

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Media Briefing

AI Index: ASA 16/022/2007 (Public)
News Service No: 191
4 October 2007

Amnesty International's global day of public action for the people of Myanmar

Secretary General Irene Khan to lead march in London

Amnesty International today announced that a global day of public action in support of the people of Myanmar will be held on 6 October.

Amnesty International's Secretary General Irene Khan will lead the march in London. Other marches have been organized in many countries around the world including in Mongolia, Malaysia, Thailand, Austria, Belgium, France, Ireland, the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the US.

"Images of last week's brutal crackdown on peaceful protestors must not be quickly forgotten. The Myanmar authorities must immediately release all of those who were arrested last week, as well as all prisoners of conscience held since before the recent events," said Amnesty International.

"With communications greatly hampered into and out of Myanmar making it more difficult to monitor the human rights situation, international outcry is even more essential to give a message to the Myanmar authorities that the world is still watching the situation in Myanmar."

In London the march will take place as follows:

Date: 6 October 2007

Time: 11:00 – 14:00

11:00 – Meet by Tate Britain in London

11:30 – Set off on march

12:00 – Photocall on Westminster Bridge

12:20 – Photocall at Downing Street

12:45 – Trafalgar Square for speeches, chanting and prayers

14:00 – Ends

For more information, or to arrange an interview, please contact

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Background:

Reports emerging from Myanmar (Burma) say that mass arrests continue. A week after the violent crackdown on peaceful demonstrations, military trucks with mounted loudspeakers have patrolled the city warning: "We have photos. We are going to make arrests!" Raids on homes and monasteries continue to be reported amidst widespread fear. In central Yangon, random searches for cameras and mobile phones have led to occasional arrests of people who carry such equipment, according to reports.

It remains extremely difficult for anyone to confirm details about who has been arrested, where they are held, why and under what circumstances. This uncertainty is partly as a consequence of restrictions on Internet and phone connectivity, partly a result from the authorities efforts to spread fear.

Amnesty International believes that at least 1,000 people were arrested in Yangon alone immediately following the brutal crackdown, the majority of them monks. Arrests were also reported from towns and cities across the country. This is in addition to at least 150 other persons arrested in August at the onset of the protests. Numerous key figures in the National League for Democracy, the main opposition party, and other activists are among those arrested.

To date, the authorities have acknowledged 10 deaths, including a Japanese video journalist. However, Amnesty International fears that the actual number of fatalities is far higher.

Last week, security forces in Myanmar raided numerous monasteries and attacked peaceful demonstrators, firing live bullets as well as tear gas and beating protesters with batons to end a wave of peaceful protests calling for reduced commodity prices and democratic reform.

Public Document

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