



# LAST MONTH IN PARLIAMENT

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

MAY  
2009

### ANSWERS TO WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

#### *International Development*

##### *Cyclone Nargis*

**21 May 2009 Frank Field:** To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what international aid has so far been brought into the Irrawaddy delta region following Cyclone Nargis by (a) the international community and (b) the UK.

**Michael Foster:** More than 30 countries and international organisations have provided aid to Burma following Cyclone Nargis. However, the financial value of their contributions has not been recorded systematically. By 30 April 2009, nearly US\$315 million had been committed to the United Nations Emergency Appeal for Cyclone Nargis. Many donors, including the United Kingdom, have also made significant contributions through other channels such as non-governmental organisations. In 2008-09 the United Kingdom committed £45 million towards the Cyclone Nargis relief effort, over 90 per cent. of which has now been delivered through the United Nations and non-governmental organisations. In March 2009, the Secretary of State for International Development agreed to provide a further £20 million for Burma over the next two years in addition to previously planned spending. Approximately £12 million of this extra funding will be spent on cyclone-related assistance.

#### *Foreign and Commonwealth Office*

##### *Kachin Human Rights Violations*

**05 May 2009 John Bercow:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Government has made to the Government of Burma on the investigation of the rape and mutilation of a schoolgirl in Kachin state on 27 July 2008. [250798]

**Bill Rammell:** We have not raised this specific, tragic case with the Burmese authorities. However, through our embassy in Rangoon, and in the UN's Human Rights bodies, we continue to take every opportunity to press the regime to uphold international human rights norms and protect vulnerable groups, including women and ethnic minorities.

On 21 November 2008, the UK helped secure a UN General Assembly resolution which expressed grave concern at the continued discrimination and hardships suffered by ethnic minority groups, and the broader human rights situation in Burma. We call on the regime to adhere to its international obligations and co-operate fully with the UN special rapporteur, Thomas Ojea Quintana, who last visited Burma from 3-7 August 2008.

##### *US Policy on Burma*

**13 May 2009 Keith Simpson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions his Department has had with the US administration on its review of US policy on Burma.

**Bill Rammell:** I discussed Burma with US Administration officials and members of Congress when I visited Washington from 3-5 May 2009. We remain in close contact with our US colleagues about the situation in Burma at all levels. We are working with them to ensure that collective international pressure is brought onto the regime to engage with the UN Good Offices mission and to instigate genuine political reforms.

We continue to share concerns for the prospects of inclusive elections in 2010 and the grave humanitarian situation. The US Administration has not as yet concluded the work that is under way.

### ***Aung San Suu Kyi***

**18 May 2009 Keith Simpson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations (a) he and (b) the Prime Minister's Special Envoy to Burma have made to the Burmese regime on the health of Aung San Suu Kyi; and if he will make a statement.

**Caroline Flint:** We were greatly concerned by reports that Aung San Suu Kyi was suffering from low blood pressure and dehydration at the beginning of May. However, latest reporting suggests that her condition has improved. Mrs Suu Kyi was reported to be in good spirits during a visit by an assistant to her regular doctor on Monday 11 May 2009. We have also received reports that she appeared to be in good health on arrival for her trial on 18 May 2009. Nonetheless, we remain concerned that Mrs Suu Kyi has been under house arrest for a considerable period and has not had the level of medical care that can be enjoyed by a free individual. In striking contrast, senior military leaders go out of Burma for medical treatment whenever the need arises.

**19 May 2009 Keith Simpson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received on the health of Aung San Suu Kyi and the medical treatment that she is receiving; and if he will make a statement.

**Bill Rammell:** Following the arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi's doctor on 7 May 2009, an assistant doctor was permitted to visit Aung San Suu Kyi on Friday 8 May 2009 and reported that she suffered from low blood pressure and dehydration. Mrs Suu Kyi was reported to be in good spirits during a further visit permitted on Monday 11 May 2009. We have received reports that she appeared to be in good health on arrival for her trial on 18 May 2009. We understand that her doctor has now been released but we are not aware that he has been able to see Mrs Suu Kyi since her arrest.

