

EXTERNAL

AI Index: ASA 16/19/96

24 May 1996

Further information on EXTRA 73/96 (ASA 16/14/96, 21 May 1996) and follow-up (ASA 16/16/96, 22 May) - Fear of torture / Legal concern / Prisoners of conscience

MYANMAR Over 200 pro-democracy activists now detained

New Names: Win Win Htay
 Ko Htay Win
 Ko Myint Htay
 Ko Min Min
 Ko Aye Htun
 Ko May Wai
 Ko Myo Khin
 Ko Kyaw Zaw
 Ko Thein Lin
 U Po Aye

Latest reports indicate that the total number of arrests of members of the National League for Democracy has risen to some 220 people over the last four days. Amnesty International is particularly concerned to learn of the arrest of nine NLD youth members (first nine people named above), given that young detainees are at a higher risk of ill-treatment in custody. Students and other young people were at the forefront of the pro-democracy movement which emerged in Myanmar in 1988.

Win Win Htay, Ko Htay Win, Ko Myint Htay, Ko Min Min, Ko Aye Htun, Ko May Wai, Ko Myo Khin, Ko Kyaw Zaw, Ko Thein Lin (the latter together with his father U Po Aye, an NLD member), were all taken from their homes in Yangon (Rangoon) on the evening of 23 May to an unknown location. Amnesty International is concerned that like the other NLD activists who have been arrested, they are being held in incommunicado detention.

According to reports, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC, Myanmar's military authorities) stated publicly on 23 May that the activists are being held for questioning and are not in fact imprisoned. The SLORC also stated that they were being treated well. The reason given for their detention was that they had taken a "confrontational stance" with regards to the SLORC. It is unclear from government statements whether the activists will be released shortly or whether they will continue to be detained.

Amnesty International considers all the detained activists, including those named above, to be prisoners of conscience who should be immediately and unconditionally released.

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

- seeking assurances that the treatment of the nine NLD youth members (naming some or all) and U Po Aye conforms to international standards and that they are being given proper access to family, lawyers of their own choice and medical personnel;
- seeking information about the whereabouts of the ten and the exact charges against them;
- urging that they, and all other NLD activists detained in recent days, be immediately and unconditionally released as prisoners of conscience, detained in violation of their rights to freedom of opinion and association.

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 22 June 1996.