

1 October 2007

Delegates, Member and Observer States  
United Nations Human Rights Council

Your Excellency:

Civil society organisations concerned about the situation in Myanmar welcome the decision of the United Nations Human Rights Council to convene a special session to take action on the crisis there. The special session provides an important opportunity not only to ameliorate a severe and deteriorating human rights situation but to prove the Council's value as an international forum for the protection of human rights.

In order to achieve these ambitious objectives, we urge the Council to adopt a resolution containing the following points:

1. Demand that the Government of Myanmar recognise the internationally protected human rights of Myanmar's citizens and take immediate action to ensure their protection. Such action must include, inter alia:
  - a. An immediate end to all violent attacks on peaceful and democratic protesters;
  - b. An immediate end to intimidation, arrest, and detention of opposition figures; and,
  - c. An immediate release of all political prisoners, both those detained during the current crisis and those already detained before the current crisis began.
  
2. Establish an experts panel led by the Special Rapporteur on Myanmar and consisting of other special procedure mandate holders (e.g. as the Special Rapporteurs on extreme poverty, freedom of religion, and freedom of expression) and persons with relevant expertise. Instruct the Special Rapporteur and any other available members of the experts panel travel to Myanmar immediately in order to:
  - a. Evaluate and report upon the Government's compliance with the demands of this resolution and with all relevant United Nations resolutions (e.g. resolutions of the General Assembly and the former Commission on Human Rights);
  - b. Detail any ongoing human rights violations (e.g. freedom of association, expression, religion; arbitrary detention, summary executions);
  - c. Report upon the broader human rights situation in Myanmar, including any relevant causes of the current crisis;

- d. Develop recommendations regarding the specific steps that should be taken to address violations of both civil and political and economic, social and cultural rights;
  - e. Identify measures for the Council to take in support of implementation of the recommendations, with a view specifically to preventing further violence; and,
  - f. Report to the Council as expeditiously as possible, and in any case before the second part of the sixth session.
3. Demand that the Government of Myanmar extend all courtesies to the experts panel as they conduct their mission, as well as to any other United Nations human rights missions, including assuring their unfettered freedom of movement and freedom to meet with the persons of their choice.
4. Demand that the Government of Myanmar report to the Council on its implementation of the demands of this resolution, the demands and recommendations of all relevant United Nations resolutions (e.g. resolutions of the General Assembly and the former Commission on Human Rights), and any recommendations of the experts panel, with a report to be presented at the same time as the report of the experts panel.
5. Instruct the President of the Council to keep the members and observers of the Council informed as to progress in implementation of this resolution on no less than weekly basis.
6. Instruct the President of the Council to keep the principal organs of the United Nations seized as to the actions of the Council regarding Burma, the reports received by the Council, and progress in implementation of this resolution.
7. Call upon the members of the United Nations to recall the “responsibility to protect” and to take all appropriate action to ensure that the demands of this resolution are met expeditiously and in full.

Respectfully,

Access Info Europe (Spain)

Action for Democracy in Vietnam

African Democracy Forum (Kenya)

Al Haq (Palestine)

The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty (USA)

Better World Campaign (USA)

Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (Egypt)

Center for Media Freedom & Responsibility (Philippines)

Citizens against Corruption (Kyrgyzstan)

CIVICUS (South Africa)  
Conectas Direitos Humanos (Brazil)  
Council for a Community of Democracies (USA)  
Democracy Coalition Project (USA)  
Open Society Institute (USA)  
Forum Asia (Thailand)  
Foundation for Human Rights in Cuba  
Freedom House (USA)  
Global Network for Good Governance (Cameroon)  
Legal Aid Society (Uzbekistan)  
International Federation for Human Rights (France)  
International Institute for Vietnam  
Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (Philippines)  
US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea  
Vietnam Committee on Human Rights  
World Hmong People's Congress (USA)

CC: Ambassador Doru-Romulus Costea, President, United Nations Human Rights  
Council  
Honorable Louise Arbour, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights