting in Shan and Kachin States, we have also welcomed the constructive dialogue between the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO) and the Burmese Government.

In June 2013, the Department for International Development announced £13.5 million of new humanitarian funding for Kachin State. The UK is the largest bilateral aid donor to Kachin—this aid for 2013-14 is reaching non-Government controlled areas where needs are greatest. We continue to lobby the Burmese Government to ensure that it implements its commitment in the agreement signed with the KIO in May 2013 to ensure humanitarian access to all conflict affected areas.

18 November 2013 Valerie Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to secure the release of villagers being held as hostages in Nhka Ga, Burma.

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Mr Swire: While the British Government has made no specific representations on the release of hostages in Nhka Ga, we are closely monitoring developments. We remain concerned by the recent outbreaks of fighting in both northern and southern Kachin state, particularly the potential impact fighting may have on negotiations between the Burmese Government and Kachin Independence Organisation towards a ceasefire and political dialogue. We have consistently called on both the Burmese military and the Kachin Independence Organisation to guarantee the safety of civilians and to work to ensure unfettered access for humanitarian aid, in accordance with the seven point agreement the two sides signed in May 2013.

In early November, British embassy officials visited Myitkyina, capital of Kachin state, where talks were held between the Burmese Government and ethnic leaders, including the Kachin. They reiterated the UK's offer of ongoing support for the peace process. We continue to call on all sides to do all they can to work towards a lasting political settlement to Burma's long running conflicts.

Shan State

28 November 2013 Mr Burrowes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received on the use by the Burmese Army of human shields in Shan State, Burma on 13 October 2013.

Mr Swire: We are aware of these reports, but are not in a position to verify the specific allegation of the use of human shields by the Burmese army in Shan State. We continue to closely monitor the peace process and allegations of human rights abuses in conflict states in Burma. We remain positive that further peace talks in the coming months will lead to a nationwide ceasefire and inclusive political dialogue that takes account of international human rights standards.

Sexual Violence

19 November 2013 Baroness Jenkin of Kennington: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the government of Burma agreed to support the United Kingdom initiative on sexual violence in conflict when requested to do so by Hugo Swire, the United Kingdom Minister of State with responsibility for Burma, during his visit to that country in December 2012.

The Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Warsi) (Con): During his visit in December 2012 to Burma, the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for East Devon (Mr Swire), called for action to tackle sexual violence.

President Thein Sein welcomed the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative (PSVI) during his visit to London in July. Mr Swire pressed the Burmese Foreign Minister for his government to endorse the PSVI Declaration at the UN General Assembly in September. We will continue lobbying to strengthen accountability systems and eliminate impunity for rape in Burma.

At its outset, the Initiative identified countries, in consultation with the UN and other partners, for initial deployments. Over recent months the Initiative has extended to a number of other countries—including Burma. Our Embassy in Rangoon is looking to incorporate PSVI activities in to new and existing work—for example, funding a new project to improve access to justice for victims, develop community-based preventive mechanisms and promote wider legal and policy reforms.

21 November 2013 Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many women who are victims of rape and sexual violence by armed forces in Burma have received financial assistance from her Department in each of the last two years.

Mr Duncan: Tackling violence against women is a high priority for the UK in Burma. In Kachin state, DFID is providing humanitarian assistance for over 40,000 internally displaced people, of whom 21,000 are female. This assistance includes shelter, food and in certain areas specific support for victims of conflict, including for women affected by sexual violence. In the Burmese refugee camps in Thailand we are providing support to victims of gender-based violence including onward referrals to specialist centres.

We have agreed to provide funding to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for two specialists to further strengthen the response to gender-based violence in the conflict-affected areas of Rakhine and Kachin states. We continue to emphasise to the Burmese Government the need to protect all citizens and respect human rights, particularly for women, and the UK has recently approved two new projects to tackle this problem in Burma, under the Foreign Secretary's Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative in conflict situations.

Political Prisoners

25 November 2013 Valerie Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has raised the case of Sumlat Roi Ja with the Burmese government.

Mr Swire: While we have not specifically raised the case of Sumlat Roi Ja, we remain concerned by the continued reports of arbitrary arrests and human rights abuses in Kachin State, particularly their potential impact on negotiations between the Burmese Government and Kachin Independence Organisation on a ceasefire and political dialogue.

