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<td>PROGRAM: 2nd ASEAN Peoples’ Forum/ 5th ASEAN Civil Society Conference</td>
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<td>BACKGROUND (What’s different this time – the new format)</td>
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<td>APF/ACSC Venue in Cha-Am: 5 ways to get there</td>
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<td>Briefer: The ASEAN Youth Movement Envisions a More Just, Sustainable Future for ASEAN</td>
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<td>Task Force on ASEAN and Burma: Burma’s Civil Society Works for Peace and Stability Despite Obstacles</td>
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<td>BP Burma’s Dead-End Road to Democracy: Overcoming Roadblocks and Finding Solutions</td>
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<td>Hot Topics continue: Will ASEAN Fail to Confront the SPDC, Again?</td>
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Proposed Schedule (as of 05/10/09)

Advancing a Peoples’ ASEAN: Continuing Dialogue
2nd ASEAN Peoples’ Forum / 5th ASEAN Civil Society Conference
18-20 October 2009
Cha-am, Phetchaburi Province, Thailand

Sunday, 18 October 2009

9:30-10:00 Opening Ceremony (Theme: Regional solidarity)
10:00-12:00 Update on ASEAN’s engagement with civil Society:
What has been done to make ASEAN people-centered and what are the current outcomes and challenges?
- H.E. Surin Pitsuwan, ASEAN Secretary General*
- A representative from Solidarity for Asian People’s Advocacy (SAPA) Working Group on ASEAN
- Dr. Rizal Sukma, Executive Director, Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)*
- A representative from Vietnamese Civil Society Groups

Moderator: Ms. Chanida Chanyapate Bamford, Focus on the Global South, ASEAN Peoples’ Forum Steering Committee

12:00-13:00 Lunch

13:00-16:00 Thailand's role in the ASEAN Region: Prospects and Challenges in advancing a caring and sharing community

Speakers, representing different sectors of the Thai society:
- Ms. Achara Ashayagachat, Journalist, Bangkok Post
- Dr. Sunait Chutintaranond, Director, Institute of Asian Study, Chulalongkorn University
- Mr. Pornsilp Pacharin-Tanakul, Thai Chamber of Commerce/Charoen Pokphand Group
- Ms. Chuenchom Greasen, Phalang Thai environmentalist
- Ms. Siriporn Skrobanek, Foundation for Women

Moderator: Dr. Naruemon Thabchumpon, Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University

16:15-18:00 Preparatory meetings for the dialogue sessions
18:00-19:00 Selection of delegates to the interface by country groups

Monday, 19 October 2009 — Civil Society’s Dialogues with ASEAN Governments

8:00-10:00 Dialogue on Socio-Economic issues: From economic integration towards economic justice and alternative regional cooperation

ASEAN Officials:
H.E. Korn Chatikavanij, Minister of Finance, Kingdom of Thailand*
Mr Gusmardi Bustami, Director-General of International Trade Cooperation, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Republic of Indonesia*
H.E. Cao Duc Phat, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Socialist Republic of Vietnam*
Mr. S. Pushpanathan, Deputy Secretary General for the ASEAN Economic Community*
Department of Labour and Employment, Republic of the Philippines

CSO representatives:
Focus on the Global South, Union Network International, AsiaDHRRA, Asian Farmers Association, Committee for Asian Women, Institute for Global Justice, EU-ASEAN FTA Campaign Network, LaVia Campesina, Migrant Forum in Asia, East Asia Rice Working Group

Dialogue Moderator: Ms. Jenina Joy Chavez, FOCUS on the Global South

10:15-12:45 **Dialogue on Socio-Cultural Issues: Equal rights and opportunities for all**

ASEAN Officials:
- Ministry of Labour, Malaysia
- Department of Foreign Affairs, Republic of the Philippines
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Socialist Republic of Vietnam
- Dr. Saisuree Chutikul, ASEAN Women and Children working group*

CSO representatives:
- ASEAN Youth Forum
- People’s Empowerment Foundation
- Thai Volunteer Service
- Committee for Asian Women
- International Network of Engaged Buddhists

Dialogue moderator: Mr. Jerald Joseph, KOMAS-Malaysia

12:45-13:45 Lunch

13:45-15:45 **Dialogue on Political and Security Issues: Conflict resolution, Democracy, and human rights**

ASEAN Officials:
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ASEAN Unit, Kingdom of Cambodia
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ASEAN Unit, Malaysia
- Department of Foreign Affairs, ASEAN Unit, Republic of Indonesia

CSO representatives:
- Mr. Gus Miclat, Initiatives for International Dialogue
- Ms. Yuyun Wahyuningrum, Forum-ASIA, SAPA Task Force on ASEAN and Human Rights
- Venerable Ashin Sopaka, International Burmese Monks Organization

Dialogue moderator: Dr. Sriprapha Petcharamesree, Mahidol University*

16:00-18:00 **Dialogue on the Environmental Issues:**

**Core theme 1- Large-scale development projects that lead to the environment and livelihood destruction**
- Mr. Pornchai Rujirapha, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Energy, the Kingdom of Thailand*
- Mr. Dang Van Loi, Vice director of the Foreign Relations Dept, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Socialist Republic of Vietnam*
Core theme 2 - Climate Change
-Ms. Masnellyarti Hilman, Deputy Minister, Natural Resources, Conservation Enhancement and Environmental Degradation Control, Ministry of Environment, Republic of Indonesia*
-Mrs. Bernarditas de Castro-Muller, Special Advisor on Climate Change, Department of Foreign Affairs, Republic of the Philippines*

Core theme 3 - Biodiversity
-Dr. Rahman Lechumanan, ASEAN Secretariat*
-Dr. Rahman Lechumanan, ASEAN Secretariat*

Civil Society representatives:
- Ms. Premrudee Daoroung, Towards Ecological Recovery and Regional Alliance
- Ms. Elenita Dano, Action Group on Erosion Technology and Concentration
- Ms. Hira Jhamtani, Third World Network

Moderator: Assoc. Professor Surichai Wun’gaeo, Director, Chulalongkorn University Social Research Institute