**19 May 2009 Keith Simpson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans there are for the UN Security Council to take steps in response to the arrest and detention of Aung San Suu Kyi by the Burmese regime on 14 May 2009; and if he will make a statement.

**Bill Rammell:** We share UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon's expression of grave concern at Aung San Suu Kyi's arrest on 14 May 2009. We are continuing to discuss the situation with our international colleagues in the UN. Once the outcome of the trial is known, we will actively consider how best to engage members of the UN Security Council further on the situation in Burma.

**20 May 2009 Keith Simpson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government have taken to seek to secure the release of Aung San Suu Kyi following her arrest and detention by the Burmese regime on 14 May 2009; and if he will make a statement.

**Bill Rammell:** The arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi on 14 May 2009 is of serious concern and shows how determined the regime are to silence her. Our embassy in Rangoon was in contact with the Burmese Ministry of Foreign Affairs immediately on 14 May. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister issued a statement on the morning of 14 May, condemning the regime's actions, The UK actively pursued a statement issued on behalf of the EU and my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary discussed with EU counterparts in Brussels on 19 May 2009 further steps the EU should take. We are continuing to discuss the situation with our international colleagues in the UN. Once the outcome of the trial is known, we will actively consider how best to engage members of the UN Security Council further on the situation in Burma.

### ***Political Prisoners***

**19 May 2009 Keith Simpson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received on the conditions in Insein Prison in Burma; and if he will make a statement.

**Bill Rammell:** On 16 February, the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Burma, Tomas Quintana, was able to visit Insein prison as part of his fact finding tour to the country. He was able to inspect certain

areas of the prison, although his visit was heavily stage-managed by the Burmese authorities. In his report of 11 March 2009 he drew attention to some prisoners being shackled and their lack of access to legal representation. We support his call for the release of all political prisoners in Insein prison and elsewhere.

## ORAL PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

### *International Development*

#### *Humanitarian Aid*

**13 May 2009 John Bercow:** What steps he has taken to increase the delivery of humanitarian aid throughout Burma. [274659]

**Mr. Gareth Thomas:** In March the Government decided to provide an additional £20 million to Burma over two years. We will continue to address cyclone recovery needs in the Irrawaddy delta, as well as expanding our programme across the rest of the country, and we will also increase our aid to Burmese refugees in Thailand.

**13 May 2009 John Bercow:** I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for that illuminating reply. As he will know, the International Development Committee's 2007 report on assistance to internally displaced people and refugees on the Thai-Burma border recommended that DFID support cross-border aid into eastern Burma, in particular for the Karen people. Will the Minister now pledge to act on that recommendation?

**Mr. Gareth Thomas:** As the hon. Gentleman knows, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has visited some of the camps to which he refers. He may also be aware that we have increased our funding to the Thailand Burma Border Consortium by some 10 per cent. this year, on top of an additional 30 per cent. last year. We have also increased our funding to other organisations that work with Burmese refugees—some £1.8 million over the next three years—so we have continued to follow through on the spirit of the recommendations of that Select Committee inquiry.

**13 May 2009 John Battle:** I thank my hon. Friend for his commitment on aid to Burma and pay tribute to the hon. Member for Buckingham (John Bercow), who has tirelessly campaigned on behalf of the Burmese people. I support the hon. Gentleman's question, because, although I welcome the money that is going to Burma, given the difficulty of the situation there must be a resolution in respect of the thousands of people who have been marooned for months and years on the border. That situation cannot be left to the Thai Government. Could we take more action internationally, in terms of humanitarian support and from without to resolve the situation in the longer term?

**Mr. Gareth Thomas:** My right hon. Friend alludes to a much wider problem with Burma: the basic lack of civil and human rights in that country and the need for major reform by the Burmese authorities. We want to see, first off, the release of all political prisoners in Burma, starting with Aung San Suu Kyi. The Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary and the International Development Secretary continue to raise that issue—the need for reform, starting with the release of Aung San Suu Kyi—at every opportunity. Most recently, we used the G20 summit to continue to press that point with a number of key partners.

