

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## Public Statement

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### Myanmar: Detention of three student leaders

Today, Amnesty International expressed strong concern at the detention of three student leaders in Yangon. The organization urged the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC, Myanmar's military government) to immediately and unconditionally release them from detention, and not to penalize them or anyone else for peaceful political activities.

U Htay Kywe, Ko Ko Gyi, and Paw U Tun aka Min Ko Naing, were detained by police Special Branch after dawn on 27 September 2006. They are reportedly held in Special Branch offices and at the Ministry of Home Affairs, and are not known to have been charged with any offence.

The group were among the few remaining leaders of the political opposition still at liberty in Myanmar, where the majority of senior opposition politicians are imprisoned on account of their peaceful activities.

Amnesty International is also concerned that they are at risk of torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and that they are being held incommunicado without charge, in violation of Myanmar law. The organization urged that pending their release, they only be held in an official place of detention, and are granted immediate access to lawyers, family and medical treatment.

#### Background

More than 1,150 political prisoners are in detention in Myanmar.

U Htay Kywe, c. 41, Ko Ko Gyi, 44, and Paw U Tun, aka Min Ko Naing, 43, were student leaders during 1988 demonstrations against 26 years of military rule. They were released in 2004 and 2005 after up to 15 years imprisonment for their role in organizing peaceful student protests. All have had health problems during their detention, which included extended periods of time in solitary confinement. Since their release they have been subjected to heavy surveillance. Their movements have been reported on and heavily criticized in the state controlled press.

The situation in Myanmar is scheduled to be discussed at the United Nations Security Council tomorrow. After Myanmar was placed on the Security Council's agenda the authorities alleged in the official press that opposition groups are involved in plots to incite unrest in the country.