

# MYANMAR

## **Dr. Aung Khin Sint, Member of Parliament: Detained for peaceful political dissent**



right to freedom of expression, union and association, and calls for his immediate and unconditional release.

Dr. Aung Khin Sint is among many MPs elect and members of the NLD who have been repeatedly detained and harassed by the ruling authorities of

Myanmar for their peaceful political

opposition. Since 1990 Dr. Aung Khin

has been detained four times in

connection with his peaceful political

involvement in opposition politics.

Amnesty International is concerned that

on each occasion his conditions of his

detention have violated internationally

recognised standards of detention and

human rights. In both October 1990 and May

1996 he was held for several weeks in

detention, acknowledged short-term detention

of a large number of other MPs-elect.

Dr. Aung Khin Sint was detained as a prisoner of

conscience between 1993 and 1995 for

writing letters to other MPs-elect. In May

1996 he was held with around 262

other NLD supporters and MPs-elect who

were detained in order to prevent the

party from holding its first congress.

If the majority were released, at least

Dr. Aung Khin Sint, 62, a medical doctor, writer and prominent elected Member of Parliament for the National League for Democracy (NLD), the largest opposition party in Myanmar, has been detained since July 1996. He is believed to be serving a sentence of 20 years' imprisonment in connection with his peaceful political activities, and is currently held in Prison. Amnesty International believes that he is a prisoner of conscience, detained for his exercise of

nine other MPs-elect who were arrested during the May 1996 crack-down and remain in detention.

MPs-elect were threatened both during their election and after their release about political beliefs and involvement in the party. Pressure was continues to be put on them to resign from their elected positions. MPs-elect have been threatened with job loss, harm to themselves and to family members, should they not resign from their elected positions.

At the end of 1996 the MPs-elect had been denied official press. Aung Khin Sint's resignation from elected office was reported after his release from short-term detention in June 1996.

#### Conditional Release

Dr. Aung Khin Sint was detained at his home in Yangon on 3 July 1996, and was held for some time in incommunicado detention. It is thought that he has been being held to date.

Dr. Aung Khin Sint was sentenced with his assistant, U Aung Min, to 20 years' imprisonment in October 1993 in connection with protests and letters he had sent to fellow MPs. The letters were sent during a national convention to draw attention to a constitution was being

20 year prison term to which he was sentenced as a prisoner of conscience in 1993. He served only 16 months of this sentence before being released by a presidential decree in February 1995. Authorities have reportedly justified Aung Khin Sint's current imprisonment on the grounds that he continued to be politically active after his release from prison. On his release he, like many other political prisoners, was reportedly made to sign a written statement undertaking not to engage in political activities.

Amnesty International believes that such restrictions on political activities violate the rights to freedom of expression and are being used by authorities to intimidate citizens of Myanmar from peaceful dissent and political activity.

years' imprisonment for writing

and presented comments and NLD material about the progress of the convention. He was a delegate to the convention himself. Authorities described his letters and leaflets as "threatening" and stated that Dr. Aung Khin had "unscrupulously engaged in

political agitation...with intent to undermine the National Convention."

At his trial Dr. Aung Khin Sint was asked "Am I guilty of... NLD elected representative... questions put forward by... members? When... explained the... of democracy... the Mingala... at NLD... and told them... is the... of the NLD? That paper... was... published and sold by the... which the members... had bought and... They are not threatened... papers... headquarters..."

Amnesty International believes that Dr. Aung Khin Sint's October 1993 sentence to... years' imprisonment violated the right of freedom of opinion and expression, at he was then, as now, a prisoner of conscience imprisoned for his peaceful... dissent.

Dr. Aung Khin Sint was sentenced under an... legislation which is frequently used... citizens exercising their legitimate... to free expression, free association... peaceful political activities. In his... the prosecutor found him guilty... publications law because... received official permission... letters. Dr. Aung Khin Sint's... to his assistant to

mail material to addresses in a list of national convention delegates' details was considered by the prosecutor to be an... of State security legislation. Aung Khin Sint was also sentenced... vaguely worded emergency legislation frequently used in political... cases, because the prosecutor found that his letters had been intended to "disrupt the morality or behaviour of the people or some of the people, or the delegates of the National Convention"

Dr. Aung Khin Sint was released from... Prison on 4 February 1995, when... sentence was commuted under a... of the criminal law which allows... of Myanmar to suspend... sentence at any... His release was... broadcast on... television in... Than... his assistant, is believed to remain in... tion.

... Dr Aung Khin... was the National League for... (NLD) member of... ment-elect for Mingala Taungnyunt... constituency in Yangon, the capital of... mar, a seat which he... with an... majority in the 19... elections. In... 83, when the... was formed, he... me a... of the NLD's core... making body, the Central... tive Committee. He had trained as... rator in Yangon and the United

Kingdom, and was deputy director of the health education department in the Ministry of Health before his imprisonment in the 1988 pro-democracy movement led to his dismissal from government. He headed the Burma Medical Association

and the national health workers' union.

Dr. Aung Khin Sint wrote a letter in the name of the Burma Medical Association to protest an incident on 10 August 1988, when the army opened fire on protesters in the compound of the main hospital in Yangon and killed six people. Dr. Aung Khin Sint is a distinguished writer who has been awarded the National Literary Prize. He is married with children.

**PLEASE WRITE, URGING**

1. **THE IMMEDIATE AND UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF DR AUNG KHIN SINT AND**
2. **THAT CITIZENS OF MYANMAR ARE GUARANTEED THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF OPINION, EXPRESSION AND ASSEMBLY AS GUARANTEED BY THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, TO:**

1. **General Than Shwe**, Chairman, State Law and Order Restoration Council, c/o Ministry of Defence, Signal Pagoda road, Yangon, Union of Myanmar

2. **Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt**, Secretary 1, State Law and Order Restoration Council (address as above)

**Please send copies of your letters to the Myanmar Embassy in your country.**