

Long March and Hunger Strike for Freedom and Democracy in Burma

A group of democracy activists in exile from Burma are embarking on a "Long March and Hunger Strike for Freedom and Democracy in Burma." The over 160-mile long march which will originate from "Grafton Peace Pagoda" in Grafton, north of Albany, New York, will begin on 1 September 2004 and end 16 days later before the United Nations in New York where heads of states and foreign ministers will be gathering at the end of September.

In New York, the "freedom marchers" will be joined by other Burmese activists who will be staging an "indefinite hunger strike" to express their solidarity with the people of Burma and draw the world's attention to the injustices being committed against the people who are being brutalized, silenced, tortured, and persecuted by the military regime.

One of the organizers of the "Long March for Freedom and Democracy", Han Lin said: "We need to keep the world's focus on the human rights violations continuing unabated in Burma. The party of the people -- the National League for Democracy (NLD) -- which won the 1990 elections by an overwhelming majority but ignored by the ruling generals, is being targeted by the military for persecution. The action we are taking is to show our support for the NLD and prompt world nations into action. It's time for rhetoric to end and action to begin." He also adds, "The UN should acknowledge that it has failed to prevent the brutal abuses of the Burmese military regime against its own people. The UN has failed to take effective action against the inhuman acts of the Burmese military regime."

The organizers of the Long March and the Hunger Strike say:

"(1) We support the appeal by the National League for Democracy to release its Vice Chairman U Tin Oo, General Secretary Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and all other political prisoners and to reopen all National League for Democracy Offices,

"(2) We call on the United Nations General Assembly to raise the Burma issue with the UN Secretary Council so that the United Nations can effectively intervene and resolve the problem of Burma, take action to win the release of the NLD leaders and other political prisoners, and reopen NLD Offices, and

(3) We urge UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to implement the resolutions on Burma passed by consecutive UNGA sessions and to organize an international conference on Burma that will result in an internationally agreed package of solutions to Burma's problems and to effectively pursue the matter through the UN Security Council."

For further information, contact:

Dr Thaug Htun	U Han Lin	U Win Shwe
Cell: 646-662-4557	Cell: 607-351-6222	Cell: 260-418-6322
Tel: 718-729-5977	Tel: 607-275-0191	Tel: 260-456-9465
thhtun@attglobal.net	hlin@ithaca.edu	winshwe2003@yahoo.com