19:30-21:30 Solidarity Night/ASEAN QUIZ

Tuesday, 20 October 2009 – Conclusion and Closing

09:00-12:00 - Reports from 4 panels: Assessing the dialogues of every cluster/issue by 4 rapporteurs from the 4 clusters
- APF/ACSC statement, presentation and affirmation of draft by Statement Drafting Committee

Moderator: Mr. Yap Swee Seng, FORUM-ASIA

12:00-13:00 Lunch & Press conference

13:00-16:00 CSOs Dialogue on the next APF/ACSC in Vietnam

- Identifying People’s agenda and process for next year's AEAN summit
- How to organize the next APF/ACSC in Vietnam
- Turn over from Thailand to Vietnam as APF/ACSC host (Thai and Vietnamese representative)

Moderator: Mr. Rafendi Djamin, Indonesia’s Coalition for International Human Rights Advocacy (HRWG)

16:00-18:00 -Preparation for the CS Interface with the ASEAN leaders (APF Working Group and CSO representatives

*Awaiting confirmation
BACKGROUND:
2ND ASEAN PEOPLES’ FORUM /
5TH ASEAN CIVIL SOCIETY CONFERENCE
18-20 October 2009, Cha-am, Phetchaburi
Province, Thailand

The first ASEAN Peoples’ Forum (APF) held in
February 2009 in Bangkok brought together over a
thousand representatives of various citizens’ groups in the region to exchange
experiences, raising issues of common concern, and deliberate on common
recommendations to the ASEAN. The Forum was effectively linked to the Fourth
ASEAN Civil Society Conference (ACSC IV) that focused on civil society’s
continuous engagement with the ASEAN bodies while recommendations from the
APF’s 30 workshops were developed for presentation to the ASEAN leaders. The
highlights of the February event were the two-hour straightforward dialogue with the
ASEAN Secretary-General and the Thai Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the half-hour
informal meeting between representatives of the APF with the ASEAN leaders in
Cha-am.

As the ASEAN leaders and officials are gathering in Thailand for the 16th ASEAN
summit, the Joint Thai-Regional APF Working Group, comprising Thai and regional
civil society organizations that constituted the Organizing Committee of the APF /
ACSC IV, once again invite civil society groups in Southeast Asia to participate in the
Second ASEAN Peoples’ Forum / the Fifth ASEAN Civil Society Conference to be
held at Regent Beach Cha-am, Phetchaburi Province, Thailand.

WHAT’S DIFFERENT THIS TIME?

The numerous, smaller workshops that were a feature of the previous APF have
been replaced with four larger plenary sessions to allow expanded dialogue between
stakeholders and ASEAN senior officials.

To pursue the goal of advancing a peoples’ ASEAN, the Second APF / Fifth ACSC
(APF II / ACSC V) will feature expanded dialogue with ASEAN governments’ and
ASEAN Secretariat’s senior officials who are involved in the three ASEAN
Community Councils.

The key objectives of the dialogue are to explore the options and limitations and
identifying potential solutions for the ASEAN to meet the demands and aspirations of
its peoples, and to foster governments-peoples cooperation in creating building
blocks for a just, people-centred, and genuine caring and sharing ASEAN
Community, which we hope is a shared goal of all the ASEAN governments.

The key broad issues for which the APF II / ACSC V will focus on and for which it will
seek ASEAN governments’ inputs, clarifications and discussions on potential
solutions include:

Socio-Cultural Cluster: Mechanisms and TOR of the Socio-Cultural community,
TOR for the ASEAN Commission for Women and Children, People’s Participation,
Migration, Disability, Health, Culture and Natural disasters.
Socio-Economic Cluster: Impacts of economic integration; Impact and roles of economic actors and people and general; Cross-border economic concerns and ASEAN’s capability to deal with them; Sustainable production and consumption, energy and development; Regional response to the economic crisis.

Environmental Cluster: Large-scale development projects that lead to the environment and livelihood destruction; ASEAN position and action plan on climate change; Biodiversity, Sustainable Agriculture and Food Sovereignty.

Political Security Cluster: Challenges in the implementation of the political security community, conflict resolutions, human rights and democracy in ASEAN.

It is anticipated that the ASEAN leaders will agree to another interface meeting with a group of representatives from the APF II / ACSC V at the beginning of their summit meeting on October 23, 2009, so that the peoples’ recommendations from the forum can be submitted directly, hopefully also to be discussed, in the interface meeting.

Joint Thai-Regional Working Group on ASEAN Peoples’ Forum:
- NGO Coordinating Committee on Development (NGO-COD), Thailand
- People’s Empowerment Foundation, Thailand
- Sustainable Agriculture Foundation, Thailand
- Thai Volunteer Service Foundation (TVS), Thailand
- Alternative Asean Network on Burma (Altsean-Burma)
- Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum-Asia)
- Committee for Asian Women (CAW)
- Focus on the Global South (Focus)
- Southeast Asia Committee for Advocacy (SEACA)
- Towards Ecological Recovery and Regional Alliance (TERRA)
- Union Network International, Asia-Pacific Regional Office (UNI-APRO)
Schedule

Advancing ASEAN community: Thai Civil Society’s Dialogue with Thai government
12 October 2009 /9.00-16.00/ at Jumpot-Pantip room, 4th Floor, Prachatipok-Rampaipanee Building, Chulalongkorn University

9.00-9.15 Registration

9.15-9.30 Welcome remark by Mrs. Suntaree H. Saeng-ging, Secretary General of NGO Coordinating Committee on Development (NGO-COD)

9.30-10.10 Vision on “Solidarity in ASEAN”
- Thai government representative: Director-General, Department of ASEAN, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- CSO representative: Assoc. Professor Surichai Wun’gaeo, Director, Social Research Institute, Chulalongkorn university

10.10-10.20 Break

10.20-11.20 Challenging issues in advancing ASEAN community
Socio-economic issues
- Thai government representative: Director-General, Department of Trade Negotiations, Ministry of Trade
- CSO representative: A representative from FTA Watch Group

Moderator: Mrs. Chanida Chanyapate Bamford, Director, Focus on Global South

11.20-13.20 Lunch

13.20-14-20 Security and Peace Issues
- Thai government representative
- CSO representative: A representative from security and peace network organizations

14.20-15.20 Socio-cultural issues
- Thai government representative
- CSO representative: A representative from socio-cultural network organizations