We continue to call on the Government to ensure that people, including in conflict areas, are able to go about their daily lives without fear of arbitrary arrest or detention, and to repeal all existing laws which are not in line with democratic standards.

Most recently, I raised these issues with the Minister for the President's Office, Tin Naing Thein on 22 November 2013. The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend, the Member for Richmond (Yorks) (Mr Hague), raised our concerns about Burma's political prisoners and the country's continuing ethnic conflicts, particularly in Kachin State, with President Thein Sein during his visit to London in July 2013. We welcome the commitment of the Kachin Independence Organisation and the Burmese Government to the process of dialogue.

28 November 2013 Mr Burrowes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government has taken to obtain the immediate and unconditional release of Bauk Ja and other remaining political prisoners in Burma.

Mr Swire: Daw Bauk Ja is still detained with court proceedings ongoing. We continue to follow her case closely: British officials from the embassy in Rangoon raised Daw Bauk Ja's case with senior members of the Burmese Government in August. We also remain in touch with local Burmese organisations that support her and the many other political prisoners that remain detained.

I raised the issue of political prisoners with Minister for the President's Office, Tin Naing Thein, on 22 November and made clear our concern about the political prisoners who are still detained in Burma.

28 November 2013 Mr Burrowes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent meetings the British ambassador to Burma has had with family members of Burmese political prisoners who remain in jail.

Mr Swire: British embassy officials are in contact with the lawyers of a number of political prisoners. We meet regularly with civil society organisations including the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners Burma to discuss developments. We have also provided English language and human rights training to a number of released prisoners and are in regular contact with the Remaining Political Prisoners Scrutiny Committee.

We welcomed the release of a further 69 political prisoners on 15 November which represents another step towards fulfilling President Thein Sein's commitment, made during his visit to London in July, to release all political prisoners by the end of the year.

I continue to raise the issue of political prisoners, and did so most recently with Minister for the President's Office, Tin Naing Thein, on 22 November, and again made clear that we did not want to see new arrests or political activists re-arrested.

UN Human Rights

28 November 2013 Alex Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what funding his Department provides to the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar.

Mr Swire: The British Government does not directly fund the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar (Burma). UN Special Rapporteurs are funded from the UN regular budget, of which the UK contribution is 5.17%.

Military Engagement

05 November 2013 Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what support his Department has given to the Burmese Army since July 2013.

Mr Swire: The British Government has not provided any support to the Burmese Army since July 2013. In January 2014, a civil-military team from the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom in collaboration with Cranfield university will deliver a Managing Defence in a Wider Security Context course in Burma to 30 students, drawn from Burma's Government and the Burmese military. This course will develop the professionalism of the Burmese armed forces within a democratic framework by raising awareness of effective governance and management in support of the policies of a civilian government. The programme will also include an examination of the legal framework by which defence and security operations are legitimised and controlled in line with international human rights and humanitarian law. The course will not contain any combat or combat related elements.

26 November 2013 Alex Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with ethnic civil society organisations in Burma's conflict zones before offering training to the Burmese army.

Mr Francois: Educating the Tatmadaw (Burmese military) in their role within a democratic society is part of a wider HMG approach to security sector reform in Burma. Officials have met with members from NGOs who have interests in Burma, in order to ensure that their concerns about our engagement are listened to and in some cases, our approach has been tailored to support their views. During Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's visit to the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, she asked for our help in instilling in the Burmese military an understanding of the value—including to themselves—of being a professional and apolitical Army. Indeed, Daw Suu particularly liked the fact that the education that we intend to provide to the Burmese military will be jointly delivered by military and civilian academic staff. We will continue to review our engagement in Burma in the light of the Tatmadaw's evolving stance on reform.

26 November 2013 Paul Blomfield: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how Burmese soldiers who receive training from the UK are monitored after such training to ensure they do not commit human rights abuses.

Mr Francois: The Tatmadaw (Burmese military) hold 25% of the seats in the Burmese Parliament on an unelected basis; our programme to influence and educate them is a key part of HMG's contribution to the process of democratic reform in Burma.