**13 May 2009 Tony Baldry:** In Burma, Sudan, Darfur, Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka, we are seeing the continued shrinking of humanitarian space. DFID and other agencies are having to work around de jure Governments, not in partnership with them. Is it not time that the United Nations Security Council did more to make a reality of the theoretical concept of the responsibility to protect?

**Mr. Gareth Thomas:** The hon. Gentleman raises a significant issue—that of humanitarian space and ensuring that humanitarian organisations such as the Red Cross, and many other non-governmental organisations, have the opportunity to continue to provide humanitarian support to people in desperate situations as a result of conflicts and other disasters. One thing that the Department continues to do is to work extremely closely with the Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Assistance, the key UN body that leads on these issues. We are working with OCHA and other partners on how we can get a better international humanitarian system precisely to help on the delivery of aid, and to try to achieve the humanitarian space that the hon. Gentleman quite rightly says we must continue to champion.

## **Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

### **Global Arms Embargo**

**19 May 2009 Mr. Geoffrey Clifton-Brown (Cotswold):** Following the totally unjustified actions by the Burmese authorities in moving Aung San Suu Kyi and five of her supporters to jail, and as the authorities in Burma spent more than 50 per cent of their budget on arms and armed forces in order to suppress their own people and prop up their rotten Government, will the Foreign Secretary undertake a new initiative with the United Nations to see what further sanctions can be applied to Burma, including a worldwide arms ban?

**Bill Rammell:** We have been at the forefront of the case for sanctions against the Burmese regime. We recently saw the rollover of EU sanctions. The recent actions have been reprehensible—the Prime Minister led the way internationally last week in condemning them—and the re-arrest last week suggests that the Burmese regime were intent on finding any pretext, no matter how tenuous, to extend Aung San Suu Kyi's unlawful detention. While thousands of political prisoners are still locked up in jail, including Aung San Suu Kyi, there cannot be credible elections in Burma next year.

## **Business of The House**

### **Aung San Suu Kyi**

**14 May 2009 Tony Baldry:** A delegation of the Chinese National People's Congress is visiting the House this week, and it would be good if the House had the ability to express concern about the fact that, yesterday, Aung San Suu Kyi was arrested—yet again—and is to be put on show trial, so that the Burmese authorities can detain her for a further period.

That is the substantive point, but will the Leader of the House consider a process point, as well? Could consideration be given to introducing a system whereby, if enough right hon. and hon. Members sign an early-day motion—250 or 300, perhaps—we could vote on it as we do in the deferred votes on Wednesdays, and, by such a mechanism, express the will of the House of Commons? People such as the Chinese Government, the Burmese authorities and others would be able to see that the House of Commons has expressed its will, without our needing to hold a full debate, followed by a resolution. We in this place, unlike those in other legislatures, are rather restricted in how we express our will.

**Ms Harman:** Early-day motions are important for that reason. They allow hon. Members to put their names to motions tabled to show support for a particular position.

We are all concerned about the arrest in Burma. We have always held that the detention is illegal, and that has been confirmed by a UN working group. We cannot speculate on whether the regime were behind the US swimmer incident, but they are clearly exploiting it for their political advantage. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will find an opportunity to raise the matter again at Foreign Office questions next week.

## **DEBATES IN HOUSE OF LORDS**

### **Burma**

**19 May 2009 Lord Alton of Liverpool:** To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will next make representations to the Government of Burma about Aung San Suu Kyi.

**The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Malloch-Brown):** My Lords, the Prime Minister released a statement on the morning of Aung San Suu Kyi's arrest, condemning the actions of the regime. Our embassy in Rangoon registered the Government's deep concern with the Burmese authorities immediately on receiving news of the arrest. The Foreign Secretary has worked with his counterparts in the EU to deliver a clear message to the regime, and we are talking to UN Security Council members to consider the next steps.

