

Support for a United Nations Commission of Inquiry into war crimes and crimes against humanity in Burma

“Given the gross and systematic nature of human rights violations in Myanmar over a period of many years, and the lack of accountability, there is an indication that those human rights violations are the result of a state policy that involves authorities in the executive, military and judiciary at all levels. According to consistent reports, the possibility exists that some of these human rights violations may entail categories of crimes against humanity or war crimes under the terms of the Statute of the International Criminal Court. The mere existence of this possibility obliges the Government of Myanmar to take prompt and effective measures to investigate these facts. There have clearly been cases where it has been necessary to establish responsibility, but this has not been done. Given this lack of accountability, UN institutions may consider the possibility to establish a commission of inquiry with a specific fact finding mandate to address the question of international crimes.”

Tomas Ojea Quintana, UN Special Rapporteur on Myanmar, March 2010

“Failing to act on accountability in Myanmar will embolden the perpetrators of international crimes and further postpone long-overdue justice.”

Tomas Ojea Quintana, UN Special Rapporteur on Myanmar, 18 October 2010

“Professor Quintana has spoken of the need for a commission of inquiry into human rights violations in Burma. I support his call for such a commission..”

Aung San Suu Kyi, 22 June 2011

Background

Since 1992 the United Nations General Assembly has been calling on the dictatorship in Burma to respect the Geneva Conventions.

In 1998, Rajsoomer Lalah, then UN Special Rapporteur on Myanmar, described human rights abuses in Burma as so numerous and consistent that they were the ‘result of policy at the highest level, entailing political and legal responsibility’.

In March 2010 Tomas Ojea Quintana, current UN Special Rapporteur on Myanmar, called for the establishment of a UN Commission of Inquiry into war crimes and crimes against humanity in Burma.

The call for a UN Inquiry is also supported by Burma’s democracy movement.

Countries supporting a UN Commission of Inquiry into war crimes and crimes against humanity in Burma

European Union Members

“The proposed Commission of Inquiry would certainly help Burma/Myanmar in the process of the needed transition to democracy.”





Slovak Republic Ministry of Foreign Affairs – August 2010

-  Belgium
-  Czech Republic
-  Denmark
-  Estonia
-  France
-  Hungary
-  Ireland
-  Latvia
-  Lithuania
-  Netherlands
-  Slovakia
-  United Kingdom

Rest of the world

“I would like to underscore the American commitment to seek accountability for the human rights violations that have occurred in Burma by working to establish an international Commission of Inquiry through close consultations with our friends, allies, and other partners at the United Nations.”

U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton - 28th October 2010

-  Australia
-  Canada
-  New Zealand
-  United States of America

Support from organisations in Burma

Supporting organisations include:

- National League for Democracy
- National Democratic Front
- 88 Generation Students
- Committee Representing the People’s Parliament
- United Nationalities Alliance
- Women’s League of Burma
- Assistance Association for Political Prisoners – Burma
- All Burma Monks Alliance
- Burma Lawyers Council
- Federation of Trade Unions – Burma
- Karen National Union
- Burma Partnership
- All Burma Federation of Student Unions
- Burma Fund – UN Office

Support from other organisations and individuals

European Parliament
The Elders
Human Rights Watch
International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)
Amnesty International
Open Society Institute
Nobel Women's Initiative
ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Myanmar Caucus
AVAAZ
International Trade Union Confederation
Trades Union Congress
Physicians for Human Rights
International Center for Transitional Justice
International Bar Association

The following Nobel Laureates:

Mairead Maguire
Betty Williams
Rigoberto Menchu Tum
Jody Williams
Shirin Ebadi
President Jose Romas Horta
The Dalai Lama
President Mikhail Gorbachev
Wangari Maathai
John Hume
President Kim Dae-jung
Adolfo Perez Esquivel
Archbishop Desmond Tutu
Ellie Wiesel
Amartya Sen

Leading Jurists:

Judge Richard Goldstone (South Africa)
Judge Patricia Wald (United States)
Judge Pedro Nikken (Venezuela)
Judge Ganzorig Gombosuren (Mongolia)
Sir Geoffrey Nice (United Kingdom)

In December 2009, 442 Parliamentarians worldwide signed a letter supporting a UN Commission of Inquiry.

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