In January 2014 a team from the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom will travel to Burma to deliver a course called Managing Defence in a Wider Security Context. The academic team will provide education, to 30 members of the military and other government departments, that will explore the civil-military relationship in a democratic society, address topics such as governance, accountability and also human rights and the rule of law. The course does not offer the Tatmadaw any form of training that would enhance their combat capability.

However active post-course monitoring of participants is not practicable although through long-term dialogue, we will enquire about their progress. It is our desire that the enduring lessons of this course will form a part of the process to ensure that the Tatmadaw continues on its road to reform.

Burmese Civil Society

04 November 2013 Rushanara Ali: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps her Department is taking to support civil society organisations that are (a) registered and (b) unregistered in Burma.

Mr Duncan: DFID supports a number of registered organisations in Burma. DFID has been helping civil society organisations in their lobbying of the Burmese Government and Parliament to amend the draft Associations Law. This law would change the process of registration for civil society organisations in Burma.

28 November 2013 Paul Blomfield: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what meetings he has held with Burmese ethnic political and civil society leaders in the last year.

Mr Swire: Four British Ministers have visited Burma in the last year. I visited in December 2012 and the Minister of State, Department for International Development, my right hon. Friend the Member for Rutland and Melton (Mr Duncan), visited in June 2013. During our respective visits, Mr Duncan and I met a wide range of leading Burmese political, religious and civil society leaders to discuss Burma's human rights situation and reform agenda. The British ambassador and embassy officials also meet regularly with ethnic and civil society leaders, in Rangoon, Naypyitaw, in the ethnic states, and in Thailand.

In London, I engaged with a range of Burmese ethnic and civil society representatives at a briefing event in March 2013. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development officials regularly meet representatives of Burma's ethnic and civil society groups, both those based in the UK and those visiting from Burma, such as the visit of the '88 Generation' of former political prisoners in June.

Ministerial colleagues, including the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Richmond (Yorks) (Mr Hague), and I, have met key Burmese political figures in the UK including: President Thein Sein; Ministers in the President's Office Aung Min and Soe Thane; and opposition leader Aung Sang Suu Kyi.

28 November 2013 Paul Blomfield: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what funding her Department provides for building civil society capacity in Burma.

Mr Duncan: DFID has allocated £11 million for building civil society capacity in Burma from July 2011 to March 2016.

28 November 2013 Paul Blomfield: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much her Department will spend on promoting good governance in Burma in 2013-14; and what proportion of such funding will be channelled through (a) the Burmese Government and (b) civil society.

Mr Duncan: DFID has allocated £12.8 million for good governance in Burma in 2013-14. This includes funding through the UN, NGOs and civil society. No UK aid is given through budget support to the Government of Burma.

Migrant Rights Worker

11 November 2013 Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Ambassador of Thailand about the charges against UK citizen Andy Hall.

Mr Swire: I discussed Mr Hall's case with Thailand's Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jullapong Nonsrichai on 20 May 2013. The Thai Government are not able to interfere with the legal process. Her Majesty's ambassador to Thailand and officials in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office have met Mr Hall to discuss his case, most recently in October 2013. We hope that Mr Hall is able to access the appropriate legal advice to resolve his situation in Thailand.

Aid

25 November 2013 Fiona O'Donnell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps her Department has taken to promote its Strategic Vision for Girls and Women in Burma since it was launched in March 2011.

Mr Duncan: DFID prioritises the needs of women and girls throughout its work in Burma. Since the launch of the strategy, UK aid has enabled 135,000 women to gain access to financial services and assets; helped 84,000 women with family planning; supported 80,000 girls to complete primary school; and is funding a network of 90 organisations that helped develop the Government's National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women and is working to strengthen anti-violence legislation.

25 November 2013 Valerie Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what support her Department is giving to the Development of Rangoon Hospital, Burma; and what the cost to the public purse of such support is.

Mr Duncan: DFID will provide up to £100,00 to support a small team to prepare a full feasibility study and a master plan for the renovation of Rangoon General Hospital in Burma.

Health Care

18 November 2013 Baroness Jenkin of Kennington: To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to encourage Burma's involvement in Family Planning 2020.