**Lord Alton of Liverpool:** My Lords, I welcome what the Minister has just said. During those discussions with members of the Security Council, will a reference to the International Criminal Court be considered for some of those who have been responsible for crimes against humanity in Burma and who are responsible for putting Aung San Suu Kyi through not just 5,000 days—nearly 14 years—of house arrest but now imprisonment in Insein prison in Rangoon, which is notorious for the torture, squalor, filth and the illnesses that have occurred there? What are we doing to work with our European Union partners on targeted sanctions and to put pressure on the Government of China, who are probably in a far better position than anyone else to ensure that humanitarian concerns about Aung San Suu Kyi's well-being are to the fore?

**Lord Malloch-Brown:** My Lords, as the noble Lord knows well, Burma is not a signatory to the ICC, so a reference by the Security Council would be required. Our view is that we would not secure one because some countries on the Security Council have made it clear in previous consultations that they would oppose such an action. Yesterday conversations were initiated in Brussels by my right honourable friend the Foreign Secretary, which will lead to a statement by the EU, and last year we led in pressing for sanctions to be strengthened at the European level. As the noble Lord is aware, however, when it comes to global action through the UN, we are constrained by the position of China and others which resist further isolation of the regime.

**Baroness Rawlings:** My Lords, have Her Majesty's Government had any discussions recently with Indian and Chinese Ministers regarding Aung San Suu Kyi? If not, will they do so in Hanoi next week at the Asia-Europe meeting, bearing in mind the influence that these Ministers may have on the Burmese Government through their considerable economic investments in Burma and their total disregard for any sanctions on Burma?

**Lord Malloch-Brown:** My Lords, there are continuous and frequent discussions at Security Council level. Last year I had occasion to talk to Ministers in both countries about this issue. Unfortunately, economic competition between India and China for a greater stake in Burma makes both of them reluctant to be parties to sanctions or further isolation of the regime.

**Baroness Cox:** My Lords, does the Minister agree that, whatever pressures are brought to bear on Burma by western nations, other ASEAN nations are complicit in many respects? The leader of the Shan people said to me that Burma opened its treasure chest of jade and jewels and ASEAN nations bought into it. Therefore, will Her Majesty's Government make representations to the other ASEAN nations not to allow commercial interests to undermine political pressure for the release of Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners and the cessation of all human rights violations in Burma?

**Lord Malloch-Brown:** My Lords, following Cyclone Nargis last year ASEAN has tried to play an increasingly constructive role in the case of Burma, and a number of ASEAN leaders have come quite far out on this issue. I say again, however, that the essential dilemma in our policy on Burma is that whereas we in the West have relied on sanctions and isolation, ASEAN neighbours have preferred limited engagement. That contradiction of strategy means that the regime has survived very nicely, thank you.

**Lord Avebury:** My Lords, I am sure that the noble Lord will join me in welcoming the statement by the presidency of ASEAN expressing grave concern about the treatment of Aung San Suu Kyi in view of her fragile state of health. Does he think that it would be worth while asking the UN special envoy, Mr Thomas Quintana, to visit both Beijing and New Delhi to see whether China and India can be persuaded to line up behind that statement and to join the EU in imposing sanctions on the regime?

**Lord Malloch-Brown:** My Lords, I am glad that the noble Lord draws attention to that ASEAN statement, which confirms my point that ASEAN is moving forward on this. In fact, ASEAN leaders frequently complain to me that the Burmese compare unfavourably their openness to Western support for Aung San Suu Kyi to the position of other neighbours which are more hard-line and reluctant to come forward. As far as UN action goes, the most promising prospect is that the UN Secretary-General has made clear his intention to visit Burma in the coming months, and it now seems that the regime will accept that visit.

**Lord Dubs:** My Lords, my noble friend mentioned sanctions. Is it the Government's position that no British Government should have any trade relationships with Burma unless and until Aung San Suu Kyi is released?



**Lord Malloch-Brown:** My Lords, the British Government discourage all such trade links. Our embassy in Rangoon does not help any British company with trade and we advise against it. We also have a number of EU-wide sanctions, particularly on arms; but, as I said, the difficulty is that it has not been possible to globalise these steps.