Moderator: Ms. Sayamon Kraiyoonwong

15.20-15.30 Break

15.30-16.30 Conclusions: Cooperation strategies between Thai government and CSO
Moderator: Dr. Naruemon Thabchumpon

16.30-16.40 Closing note by Mrs. Suntaree H. Saeng-ging, Secretary General of NGO Coordinating Committee on Development (NGO-COD)
SERVICES FOR MEDIA (as of 9 October 2009)

- Interviews, briefings upon request
- Citizen reporting on websites within hours of events on www.aseanpeoplesforum.net, and www.aseanpeople.org
- Live Streaming of main events
- Twitter
- SMS alerts & updates
  (to subscribe to our sms alert service, pls text your business card, i.e. your name, cell number & media organization, to +6681 771 6075

Media Enquiries:

- Thai language: 08 1584 0080 or +668 1584 0080 if calling from overseas
- English language: 08 1771 6075 or +668 1771 6075 if calling from overseas

or at

- APF Secretariat Room,
  Holiday Inn Resort Regent Beach, Cha-am
WHAT’S ON: CIVIL SOCIETY ACTIVITIES AROUND THE ASEAN SUMMIT
The following is a list of activities being organized in the lead up to the 15th ASEAN Summit, 23-25 October, Cha-Am, as of October 8, 2009. Media subscribing to our sms alert service will be updated as information comes in.

Media enquiries:  tel 081 584 0080 (Thai) and 081 771 6075 (English) or +6681 771 6075 if calling from overseas.

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<th>Event/Location</th>
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<th>Media Contact</th>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 6-7</td>
<td>Country Workshop on ASEAN, Dili, Timor Leste</td>
<td>Since 2006, SEACA (South East Asian Committee for Advocacy) has been organizing civil society consultations to promote and encourage civil society engagement with the ASEAN, as the latter transitions towards formalization as a regional organization seeking to play a greater role in the lives of the peoples of the region. These initiatives are set against the backdrop of direct, regional-level civil society engagement of the ASEAN through the Solidarity for Asian People’s Advocacy-Working Group on ASEAN (SAPA-WG on ASEAN) and the ASEAN Civil Society Conference (ACSC) series. National workshops have been aimed at sensitizing local civil society groups about the developments within ASEAN and soliciting their input on various civil society interventions in processes such as the ASEAN Charter and the human rights body.</td>
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<td>Oct 12</td>
<td>Country Workshop on ASEAN, Hanoi</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Armindo Da Costa (FONGTIL) <a href="mailto:kiikoan78@yahoo.com">kiikoan78@yahoo.com</a> or Mr. Gaudencio Souza <a href="mailto:agau1327@yahoo.com">agau1327@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 15</td>
<td>Country Workshop on ASEAN, Vientiane</td>
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<td>Oct 8</td>
<td>Media Briefing (Thai) 12.00-13.00am. CUSRI Meeting room, 4th floor, Wisit Prachuabmoh Building, Political Science Faculty, Chulalongkorn University</td>
<td>Thai representatives of the national process and the APF/ACSC organizers will brief media.</td>
<td>Lek - 0815840080</td>
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<td>Oct 8</td>
<td>Seminar: ASEAN Stakes: Challenges to the Thai Society, 9 am- 4:30 pm Jumpot-Pantip room, 4th Floor, Prachatipok-Rampaipanee Building Building, Chulalongkorn University</td>
<td>This seminar will be composed of two roundtable discussions. 1.&quot;The future of Thai society and the ASEAN community in the context of a development crisis: The question of values and other challenges&quot; 2.&quot;Thailand’s leadership and good neighbourliness: what is the issue and who's driving it.&quot; <em>(Seminar will be conducted in Thai)</em></td>
<td>Prof Surichai Wun’gaeo Phone 02 2187386 or 0866106004.</td>
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| Oct 9  | Media Briefing (English): “Curt Civility. Active dialogue or face-off”, 11 a.m. Foreign Correspondents Club of Thailand | The APF/ACSC has been reformatted to create greater opportunities for interaction between civil society group and Asean senior officials but will Asean rise to the occasion? Speakers:  
- Chanida Bamford  
- Khin Ohmar  
- Yap Swee Seng  
- Saksinee Emasiri Thanakulmas  

Contact: 0817716075                                                                 |                                                                                                   |
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<td>Oct 11</td>
<td>Forum: From ASEAN free trade to investment liberalization: implication for food security and Thai agriculture, 10 am -12:30 pm, Nonsee 2 Room, K. U. Home, Kasetsart University</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion from different perspectives impacts of ASEAN free trade (AFTA) on food security and agriculture in Thailand, especially since the tariff elimination of agriculture products will be in effect next year. Also, the impacts of the new agreement of ASEAN investment liberalization (ACIA) will be discussed as the Thai government is negotiating to open three important sub sectors in fishery, forestry and agriculture. Speakers include representatives from Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Corn Farmers Federation, Faculty of Economics, and Biothai.</td>
<td>Sajin Prachason 081-642-7951</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 12</td>
<td>Advancing ASEAN Community: Thai Civil Society’s Dialogue with the Thai Government, 9 am – 4 pm, Jumpot-Pantip room, 4th Floor, Prachatipok-Rampaipanee Building, Chulalongkorn University (Seminar will be conducted in Thai)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Suntaree Saeng-ging 089 7132070</td>
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<td>Oct 14-17</td>
<td>ASEAN Youth Forum Krang Krajan Riverside, Petchaburi</td>
<td></td>
<td>ASEAN youth will meet to exchange experiences and ideas, and plan future activities on issues of education, environment and human rights. ASEAN Youth Movement is a new network of youth activists, NGOs, students and social entrepreneurs.</td>
<td>Jaruwan “Netting” Supolrai 08 1072 2714</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 17</td>
<td>ASEAN Women calling for Democracy, 9 am, Bangkok Chada Hotel, Ratchadaphisek Road</td>
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<td>Thai Labour Campaign 02 933 9492</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 18-20</td>
<td>Asean Peoples’ Forum/Asean Civil Society Conference 5, Cha-am</td>
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<td>See complete program</td>
<td>For media enquiries, please tel 081 584 0080 (Thai), 081 771 6075 or +6681 771 6075 (English) if calling from overseas</td>
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<td>Oct 20</td>
<td>Press conference</td>
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<td>Lunch-time, APF/ACSC Venue. See program</td>
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<td>Oct 23</td>
<td>CSO interface with ASEAN leaders</td>
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<td>Civil society delegates meeting with ASEAN Heads of Government will be available for media interviews. Details of time and location will be confirmed closer to the date</td>
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<td>Oct 24</td>
<td>Press conference following the Inauguration of the ASEAN Inter-Governmental Commission on Human Rights</td>
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<td>Civil society reps will share their analysis and concerns about the new and controversial ASEAN human rights commission. Details of time and location will be confirmed closer to the date</td>
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CONTACTS FOR MEDIA

This is a list of experts and spokespersons who will be in Cha-am and/or Hua Hin before/during/after the ASEAN Summit.