Baroness Northover (LD): The UK Government will continue to support Burma's efforts in engaging with Family Planning 2020, including through dialogue with the relevant ministry.

18 November 2013 Baroness Jenkin of Kennington: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to take steps to assist Burma in improving the quality of its maternity services.

Baroness Northover: The UK has allocated £80 million over four financial years (2012 to 2016) in support of the Three Millennium Development Goal Trust Fund in Burma. This fund supports access to essential health services for maternal and child health and family planning.

Trade & Investment

28 November 2013 Alex Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received of British or international companies or individuals giving strategic or public relations advice to the Government of Burma.

Mr Swire: We are aware of a number of British and international companies and individuals who are providing advice to the Government of Burma, across a range of subjects. We encourage the Government of Burma to draw on reputable international expertise where it can add value to the issues that they are tackling.

28 November 2013 Alex Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions her Department has had with communities in areas of Burma negatively affected by foreign investment before the decision was made to fund the Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business.

Mr Duncan: Prior to the creation of the Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business, discussions about its potential work were held both within and outside Burma with civil society, as well as with business, government, trade unions and experts. Particular attention was paid to regions of the country made especially vulnerable due to conflict, ethnic and religious strife, and corruption.

Burma mentioned in Sexual Violence in conflict debate in the House of Commons

28 November 2013 Mr Douglas Alexander (Paisley and Renfrewshire South) (Lab): In response to a written question in October, the Government confirmed that Burma has now been added to the list of

countries, despite being omitted from the original list. Will the Foreign Secretary explain the reason for not including Burma as part of the initiative when it was first launched?

Mr Hague: The right hon. Gentleman asked about Burma. We are providing support to legal assistance centres in Burmese refugee camps in Thailand and to trauma care camps in Kachin state, both of which deal with rape cases. Our embassy in Rangoon is currently considering how we can do more in Burma, and we are also promoting legal reforms that address and deter sexual violence.

Jonathan Ashworth (Leicester South) (Lab): I have listened carefully to the Foreign Secretary's remarks on Burma. He will know of the reports of sexual violence against the Rohingya minority in Rakhine and against other minorities in Kachin state. In the light of those reports, there is scepticism about the depth of the regime's commitment to the initiative. What assurances has he sought from the regime, and what role does he envisage it playing at the summit next year?

Mr Hague: That scepticism is understandable. This will require a big change in attitudes and increased priority to be given to this issue in Burma. We have raised the matter with the Burmese Government, but we will need to go on doing so, because the scale of the problem is substantial, including in the areas that the hon. Gentleman mentions. I cannot give any categorical assurances that the Burmese Government will do the right thing, but I can assure him that they will receive very strong encouragement from Her Majesty's Government to do so.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm131128/debtext/131128-0002.htm#13112853000003>

Burma mentioned in Human Rights: Motions to take note debate in the House of Lords

21 November 2013 Lord Alton of Liverpool (CB): In March I had the opportunity to meet Daw Aung Sang Suu Kyi in Burma. She famously said: "Please use your liberty to promote ours".

Perhaps that is the purpose of a debate such as this and of our being Members of your Lordships' House. She told me that the BBC's Burmese Service made a major contribution to the process of opening up Burma. There is much that can be learnt from this and applied to North Korea. Burma is an example of a country where the right combination of international pressure, the flow of information and critical engagement has led to progress.

Baroness Cox (CB): My Lords, I warmly congratulate my noble friend Lord Alton on his tenacious commitment to justice and the protection of human rights. From a vast array of concerns, I will focus today on Burma and Nigeria.

The widely celebrated reforms in Burma are welcome but while western political leaders, investors and aid agencies flock to Rangoon, many ethnic national peoples suffer military offensives, gross violations of human rights by the Burmese army and exploitation of their natural resources by the Burmese Government. The Muslim Rohingya people suffer systematic oppression, with 140,000 forced to live in dire conditions in camps in Rakhine state and thousands more forced to flee to Bangladesh or in precarious boats to other countries. Human Rights Watch describes the situation as "ethnic cleansing". Will Her Majesty's Government support calls for an independent international inquiry into war crimes and crimes against humanity?

