

Aung San Suu Kyi remains under house arrest for another year

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International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

PRESS RELEASE

BURMA

Paris, May 28, 2007. The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) strongly condemns the decision of the Burmese military junta to extend the house arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi, 1991 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and leader of the Burmese opposition. FIDH, calls today the Burmese authorities to put an end to the harsh repression of political opponents and to immediately release all political prisoners.

On 25 May 2007, the Burmese military regime announced its decision to extend, once again arbitrarily and for yet another year, the house arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi. The Secretary-General of the National League for Democracy (NLD), the main opposition party in Burma, has already spent more than 11 years under house arrest since 1989, although she has never been charged with a crime. Her last arrest dates back to May 2003.

Despite the repeated appeals for her release from the international community, including the appeals of Ms. Louise Arbour, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and 59 former Heads of States and Governments, the Burmese regime has taken a step further in its determination to neutralise the eminent opposition leader.

Over the past year, the Burmese military junta has not undertaken any action in favor of national reconciliation. Indeed, in September 2006, the regime publicly declared that it will never engage in discussions with the NLD and ethnic minorities. Instead, NLD leaders and democracy activists have increasingly been subjected to harassment including arbitrary arrests and restrictions on freedom of expression and assembly.

The reform process proposed in the road map and the work of the National Convention have produced absolutely no concrete results and the military campaign in the ethnic areas of eastern Burma is having a terrible effect on human rights with 27 000 internally displaced people in 2006 alone in the region.

FIDH urges the Burmese authorities :

- to release Aung San Suu Kyi and the other political prisoners, estimated at 1200 by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the

situation of human rights in Myanmar (Report submitted at the HRC, February 2007), who are arbitrarily detained and to guarantee their physical and psychological integrity.

- To put an immediate end to military operations and attacks against civilian populations in ethnic areas;
- To allow the immediate, safe, and unhindered access to all parts of the country for international humanitarian organizations to provide assistance to the most vulnerable groups;
- To undertake a meaningful, transparent and inclusive dialogue with all political parties and ethnic groups in order to achieve a genuine process of national reconciliation.

Moreover, FIDH urges, once again, the international community to take all necessary measures, including economic pressure, in order to promote the effective protection of the rights of the Burmese people and the strengthening of the rule of law.

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