

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

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## **Myanmar: Global demonstrations to support peaceful protestors**

Thousands of Amnesty International members across the globe are demonstrating to send a message to the Myanmar authorities to immediately release the thousands of people recently detained for peaceful protest. The Myanmar authorities must also deal with the long-standing human rights concerns, and immediately release all prisoners of conscience, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

"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 Secretary General Irene Khan who is leading a demonstration in London.

"Information from Myanmar is being restricted by the regime, making it more difficult to expose human rights violations. This makes international outcry even more essential to give a message to the Myanmar authorities that the world is outraged."

Similar demonstrations are taking place in Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Edinburgh, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Mongolia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand and the USA.

Amnesty International has called on governments with influence over Myanmar, in particular India, China and ASEAN to pressure Myanmar to address human rights violations, and prohibit the supply of arms to Myanmar. The organization has also called on the UN Security Council to urgently send a mission to Myanmar and to impose an arms embargo, and recently also called on the UN Human Rights Council to act decisively on human rights violations in Myanmar.

### **Background**

- o Even according to official figures issued since Thursday, thousands have been arrested across the country, many of them monks. While the authorities told Ibrahim Gambari, Special Advisor to the UN Secretary General that over 2095 of those arrested had been released, reports emerging from Myanmar indicate that mass arrests continue. Numerous key figures in the National League for Democracy, the main opposition party, and other activists are among those arrested.
- o 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.
- o 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.

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