**Lord Hannay of Chiswick:** My Lords, will the Minister confirm that the British Government continue to have a twin-track policy of maintaining and perhaps strengthening sanctions while at the same time increasing aid to non-governmental organisations which have no connection to the Burmese regime? Is not a steady increase in that aid to non-governmental organisations one way of making it clear to Burma's other neighbours that we are not seeking to destabilise the country or to punish the citizens of that country but merely to deal with an obnoxious regime?

**Lord Malloch-Brown:** My Lords, I must again thank the noble Lord, who is always able to state British policy much more elegantly than I can. He is completely right: it is a twin-track policy. It is very important to weigh against the fact that we have led the push for sanctions, and are proud of that, the fact that we are also the biggest bilateral humanitarian donor to Burma, working exclusively through NGOs and not through the Burmese Government. We think that both tracks are vitally important so that people see the sanctions for what they are—targeted at the regime and its economic interests but not intended to adversely impact the desperate lives of ordinary Burmese.

**Baroness O’Cathain:** My Lords, are the Government doing anything at all to try to dissuade British travellers from taking holidays in Burma? We have the trade sanctions, and the Minister has now told us about the aid sanctions through the NGOs, but many travellers are still going to Burma, and something should be done about it.

**Lord Malloch-Brown:** My Lords, the noble Baroness has a point. I will have a look at our FCO travel website and see what we say about Burma. I think that it makes clear the different sanctions and restrictions which are in place. For many people, however, that chance of citizen-to-citizen contact brings them home even angrier about the regime than they were when they went.

**Lord Judd:** My Lords, with its repeated commitment to the principle of human rights, does the Commonwealth have a part to play in this dreadful story? If so, what is that part, and what are we doing to ensure that it is played?

**Lord Malloch-Brown:** My Lords, Burma is not a member of the Commonwealth and it points to its history to show why that is so. In this case the Commonwealth would probably be a somewhat provocative vehicle or track to pursue.

## **EU: General Affairs and External Relations Council Statement On Burma**

**5 May 2009** The presidency announced the adoption of the EU's common position renewing restrictive measures for a further 12 months, which the Government strongly support.

EU Foreign Ministers also adopted conclusions, which the Government also welcome, expressing concern about the human rights situation; underlining the EU's commitment to promoting political, social and economic reform in Burma/Myanmar; and urging the Government of Burma/Myanmar to engage meaningfully with the UN Secretary-General's good offices mission.

## **Statement from British Prime Minister Gordon Brown about Aung San Suu Kyi**

**14 May 2009**

“I am deeply disturbed that Aung San Suu Kyi may be charged with breaching the terms of her detention. The Burmese regime is clearly intent on finding any pretext, no matter how tenuous, to extend her unlawful detention. The real injustice, the real illegality, is that she is still detained in the first place. If the

2010 elections are to have any semblance of credibility, she and all political prisoners must be freed to participate. Only then will Burma be set on the road to real democracy, stability and prosperity.”

## **David Cameron Commenting on the latest reports from Burma about Aung San Suu Kyi**

**14 May 2009**

“We are shocked by the news that Aung San Suu Kyi and her doctor have been transferred to Insein Prison and by reports that she is being denied the medical treatment she desperately needs.

“This innocent woman has been illegally detained by the Burmese authorities for the last 13 years. She has been denied her liberty, just as the Burmese people have been denied theirs.

“Her imprisonment in Insein Prison is yet another attempt to suppress democracy in Burma and shut off this courageous leader from her people.

“We call for her immediate release, for the UN and ASEAN to immediately send envoys to Burma, and for an end to this travesty of justice.”

## **Declaration of the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the arrest of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi**

**14 May 2009**

The EU deeply regrets that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the National League of Democracy, and members of her household have been arrested and charged with breaching the terms of her detention, which the United Nations had determined violates international and national law. It is especially striking that these events practically coincide with the expiry of her house arrest.

The EU strongly urges Burma/Myanmar’s authorities to release Aung San Suu Kyi and engage in an inclusive process of national reconciliation, which is essential for setting Burma/Myanmar on a genuine path to stability and prosperity and initiate a new phase in the development of the country.