My small NGO, HART, works with partners in Shan, Kachin, Karen and Karenni states. We have visited them to witness the plight of their people, which has not been reported by the media. In Kachin and Shan states, the Burmese army continues military offensives, driving hundreds of thousands of civilians to camps for the displaced. We have seen their destitution and heard heartbreaking stories of atrocities perpetrated by the army, including the recent rape of girls aged eight and 15.

Land confiscation and environmental degradation from investment projects are increasing, as in northern Shan state, with China's oil and gas pipelines. Indeed, people in Shan state are asking what sort of peace this is, when they are losing more and more of their lands and livelihoods.

In Karen state, the cessation of fighting is welcome, but the ceasefire allows the Burmese army to build more, larger camps along the Salween river and the Burmese Government to exploit, destroy or confiscate natural resources, with no compensation. Human rights violations by the Burmese army, including sexual violence against women, continue with impunity.

Burma's ethnic national peoples share many concerns; for example, that the 2008 constitution, which does not recognise the rights of ethnic national peoples or allow for the development of a federal union, will become the accepted political road map for Burma, and that ethnic national people, who retain their armies for protection from Burmese military aggression, will be seen as rebel groups with rebel armies.

Their situation is best expressed in the words of their own local leaders. I quote a leader of the Shan people:

"The Burmese Government has conceded just enough credibility to achieve everything it wants from the international community: investment, aid and hosting international events".

A senior officer in the Shan state army said:

"When the lights went on in Rangoon, everyone rushed there—and nobody stopped to visit us in the darkness".

A healthcare worker helping displaced people in the jungles of Karen and Karenni states said:

"They are playing a game like Chess: take one piece at a time. While they sign a ceasefire with the Karen, they launch major offensives in Kachin State. They wear a beautiful mask, but the original face, which is brutal, is hidden".

Will Her Majesty's Government make much stronger representations to the Burmese Government to desist immediately from military offensives against civilians in Kachin and Shan states; to increase humanitarian assistance to displaced people in Kachin, Shan and Rakhine states and allow unhindered access for international aid and human rights organisations; to call the Burmese army to account for violations of human rights, including murder, torture and rape; to ensure that concessions granted to the Burmese Government in recognition of recent reforms do not promote exploitative investment; and to allow ethnic national people to participate in discussions and agreements concerning the extraction of resources from their own lands—and the future of Burma?

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldhansrd/text/131121-0001.htm#13112188000852>

Written Statement: Foreign & Commonwealth Office

Foreign Affairs and General Affairs Councils 26 November 2013

Introduction—Burma

Baroness Ashton briefed the Council following the EU-Myanmar Task Force which she led on 14-15 November. She had been accompanied by three fellow Commissioners, over 100 business leaders and a European Parliament delegation. She said the taskforce had successfully brought together political, economic and development agendas, as well as holding discussions with both President Thein Sein and Aung Sang Suu Kyi. I called on member states to sustain the EU's push for constitutional reform to secure genuine democratic elections in 2015 and requested further discussion at the December FAC.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm131126/wmstext/131126m0001.htm#13112639000004>

ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP FOR DEMOCRACY IN BURMA

On 20th November 2013, APPG Burma hold a private screening of a new Burma documentary film 'Mantra of Rage'. This new documentary "Mantra of Rage", claims the anti-Muslim attacks are being organised in an attempted threat to undermine Burma's transition to democracy. Following the film screening, Kyaw Win, the Secretary of the Burmese Muslim Association-UK. Kyaw Win talked about the current situation of Muslims in Burma and the abuses they face, such as arson, killings, displacement, other on-going human rights abuses and the need for support and engagement by the British Government.