Most of the moderators, speakers, workshop resource persons and organizers of the ASEAN Peoples’ Forum and ASEAN Civil Society will also be available for media interviews and/or background briefings.

Media enquiries
• 081 584 0080 (Thai)
• 081 771 6075 (English) or +6681 771 6075 if calling from overseas.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Expertise</th>
<th>Phone No.</th>
<th>Languages</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashin Sopaka</td>
<td>International Burmese Monks Organization</td>
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<td>+668 46683556</td>
<td>English, Burmese, German</td>
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<td>Aung Marm Oo (Mr)</td>
<td>All Arakan Student and Youth Congress</td>
<td>Environment, Development Projects, Natural Resources (Burma)</td>
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<td>Bennett Haynes (Mr)</td>
<td>ASEAN Youth Movement Media Team</td>
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<td>Economic Development, Free Trade, Globalisation, FTAs</td>
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<td>Cheery Zahau (Ms)</td>
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<td>Dr. Thein Naing (Mr)</td>
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<td>+6391 89026716 +6680 603 6162 (Thai mobile, Oct 13-23)</td>
<td>English, Filipino</td>
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<td>Name</td>
<td>Organization/Role</td>
<td>Contact Information</td>
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<td>Khin Ohmar (Ms)</td>
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<td>Rafendi Djamin (Mr)</td>
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APF/ACSC VENUE

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Cha-Am Beach, Petchburi 76120 Thailand
Tel +66 32 451240 Fax +66 32 471491
www.chaam.holidayinn.com

Five ways to get to the hotel:

1. For registered participants: APF secretariat will arrange for transportation (van) from the Suvarhabumi Airport (Bangkok) to Regent Beach Cha-Am starting on October 17.

Foreign participants who wish to avail of this service should inform the coordinator of the secretariat, Ms. Montawadee Krumtechai (montawadee@007@yahoo.com) the flight details i.e., arrival time on Oct 17 and departure time on Oct 21) The estimate fare is US$ 43 for a roundtrip van from Suvarnabhumi Airport to Regent Beach Cha-Am

2. Take a taxi from the Suvarnabhumi airport to the hotel. This will cost around 2,000 Baht (US$ 61).

3. There are public vans at Century Movie Plaza, Victory Monument, Bangkok that travel to Cha-Am. From Cha-am, rent a local transportation or call the hotel van of the Regent Beach Cha-am. Fare is about 200 Baht

4. By Train: Go to the Southern Bus Terminal “Sai Tai Mai” and take a train that will pass by Cha-am. When you get off at the train stop in Cha-am, you can call the hotel to pick you up.
Fare: 1st class Baht 202
2nd class Baht 102
3rd class Baht 44

5. By Air-Con Bus: Take the train at the Southern Bus Terminal (Sai Tai Mai) station to Cha-am (destination). Get off at the Regent Beach Cha-Am.
Bangkok-Huahin bus route – Baht 142

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ASEAN Youth Movement – Driving Southeast Asian Youth for a Sustainable Future

8 October 2009 – Bangkok, Thailand: The ASEAN Youth Movement is organized by youth networks and civil society organizations from around the ASEAN region. Youth activists, NGOs, students and social entrepreneurs have joined together to form a voice for social justice and sustainable development. We are currently focusing on three main issues: education, the environment and human rights. We seek to develop a strong and active network to facilitate communication and coordination between ASEAN youth. We have members throughout ASEAN, with a strong presence in the Mekong sub-region. Since early 2008, we have organized several youth camps and forums that have formed new relationships and strengthened our solidarity. Last year’s ASEAN Youth Camp produced the first ASEAN Youth Statement.

The ASEAN Youth Movement is currently organizing the ASEAN Youth Forum, which will be held in Phetchaburi, Thailand from October 14-17. The Forum will be an opportunity for ASEAN youth to come together, exchange their experiences and ideas, and formulate youth recommendations to ASEAN and as well as plan future activities. We will produce an updated and concrete ASEAN Youth Statement, which will be utilized during the ASEAN Peoples’ Forum from October 18-20 and presented at the 15th ASEAN Summit, from Oct. 23-25. Youth voices are an essential part of civil society’s engagement with ASEAN. The ASEAN approach and policy-making decisions regarding these issues have important impacts on youth and the communities in which we live and work.

ASEAN governments have claimed the phrase “empowering young people through education,” yet we understand the current educational system to be overly career-oriented and lacking in the teaching of real life skills and respect local wisdom in their communities. This kind of education does not allow us to know ourselves, and limits our ability to support our communities and society as the whole. We have the right to access alternative education and learn freely about local wisdom in our communities and our societies.

Education about the environment and local ecology will not only help build awareness about environmental problems, but foster a conservation ethic and empower youth to take action for environmental sustainability. Furthermore, mega-project development plans for the Mekong River or other energy sources are not only environmentally unsustainable, but the source of serious human rights violations. Youth are increasingly aware about human rights issues and violations throughout Southeast Asia. We envision a role in educating our communities and learning together with civil society in ASEAN societies about human rights.

The ASEAN Youth Movement is a new network of youth activists, NGOs, students and social entrepreneurs. We are working to educate ourselves about critical issues in our region and strengthening social and environmental alternatives for a genuinely people-centered ASEAN.

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The ASEAN Youth Movement envisions a more just, sustainable future for ASEAN.