## **Statement of the UN Secretary-General**

**14 May 2009**

“The Secretary-General is gravely concerned about the news that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has been moved to the Insein Prison to face criminal charges. The Secretary-General believes that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is an essential partner for dialogue in Myanmar’s national reconciliation and calls on the Government not to take any further action that could undermine this important process. As he has said repeatedly, the Secretary-General believes strongly that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all those who have a contribution to make to the future of their country must be free to be able to do so to ensure that the political process is credible.”

## **Norway Demands The Release Of Aung San Suu Kyi**

**14 May 2009**

Opposition leader and Nobel Peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi was brought to the court in Insein Prison today. In this connection, Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Støre states:

- The Norwegian government is concerned about the reports of the arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi and requests that she be immediately released. Norway has repeatedly stated that the regime in Burma must release Aung San Suu Kyi and all other political prisoners, says Støre.

- The detention of Aung San Suu Kyi is a step in the wrong direction. Today, I will instruct Norwegian representations to raise the situation with countries in the region, including China and India, as well as with the UN Secretary-General, says the Foreign Minister.

Aung San Suu Kyi has spent 13 of the past 19 years under detention, including the last six years. Her term under house arrest runs out on 27 May. It has been said that she will appear in court again on 18 May.

## **Arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi – Joint statement by Bernard Kouchner, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, and Rama Yade, Minister of State responsible for Foreign Affairs and Human Rights**

**14 May 2009**

France utterly condemns the arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi and her transfer to Insein prison.

This decision is even more unacceptable in that the Nobel Peace Prizewinner's health has deteriorated over the past several days. We reiterate our condemnation of her doctor's arrest last week.

France holds the Burmese authorities responsible for the conditions under which Aung San Suu Kyi is being detained and for any further deterioration in her state of health. Her release is becoming more urgent than ever.

France again condemns the Burmese authorities' repeated human rights violations. She calls on the Burmese government to release unconditionally Aung San Suu Kyi and the leaders of the Burmese opposition and begin a necessary dialogue with them, the only way to confer on the elections scheduled in 2010 a legitimacy and credibility which, in the current circumstances, they totally lack.

We are keen to discuss the political and human rights situation in Burma with our European Union partners at Monday's General Affairs and External Relations Council meeting.

## **Open Letter to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi by Prime Minister Gordon Brown**

**18 May 2009**

Dear Daw Suu

The Burmese regime continues to resist the righteous clamour from your people and from the international community for your release. As you and the Burmese people are denied your democratic rights and freedoms the only way for me to communicate with you is through this open letter.

I wanted to publish it to let you know that you are not alone - that people are standing with you not just here in Britain, but everywhere that democracy and freedom are upheld.

We are heartened by your tremendous courage, your inspirational leadership, and by the knowledge that no oppression is so great that the forces of liberty cannot prevail. The history books are full of stories of injustice. But they are also full of stories of hope, resistance and the victories that satisfy the deep human yearning to be free. I am confident that your story will stand prominently among those that show that from the deepest wells of despair can come the greatest triumphs of human endeavour.

Inspired by and in solidarity with you, the British Government will continue to work with our international partners to support Burma's path to stability, peace and economic recovery. The UN Security Council has set out the steps necessary for a return to democracy in Burma. I have worked with our partners in the EU to maintain sanctions that are tough and targeted against those individuals who wish to deny the Burmese people their rights. And I will continue to press your neighbours in Asia to work even harder for your release and that of all political prisoners in Burma.

My message to the Burmese regime is clear the people of Burma have suffered nearly half a century of



conflict and isolation, it is time to embrace a new beginning. So I say to the Generals who imprison you: the time for a transition to democracy is now. By excluding you from that future, by silencing and imprisoning you, they condemn your country to further decades of poverty and exclusion.

Your continued imprisonment reminds all of us that we should not take for granted the institution of democracy for which you campaign. That we should not rest until you are able to play your rightful role in a free and secure Burma. And that our place is alongside all those who face imprisonment, repression and despair in their battle to build democracy, confront poverty and protect human rights. Daw Suu I want you to know: you are not alone.