EARLY DAY MOTIONS

SPEAKER'S DELEGATION TO BURMA

Date tabled: 08.10.2013

That this House wishes to thank Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker's Office and the British Embassy staff in Rangoon who helped to organise Mr Speaker's successful delegation to Burma on 28 July to 4 August 2013; welcomes the constructive meetings with Daw Suu Kyi, President Thein Sein and other Burmese politicians and activists; notes the need for constitutional change to allow Daw Suu Kyi to stand for election as President of Burma; further notes the meetings between faith leaders and the delegation, and hopes that this continued contact brings lasting peace to Burma; further welcomes Mr Speaker's speech at Yangon University; praises the hard work by all parties to reform Burma's political process, but also notes the work left to do to strengthen Burma's democracy; further welcomes the enthusiasm and desire for democracy from the younger generation shown during the meeting with youth activists in Mon State; calls for the UN Special Rapporteur on Religious Beliefs to be allowed to carry out his work with the full protection of the local police; further calls for the establishment of a UN Office of Human Rights in Burma as agreed to by President Thein Sein; and further calls on the Government to continue to provide practical assistance to strengthen the capacity building of the Burmese Naypyidaw Parliament's research department to help reduce the workload of the Bill Committees and help assist Burmese Members of Parliament to carry out their work.

Total signatures: 24

SPEAKER'S DELEGATION TO BURMA (No. 2)

Date tabled: 08.10.2013

That this House notes the Speaker's successful delegation to Burma which visited that country between 28 July and 4 August 2013; welcomes the constructive meetings with Daw Suu Kyi, President Thein Sein, HE U Soe Thane, Minister Presidential Office, HE U Khin Aung Myint, Speaker of the Upper House, HE U Thura Shwe Mann, Speaker of the Lower House, Burmese MPs from all parties, Burmese Committee Chairs, non-governmental organisations, UN agencies, international agencies, Rohingya and Rakhine leaders, 88 Generation, ethnic and faith leaders, including Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Anglican and Catholic representatives, the Burmese business community, the Chief Minister of Mon State, the Speaker of Mon State Parliament, local MPs, and young political activists; further notes the visits to a DFID-funded school, UK-funded law clinic, a Commonwealth War Cemetery, a Migrant community clinic, and humanitarian projects; further notes the work by all parties to reform Burma's democratic process, but notes that there is still more work to be done, especially in the area of human rights; and calls on the Government to continue its support for democratic reform in Burma and to provide the resources necessary to strengthen Burma's democratic institutions.

Total signatures: 24

DAW BAWK JA AND THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN MYANMAR (BURMA)

Date tabled: 05.09.2013

That this House notes that Daw BawkJa was arrested in July 2013, and that the charges against her are currently unknown to her or her lawyer, and her trial is still pending; further notes that Daw BawkJa has actively supported local Kachin farmers against illegal land grabbing in 2009 and the resulting trial sided against the farmers; further notes that Daw BawkJa ran as a National Democratic Force candidate in the November 2010 election and lost by under 8,000 votes after 13,255 votes were deemed invalid; welcomes the political reforms and progress that have been made in Burma since the 2012 UN General Assembly Resolution on Human Rights in Myanmar (Burma) but notes that there are still concerns that need to be addressed, including the detention of political prisoners; further notes that President TheinSein is still discussing the opening of the UN Office of Human Rights in Burma; and calls on the Government to help facilitate the release of Daw BawkJa and to continue its support for the UN General Assembly Resolution on Human Rights in Myanmar (Burma).

Total Signature: 7

ANTI-MUSLIM VIOLENCE IN BURMA

Date tabled: 11.07.2013

That this House expresses deep concern at the growing anti-Muslim violence in Burma; is concerned that the government of Burma has still not taken action against those inciting and organising violence; is further concerned by growing Buddhist nationalism in the country and that other religious minorities could also be targeted; is further concerned that, despite Muslims being the majority of the victims of violence, they also make up the vast majority of those being charged with violent offences; calls on the Government to significantly increase support for programmes promoting religious tolerance in Burma; and further calls on the Government to mobilise and co-ordinate an international task force to help address religious violence in Burma.

Total Signature: 33

ROHINGYA MUSLIM PERSECUTION IN MYANMAR

Date tabled: 20.05.2013

That this House notes that the persecution of Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar is not only continuing but sectarian violence is getting worse; further notes that a boat carrying well over 100 Rohingya Muslims fleeing a cyclone capsized on 14 May with many drowned; further notes that the Myanmar President Thein Sein has been invited to Washington to meet President Obama as part of the normalisation of relations with western countries; deplores the continued persecution of the Rohingya Muslims; and calls on the Government to take all necessary measures to get the Myanmar government to act to protect the Rohingya Muslims from sectarian persecution and violence.

Total Signatures: 14

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Thank you.

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