Is ASEAN an opportunity or an obstacle for Southeast Asian youth? In many ways, ASEAN is a challenge for us to share our voices and seek support for our efforts at the regional-level.

ASEAN policies impact Southeast Asian youth!

We will continue working to hold ASEAN accountable.

Human Rights - Protection through Education and Advocacy

“The lack of respect for human rights is at the heart of many conflicts. Societies that respect and promote human rights and democracy will be less vulnerable to conflict. If conflict arose, the societies will resolve it peacefully with respect to human rights.”

- Ryan Gan Zhi Jie, youth from the Malaysia Youth and Students Democratic Movement

An understanding of political and regional security issues is essential for youth. When governments or the private sector violates any communities’ rights, we recognize an opportunity for ASEAN to be directly involved in protection of ASEAN Peoples. Youth also need to have a role in reporting and examining human rights violations in ASEAN. Society can benefit greatly from our energy and commitment to social justice.

“Decision makers, at both regional and national levels, have conducted mapping of the problem of youth employment and child labor with respect to existing facts, trends, development, cause and effect analysis, as well as from the perspective of the social and economic impact of youth employment and child labor. However, the problem has not yet been encapsulated into a comprehensive policy, program, and integrated into the regional and national budget. Consequently, solutions to the problem of youth employment and child labor continue to be partial, without much of a relationship between one policy and another.”

- Widdi, from the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Jakarta Indonesia

The opening of borders and markets will have direct impacts on labor costs and job opportunities. Young migrant workers are often the first to be affected. Our work with labor unions and workers’ rights organizations; universities or research groups are all tools for understanding social and economic issues. We can use these experiences to directly engage with ASEAN policies or regional issues.
Alternative Education – A More Holistic and Diverse Worldview

“The education institution especially the University and College was applied by the government to become the marketable market place for businessman to invest and education does not now follow the principal of education but produces a group of students who only fulfill the market demand.”

- Heng, youth from Suara Rakyat Malaysia (SUARAM) for Human Rights

“Education is career oriented, lacks education about like skills, doesn’t allow us to know ourselves, and limits our ability to support ourselves. Should education be just about this? Thai people have the right to freely learn about local wisdom in communities, without limitations. Youth in ASEAN need to have an equal opportunity to access alternative education.”

- Pichet Benjamart, Alternative Education volunteer, Thai Volunteer Service Foundation

We critically approach conventional education and believe in the possibilities for alternative education. Learning from local wise-people, community educators, organic farmers and environmentalists inside and outside the classroom can help us better understand our society and ourselves.

“Youth should really pay attention to the local mode of life both traditionally and in practice, so as to comprehend deeply and practically local people's life. We can effectively apply this to youth's aspiration and innovation in building a more harmonious society. The first thing to do is to listen equally, to energetically practice at local and, to responsibly attempt to apply thought in practical conditions.”

- Pham Tran Thang Long, a Vietnamese graduate student at the Regional Center for Social Science and Sustainable Development (RCSD), Chiang Mai University and Save the Mekong! (Vietnam Rivers Network)

ASEAN has made education a priority for youth. We recognize that local wisdom and self-reliant ways of life are essential for youth to grow as ASEAN citizens. Trends can be powerful forces in society, so how do we connect cultural change and integrity? By learning through experience and exchange, we can build a movement for support of an alternative education approach in schools and communities throughout the region.
Environment – Justice, Sustainability and Ecological Health

“One of our motivations is to protect and conserve the environment, and we are raising awareness of these issues. Youth should care about the environment to improve themselves and because we are one of the important members of each country. If they take care of country in the future, and their knowledge has grown, their country will be peaceful.”

- Ly Quoc Dang, from the Center for Biodiversity and Development - Institute of Tropical Biology, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

We see that buying a “Stop Climate Change” bag or T-Shirt is not a solution – the ASEAN Youth Movement approaches environmental issues through first-hand experience with climate impacts, environmental pollution and biodiversity loss. We are changing the way we consume, supporting local farmers or growing our own food, recycling and composting, spending time in natural areas and learning more about local ecology. If youth can’t start taking care of the environment right now, then who will do so in the future?

“I’m working on the environment, and I think we should have more sustainable environmental protection. For example, a fund for environmental education and activities that promotes environmental responsibility. This will help create new green spaces. This is something we can do ourselves. We might not be at the international level of ASEAN yet, but as a network of youth groups we don’t have to wait for ASEAN and we can do it on our own.”

- Burana Sangthong, Dek Rak Ban Group, Ubon Communities Network

Next Steps

“If youth don’t understand the issues, they can’t do anything about them, but if they understood, so they can work on them by themselves or as a team’ - The behavior, attitude and spirit of voluntary work is very, very important toward the promotion and empowerment of youth to know and understand these values.”

–Monorum, coordinator for Cambodian Volunteers for Society (CVS), Phnom Penh Cambodia

Building our network is going to take a lot of energy. Following the ASEAN Youth Forum from Oct. 15-17, we will continue sharing our knowledge, opinions and experiences through our Media Team and future events. The ASEAN Youth Movement seeks to create a space both locally and regionally and online for youth to share experiences, exchange and dialog.

Our movement can be found at aseanyouthmovement.org
ASEAN needs a Strategic Pillar on Environment!

In the face of environmental crisis now impacting the lives of millions of ASEAN people, civil society groups will call on ASEAN at the APF to launch a Strategic Pillar on Environment that places people’s participation central to decision-making over the natural resources that are vital to their livelihoods.

It is more urgent than ever that ASEAN recognizes the need to establish Environment as a fourth pillar, in order to adapt to the world’s changing circumstances and catch up with emerging international standards, practices and movements that promote ecological sustainability, and the Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights of the people.

The Environment Dialogue of the second ASEAN People Forum proposes discussion on three key environmental issues that challenges the whole of ASEAN: the impact of large-scale development projects; climate change; and biodiversity.

Large scale hydropower dams, export-orientated mining, oil and gas exploitation, regional transmission lines, roads and industrial plantations have been proved as a major threat to the environment, livelihoods and culture, and are further exacerbating inequality and food insecurity. Cascades of dams proposed for the Mekong and Salween Rivers’ mainstreams typify the approach to development that is failing to ensure a sustainable people-centered ASEAN economy. At the APF, civil society will discuss ways that ASEAN can encourage its member states to withdraw from destructive infrastructure projects and commit to international standards through developing new frameworks, such as an ASEAN Extractive Industry Framework.

