

EXTERNAL

AI Index: ASA 16/26/96

7 June 1996

Further information on EXTRA 73/96 (ASA 16/14/96, 21 May 1996) and follow-ups (ASA 16/16/96, 22 May; ASA 16/19/96, 24 May; ASA 16/22/96, 29 May) - Fear of torture / Legal concern

MYANMAR Release of 154 detainees confirmed, at least 27 still detained

new names: Nan Khin Htwe Myint (f); Ko Saw Nay Win, NLD youth; U Nay Oo; U Han Than Myint; U Thein Tin; Maung Myo Nyunt; Ko Myo Khin; Ko Tin Htut; Ko Soe Myint Htein; Ko Tin Maung Oo; Ko Zaw Win; Ko Nay Win; U Kyaw Min; U Moe Thu; U Soe Thein, U Khin Maung Win

Amnesty International welcomes the confirmed releases of 154 people among the 297 National League for Democracy (NLD) members who had been arrested in a massive sweep of the opposition beginning on 20 May 1996. Although there are believed to have been more releases, Amnesty International has obtained the names of 27 people who are believed to remain in custody and cannot confirm how many of the remaining 116 people have been freed.

However, Amnesty International is concerned at reports that the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC, Myanmar's military government) has banned the weekend public gatherings at the compound of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. She had previously been allowed to address people on Saturdays and Sundays with relatively little interference from the authorities. Amnesty International is also extremely concerned by reports that the SLORC may be preparing to take further hardline action against the NLD, including the arrests of its members. U Aung Shwe, NLD Chairman, has reportedly been summoned by Military Intelligence personnel and told that if the NLD continues with plans to draft its own constitution, it would be banned as a legal political party. Reports in official press of 7 June indicate that if the NLD is deemed an "illegal association", NLD members would be arrested and sent to Insein Prison, where hundreds of other political prisoners are serving long sentences. Amnesty International regards the SLORC's actions to suppress peaceful dissent as a violation the right to freedom of expression, as proclaimed in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Among those released are Dr Aung Khin Sint, NLD MP and former prisoner of conscience (see update of 22 May, ASA 16/16/96), and nine NLD MPs from Ayeyarwady (Irrawaddy) Division (see update 29 May, ASA 16/22/96); charges against the nine were apparently dropped. However, U Kyaw Min, who is also an MP-elect from Ayeyarwady Division, remains in detention. U Nay Oo, MP-elect from Rangoon Division; U Soe Thein, MP-elect from Waw 2, Bago (Pegu) Division; U Han Than Myint, MP-elect from Sagaing Division, Nan Khin Htwe Myint (f), MP-elect from Hpa-an, Kayin (Karen) Division; U Thein Tin, NLD member, U Win Htein, NLD spokesman and former prisoner of conscience; U Moe Thu, journalist and former prisoner of conscience; and U Aye Win, personal assistant to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, are all still held. U Win Htein was reportedly scheduled to be tried on 5 June; however Amnesty International has no further information about the trial (see update 29 May 1996, ASA 16/22/96).

Ma Win Htay (previously Win Win Htay); Ko Min Wai (previously Ko May Wai); Ko Htay Win; Ko Myint Htay; Ko Min Min; Ko Aye Htun; Ko Myo Khin; Ko Kyaw Zaw; Ko Thein Lin; and U Po Aye are also still held (see update 24 May, ASA 16/19/96). Maung Myo Nyunt, Ko Tin Htut, Ko Soe Myint Htein, Ko Tin Maung Oo, Ko Zaw Win, Ko Nay Win, and Ko Saw Nay Win all NLD youth members, are also believed to

remain in detention. U Khin Maung Win, an NLD member, is also thought to still be detained.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or in your own language:

- welcoming the release of some 145 NLD members, and urging the SLORC to release those who remain in detention;
- calling on the SLORC not to rearrest any of those NLD members recently released;
- urging the SLORC to uphold the right to freedom of expression, as proclaimed in Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

APPEALS TO:

1. Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman
State Law and Order Restoration Council
c/o Director of Defence Services Intelligence (DDSI)
Ministry of Defence, Signal Pagoda Road
Dagon Post Office
Yangon, Union of Myanmar

Telegrams: General Than Shwe, Yangon, Myanmar

Telexes: 21316

Salutation: Dear General

2. Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt, Secretary 1
State Law and Order Restoration Council
c/o Director of Defence Services Intelligence (DDSI)
Ministry of Defence, Signal Pagoda Road
Dagon Post Office
Yangon, Union of Myanmar

Telegrams: Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt, Yangon, Myanmar

Salutation: Dear General

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Myanmar accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 7 July 1996.