Yours sincerely  
Gordon Brown

## **MP Calls For Support of Real Burmese Leader**

**20 May 2009**

Julie Morgan the MP for Cardiff North is calling for renewed support for the detained elected leader of Burma Aung San Suu Kyi who has spent thirteen of the last nineteen years either in jail or under house arrest and who has recently been arrested and is undergoing a fresh trial under charges made against her by the military junta running the country. The trial began on Monday 18th May.

The new trial is being held under tight security, inside a prison in Burma. The charges relate to an incident when American John Yettany swam across the river to the waterside home of Suu Kyi whilst she was under house arrest. Mr Yettany is also facing charges.

Many in the West believe that this trial is being used as an excuse to make sure that Suu Kyi is either still under house arrest or in prison for the Burmese elections next year.

Julie said, "I along with many others have campaigned for Suu Kyi's release from house arrest and prison for many years. She is the freely elected leader of her country, imprisoned because the unelected military in Burma did not approve of the result of free elections. Under international law, the Military Government has no legal right to govern, and no moral right to govern under any law.

It is no surprise to me or anyone who has followed this situation to see the incident of Mr Yettany swimming to Suu Kyi's home used as an excuse to put her on trial before next year's elections. The result of these elections is only valid, in the Military Government's eyes, if they agree with what they want.

I ask everybody who cares about democracy to do what they can. Write to your MP, write to Government Ministers, support Amnesty's International's campaign, support the Burma Campaign; do everything you can to show that people care deeply about this issue and want to see a free democracy brought to Burma.

We want to see these changes happen bloodlessly. With support from our Government, every European Government, the EU and the United Nations, we can work towards making this change. We all want Suu Kyi to be fit and well enough to see it herself."

## **EPCB calls for UNSG to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners in Burma**

**20 May 2009**

167 parliamentarians from 16 European countries, members of the European Parliamentary Caucus on Burma (EPCB), today called on UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon to personally secure the release of the opposition leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who is on trial after being accused of breaching the terms of her house arrest. The EPCB have written the letter in support of the Free Burma Political Prisoners Now Campaign, which collected more than 400,000 signatures calling for Ban Ki-Moon to take Action.

According to the letter, Ban Ki-Moon should negotiate the implementation of previous UN calls for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners in Burma. The United Nations Security Council, General Assembly, and Human Rights Council have all called for her release. This March the UN ruled the detention of the opposition leader as illegal not only under international law, but also under Burmese law.

In direct defiance of the UN, the regime is seeking to prolong the detention of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. In further defiance of the UN, the regime is continuing the systematic torture, long-term imprisonment, and transfers to remote prisons, and denial of healthcare on the country's pro-democracy activists.

"As Secretary General of the United Nations, it is essential you show strong leadership, not only for Burma's political prisoners, but also for the credibility of the United Nations and your good offices." the letter says.

The Free Burma Political Prisoners Now petition campaign is organized by the Burmese exile organizations, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners and Forum for Democracy in Burma and can be signed at [www.fbppn.net](http://www.fbppn.net).

The European Parliamentary Caucus on Burma was founded in June 2008 to raise awareness on Burma in Europe and promote human rights and democracy in Burma.

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

**22 May 2009**

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.

## **Statement by South African Government on the arrest of the Leader of the National League for Democracy in Myanmar, Aung San Suu Kyi**

**22 May 2009**

Pretoria- The South African Government joins the international community in expressing grave concern about the arrest of the Leader of the National League for Democracy, Nobel Peace Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi.

It is with regret that the South African Government learnt of the new charges against Aung San Suu Kyi's less than two weeks before her house arrest was due to end. The South African Government also took note of the recent reports on Ms Suu Kyi's poor health and fears that the arrest may worsen her condition.

The South African Government calls on the Authorities in Myanmar to release Ms Suu Kyi immediately.

For the general elections due to be held in Myanmar in 2010 to be as viewed free and fair, the process should be all inclusive and for this reason, the Military Government of Myanmar is urged to release political prisoners including Aung San Suu Kyi in order to participate in the electoral process.