Climate change is a looming common threat to all ASEAN countries. Civil society has urged ASEAN to take a firm stand in negotiations to ensure a fair climate regime that is protective of the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities that rely directly on natural resources by not making them victims of the failing Clean Development Mechanism, by protecting small farmers’ rights, and by seeing a transition towards sustainable agriculture and food sovereignty. ASEAN will be asked to makes sure that climate justice prevails with regard to the historic responsibilities of Annex 1 countries.

ASEAN countries are blessed with a rich and unique biodiversity and agro-diversity. Yet, through trade agreements and genetic patenting, large international companies threaten to monopolize and exploit the region’s genetic resources. In common with the other two key themes above, the environmental dialogue aims to discuss ways to promote full participation in biodiversity and genetic patenting exchange and agreement not only among states, but among the indigenous and local communities who own them.

Environment issues can no longer remain hidden from the ASEAN perspectives. Without a clear pillar on the Environment, the three existing pillars of ASEAN will never be strong and serve the ASEAN people as it has been touted.
APF 2/ACSC 5 MEDIA BRIEFING

Urgent Economic Issues Faced by ASEAN

Overcoming the Negative Impact of the Global Economic Crisis

Asia’s (and ASEAN’s) financial sector did not take the kind of beating that crippled the financial sectors of Northern countries. Yet, the region’s real economy reels from the impact of the slide in global financial markets. The slowdown in traditional markets, as well as in China, has caused massive blows to heavily export-dependent ASEAN Members. This results in economic downturn, worsening unemployment and poverty levels.

Making the Chiang Mai Initiative (CMI) Really Work

From a series of bilateral swaps to help fend off balance of payments difficulties, the CMI has been multilateralized, and its financial pool increased to US$120 billion. Despite these developments, the CMI has yet to be fully functional almost 10 years after it has been established in the wake of the Asian financial crisis. Problems of institutionalization, agreements on surveillance system, the need for and the physical base of a secretariat, among others, remain. But the biggest question hanging is decision making that still follows the International Monetary Fund (IMF) formula that votes follow the weight of Member contributions. With this, the biggest contributors Japan and China have the capacity to block or approve any application. How different the CMI is from traditional financing mechanisms, and whether it will be more effective, is therefore a concern.

Sorting Out Issues in Various Regional Free Trade Agreements

(a) Will ASEAN Members negotiate individually with the EU?

Negotiations on the EU-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement were temporarily suspended in May due to disagreements over the coverage of the agreement. ASEAN objected to the European Union’s insistence on a comprehensive coverage including sensitive issues like labor and the environment, while the EU is said to be overly concerned about the human rights record of Myanmar. These concerns led to the suspension of talks, as well as rumors that the EU might try to negotiate FTAs with individual ASEAN Members. Will ASEAN be pressured to take the shift?

(b) Does ASEAN believe in South-South trade? How will ASEAN deal with opposition to FTA from its partners’ citizens?
The ASEAN-India FTA was signed in August 2009. While the news has yet to filter through to the region’s agricultural sectors, it has been met by massive protests in India, particularly in the state of Kerala, citing fisheries as a particular concern. As ASEAN continues to negotiate or sign FTAs, and as some of these FTAs become fully operational, adverse distributional impacts of such agreements get revealed. FTAs with developed countries (Korea, Australia/New Zealand, Japan) raise obvious concerns on negative impacts, fairness and balance of interest. Trade cooperation with developing countries (China, India) has the potential to address common development issues, but it remains a question whether using the FTA format is the best way to promote South-South solidarity. Given that FTAs with developing countries also imply adverse impacts to vulnerable groups, ASEAN needs to sort out how to deal with opposition from sectors from its FTA partners (like in the case of India), at the same time that it has to deal with opposition from its ASEAN sectors negatively affected by FTAs.

Full Implementation of the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) in 2010

Original signatories (ASEAN-6: Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand) of the AFTA agreement have agreed to bring down to zero the tariffs of almost all imports by 2010. By next year (2010), the phase-in of sensitive agricultural products, including rice, into the AFTA will also have to be completed and their tariffs brought down to 0-5%. The CLMV countries have until 2013 (Vietnam), 2015 (Laos and Myanmar) and 2017 (Cambodia) to fully implement AFTA.

Earlier this year, the Philippines—whose poultry, egg and hog industries and the rice sector will be badly hit – pushed for the delay of the full implementation of AFTA, but Singapore was opposed to any change in the timetable. The inclusion of unprocessed agricultural products has always been the acid test of AFTA. Against the backdrop of a global recession and health concerns in the poultry and hog sectors, how ASEAN will tackle apprehensions by Members will be an acid test of regional solidarity.

Bridging the Development Gap within ASEAN

If the more established ASEAN economies are having jitters about the full implementation of AFTA and other regional agreements, one can assume that newer Members feel even more anxious and vulnerable. The 3-7 years grace for fully acceding to regional agreements might not be enough for the CLMV, as they have fewer resources and less endowment compared to the ASEAN-6.

Economic Impact of Natural Disasters

In recent weeks, Southeast Asia has been hit by a series of disasters. Massive deaths and displacements were caused by Typhoons Ketsana and Parma, as well as the earthquake in
Indonesia. ASEAN has had various functional cooperation initiatives on enhancing emergency response capacities and coordination, but a regional mechanism to deal with frequent natural calamities is still lacking. Regional disaster management and response was also put to the test by Cyclone Nargis, where until pressure mounted, ASEAN was constrained and unable to do anything.

The recent spate of natural disasters cost ASEAN Member countries hundreds of million dollars in damaged crops and infrastructure. On top of the social consequences, rebuilding lives and livelihood will be a major concern for many Members, affecting their readiness to take part in the region’s many economic initiatives.

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Others???
HOT Issues – ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights

Can AICHR promote and protect human rights?