The South African government reiterates its position that the solution to the current challenges facing the people of Myanmar lies in a negotiated political solution between the government and the opposition, culminating in all inclusive free and fair elections.

# **Statement by the US President on Aung San Suu Kyi's House Arrest and Detention**

## **THE WHITE HOUSE**

**26 May 2009**

I call on the Burmese government to release National League for Democracy Secretary General and Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi from detention immediately and unconditionally. I strongly condemn her house arrest and detention, which have also been condemned around the world. The United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has issued opinions affirming that the detention of Aung San Suu Kyi dating back to 2003 is arbitrary, unjustified, and in contravention of Burma's own law, and the United Nations Security Council reaffirmed on May 22 their concern about the situation and called for the release of all political prisoners.

Aung San Suu Kyi's continued detention, isolation, and show trial based on spurious charges cast serious doubt on the Burmese regime's willingness to be a responsible member of the international community. This is an important opportunity for the government in Burma to demonstrate that it respects its own laws and its own people, is ready to work with the National League for Democracy and other ethnic and opposition groups, and is prepared to move toward reconciliation.

By her actions, Aung San Suu Kyi has represented profound patriotism, sacrifice, and the vision of a democratic and prosperous Burma. It is time for the Burmese government to drop all charges against Aung San Suu Kyi and unconditionally release her and her fellow political prisoners. Such an action would be an affirmative and significant step on Burma's part to begin to restore its standing in the eyes of the United States and the world community and to move toward a better future for its people.

Please see the link below for more statements from around the world calling for the release of Aung San Suu Kyi:

<http://www.burmacampaign.org.uk/index.php/burma/news/statements-calling-for-the-release-of-aung-san-suu-kyi>

## **EARY DAY MOTIONS**

**EDM 1452**                      **POLITICAL PRISONERS IN BURMA**  
**07.05.2009**

Bercow, John

That this House welcomes the Free Burma's Political Prisoners Now campaign being organised by former political prisoners from Burma; congratulates the organisers on securing 250,000 signatures in support of the campaign; notes that more than 2,100 political prisoners languish in Burma's gaols, having committed no crime other than to want freedom and democracy, or to deliver aid to victims of Cyclone Nargis; expresses deep concern that political prisoners are deliberately being denied medical treatment; supports the call for UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to make it his personal priority to secure the release of all of Burma's political prisoners; and calls on the Government to do all it can to assist the UN Secretary General in this objective.

**EDM 1490**                      **AUNG SAN SUU KYI**  
**14.05.2009**

Clwyd, Ann

That this House deplores the decision of Burma's regime to move the democracy leader and Nobel Peace Prize winner, Aung San Suu Kyi, to Insein prison to face charges relating to an incident involving a US citizen who broke into her compound last week; is dismayed by her unlawful detention under house

arrest for 13 of the 19 years since the military junta refused to recognise the 1990 landslide victory of her party, the National League for Democracy; is concerned that this incident could give the military junta a convenient reason to extend her unlawful detention, which was meant to end shortly; is concerned about reports of a deterioration in Ms Suu Kyi's health; calls on the international community to do more to secure the release of political prisoners in Burma and to disregard the results of next year's elections if they are not free and fair; and applauds the European Union for extending its sanctions against the regime, including an arms embargo, a travel ban on Burma's leaders and a freezing of their assets in Europe.

**EDM 1336: HUMAN RIGHTS IN BURMA**

**23.04.2009**

Bercow, John  
Signe by 74

**EDM 670: THAILAND TREATMENT OF ROHINGYA REFUGEES**

**03.02.2009**

Signed by 52 MPs

**EDM 671: CLOSURE OF CHURCHES IN RANGOON**

**03.02.2009**

Signed by 117 MPs

**EDM 343: UNITED NATIONS AND POLITICAL PRISONERS IN BURMA**

**17.02.2009**

Signed by 177 MPs

To view the whole list of EDMs, please visit:  
<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/Search.aspx>

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**CAMPAIGNING  
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
AND DEMOCRACY IN BURMA**