The Southeast Asian region continues to be the place where human rights defenders still risk their lives and liberty when speaking out, challenging the impunity of human rights violators and seeking to build societies that respect and uphold values of human dignity. Dictatorships in Burma and Cambodia, conflicts in Thailand and the Philippines and elsewhere in the region, continue to claim lives and impose suffering on innocent civilians. More importantly today, with global concerns against terrorism, is the rise of a host of issues linked to national security which also have to be dealt with sensitively by national human rights commissions.

With the adoption of the Terms of Reference of the establishment of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights on 20 July during the 42nd ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM) in Phuket, Thailand, ASEAN embarked on an important landmark for the development of human rights in the region as well as introduced a way of engaging civil society in the process. For an association which was initially established as a reaction to the on-going Cold War and fear of communism, the recent development to institutionalize the culture of human rights in ASEAN should be welcomed.

However, one only has to further scrutinize the main purposes of the AICHR as articulated in its TOR--promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms in order to complement community building process in ASEAN integration--to know that the Commission is more focused on the areas of ‘promotion’. Civil society organizations have expressed their regret that the AICHR adopts the formula of “promotion first, protection later”. It is perceived that ASEAN lacks the commitment to uphold human rights in the region. Civil society is also concerned that there is no guarantee of ensuring the independence of the body, the representatives and the secretariat support.

In an open letter to the HLP on 22 June 2009, 200 civil society organizations conveyed their request to see that the AICHR includes at least three mandates: conduct country visits, receive complaints and initiate investigations, and conduct periodic reviews of human rights situations in the region. The latest demand of civil society is to request ASEAN to ensure the development of a full fledged regional human rights mechanism, including conventions, commissions and a human rights court, will be in line with international standards and should not take more than 10 years to establish.

Looking ahead, there are articles in the TOR of AICHR that can be used wisely and strategically to tackle the region’s sensitive issues. Take for instance Article 4.8, which states that AICHR must engage in dialogue and consultation with other ASEAN bodies, including civil society organizations and other stakeholders. This provides a window of opportunity for the Representatives to pro-actively continue the dialogue with civil society groups, victims and people’s organizations.

Article 4.10 states that AICHR is mandated to “obtain information from ASEAN Member States on the promotion and protection of human rights” which will provide room for manoeuvre on issues to be collected each of the ten Representatives. Article 4.12 provides the mandate for AICHR to “prepare studies on thematic issues of human rights in ASEAN” which will task the Representatives to seek information and gather data from ASEAN countries on issues related to
human rights. Civil society can use this article together with Article 4.8 to hold a consultation to determine the thematic issues in ASEAN.

Combining Article 4.8 and Article 6.2, on holding annual meetings, civil society can request for a forum dedicated to the interface meeting between the Representatives and civil society annually, where victims and survivors can dialogue with the AICHR directly. Actually the TOR of AICHR expands its channel of communication between the people of ASEAN and the association by introducing Article 7.1, which states that the role of the Secretary-General of ASEAN is to “bring relevant issues to the attention of the AICHR in accordance with Article 11.2 (a) and (b) of the ASEAN Charter”.

Challenges

Non-interference principles – The TOR’s biggest spoiler is Article 2.1.b: non-interference in the internal affairs of ASEAN member states. This principle, not only inherited in ASEAN but is also somewhat seen as its trademark, is often used by the States as an excuse/defense to avoid fulfilling their human rights obligations under international law. This long-held and much-abused principle is currently under intense scrutiny, resulting in many states’ proposals to seek a new definition for the principle. Some governments try to skirt around the issue, preferring instead to move ahead with ongoing regional and global diplomatic dynamics, dwelling on collective responsibilities and shared norms.

While non-interference and respect for sovereignty of the state is a universally accepted principle, it should not be used to stifle or hinder the work of the AICHR to fulfill its mandate and functions. It should be clearly unacceptable for a member state to invoke the notion of “sovereignty” or “internal affairs” to avoid scrutiny of its human rights records.

Issues of compliance – It is still questionable whether AICHR can improve the plight of ethnic minorities in Burma after its launch in October 2009, and move beyond the standard expressions of disapproval for the junta. As indicated in their open letter to the ASEAN ministers, civil society expressed doubt over whether ASEAN countries have the necessary political will to comply with the legally binding document, the ASEAN Charter, especially when it comes to Burma. The question remains whether this half-hearted attitude of ASEAN to censure the actions of the junta will change for the better or whether we can rely on the TOR of AICHR to provide any solutions. Under the TOR, the AICHR and ASEAN are obliged to uphold international human rights standards, which should presumably include securing the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the 2,100 political prisoners and a cessation of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Burma. In order to enforce the TOR, representatives of the AICHR should be competent in the field of human rights and able to propose suitable recommendations to the ASEAN Foreign Ministers. Hence, the regional development of human rights will depend largely on the Commission’s ultimate composition.

The TOR of AICHR provides the States with the necessary procedures on how they can send their representatives to the AICHR. It can be through appointment or the national process of selection. Up to now, only Indonesia and Thailand seem to be committed to a selection process. However, the competency of their representatives does not necessarily ensure that the States can influence the final decision, as ASEAN’s decision making process is through consensus. Moreover, Article 5.2 states very clearly that the Representative shall be accountable to the appointing government, and not to the people of ASEAN.
On Coordination and relationship with ACWC and ACMW – Apart from establishing an overall human rights body (Article 6.6), ASEAN also wants to establish a mechanism to promote and protect the rights of women, children and migrant workers. As such, it has set up a working group to draft the TOR for the ACWC and the ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers (ACMW). The drafting committee consists of two sending countries (Indonesia and the Philippines) and two receiving countries (Thailand and Malaysia).

Article 6.9 requires AICHR to “expeditiously determine the modalities for ultimate alignment” with the two bodies. But what is unclear now is the line of reporting, given that the nature of the establishments are very different from one another. AICHR was established based on Article 14 of the ASEAN Charter, while the ACWC and ACMW were created under the 2004 VAP. The ASEAN charter is legitimate as it is a legal document, while the 2004 VAP has been replaced with the blueprint on social-cultural cooperation and it is not a legal document at all.

In the issue of line reporting, Article 6.6 of the TOR instructs the AICHR to submit annual reports to the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting. Meanwhile the ACWC and ACMW are not required to do so, but seem to be required only to report to lower level ministers or agencies such as the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), Senior Officers Meeting for Social Development and Welfare (SOMSWD) and the Senior Officers of Labor Ministers (SLOM). The difference in the levels of reporting reflects the degree of importance of the issue, which prompted civil society to urge ASEAN to harmonize these initiatives so that they can come under the overarching framework of the AICHR, which includes the promotion and protection of human rights for all.

Resources mobilization and control – The funding and secretariat support of the AICHR will depend on the availability of resources and expertise for both the AICHR and the ASEAN Secretariat. There is foreseeable operational challenge for the AICHR and other regional human rights mechanisms in the pipeline, such as the ACWC and ACMW. ASEAN states are encouraged to second their officials to the ASEAN Secretariat in order to resolve the budgetary problem. In terms of control over their budget, AICHR is required to seek approval from ASEAN Foreign Ministers, and recommendations from the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN. This is also the case with the AICHR’s program and activities’ plan. It is assumed that the budgeting and program plan will become a political arena of the Members states to control the work of the AICHR.

FORUM-ASIA and SAPA Task Force on ASEAN and Human Rights
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Burmese Civil Society Works for Peace and Stability Despite Obstacles

Calls on ASEAN to Support People and Not Military Generals

About the Task Force on ASEAN and Burma (TFAB): A diverse network of civil society actors from Burma working to promote a people-centered ASEAN that is supportive to the cause of democracy, human rights, and peace in Burma.

Since ASEAN’s new charter came into force at the end of 2008, Burma continues to be in flagrant violation of several fundamental principles, most significantly (1) adherence to the rule of law, good governance, and democracy, (2) respect for fundamental freedoms, human rights and social justice; and (3) collective responsibility in enhancing regional peace and security. Many of the most recent violations of these principles have been tied to the regime’s coercive approach to securing power in the run-up to its 2010 elections.

As ASEAN takes significant steps towards further regional coordination and consolidation, Burma will continue to serve as a benchmark for its success or failure. It is clear that Burma’s military regime’s economic mismanagement, disregard for its own people, and highly volatile approach to consolidating its military power before next year’s elections, continue to contribute to regional instability.

Civil society from Burma, many of whom are forced into exile, seek a peaceful and stable Burma that will be able to fully contribute to the ASEAN community. We firmly believe that ASEAN cannot continue its policy of economic engagement without being responsible for a parallel and critical political engagement. We call upon ASEAN to use its new Charter as a guide to deal holistically with its problem child.

Systematic Human Rights Violations Must Cease

Violent and exploitative abuse of ethnic communities is widespread and ongoing particularly in eastern Burma. In an attempt to reclaim control of its border areas before the elections, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) has combined both divide-and-rule and scorched earth tactics, with devastating consequences for ethnic civilians. These actions are a continuation of long-held policies, which have destroyed over 3,300 villages in Eastern Burma in the last ten years.

Affected villagers, meanwhile, work on a daily basis to address these concerns, using a variety of strategies that comprise some of the most effective means to address locally-perceived humanitarian and socio-economic concerns. The fact that ethnic communities, in spite of the odds, continue to actively resist abuse demonstrates that they are highly capable of determining their own futures.

* We call on all involved actors to recognize ethnic minority peoples’ ongoing resistance and support their efforts. All humanitarian efforts, political programs, or development projects should be done in full cooperation with local communities. Abuses, exploitation and corruption must cease.

* One of the first actions of the new ASEAN Inter-governmental Commission on Human Rights should be to investigate these human atrocities. ASEAN should also support international efforts to cease the ongoing impunity of those perpetrating the crimes.

Security for Women: Gender Equality Benefits All

Despite the junta’s assertion that the women of Burma enjoy rights even before they are born, the SPDC is made up entirely of men who are promoting patriarchy through militarization and committing various forms of violence against women throughout the country.
Women human rights defenders who have dared to speak out have been physically assaulted, arrested and detained. Rape and sexual violence carried out by the regime’s armed forces and other authorities occur throughout Burma, but are highly concentrated in ethnic states due to the regime’s policy of military expansion. Sexual violence is being used by the regime as an integral part of its strategy to subjugate the ethnic peoples, and establish control over their lands and resources.

The regime’s economic mismanagement, failed policies and systematic human rights abuses have reduced many of Burma’s people to extreme poverty. This has driven women and girls to migrate in order to find jobs and earn money for their own and their family’s survival. In the course of migration, women and girls become vulnerable to trafficking, due to factors such as a lack of information about their destination and no security and protection.

*The women of Burma reiterate that there can be no advancement of the lives of women and girls in Burma and no protection and promotion of their rights while the military and its proxy organizations remain in power. To ensure political and socio-economic security in Burma, the lives of women must be protected.

**Full Rights for Migrant Workers**

Because of the brutal repression and dire economic circumstances wrought by the SPDC, people from Burma are forced to migrate in unsafe conditions, without any preparation, information, or documentation.

Thailand and Malaysia are the two countries of destination in ASEAN for the majority of these migrants, but these countries offer only extraordinarily precarious legal status. The majority of migrants are completely undocumented, while those with legal or semi-legal status are at risk of losing their status at the hands of retaliatory employers and corrupt government officials. The onerous “nationality verification” process that gives migrants from Burma legal permission to work in Thailand, pursuant to a 2004 MoU with Burma, places migrants and their families back in Burma at risk of SPDC monitoring and abuse. It also ignores the reality that people are fleeing Burma because of the oppression of the SPDC.

Migrants have no secure right to stay in their countries of destination, and are at constant risk of arrest, detention and deportation. Once detained, they often face deplorable conditions. In the past six years alone, 1,300 migrants have died in Malaysian detention centres from insufficient access to medical care.

*We therefore demand the protection of the labour, social, cultural, economic and political rights of migrants from Burma regardless of their legal status, in accordance with the first core principle of the ASEAN Civil Society Proposal for the ASEAN Framework Instrument on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers.*

**Environmental Justice: Protecting Communities and Their Resources**

In the past, communities throughout Burma had their own systems of natural resource management that supported their lives and that also ensured that the resources were not depleted. But inevitably, militarization and development projects under the SPDC have destroyed the environment and made it impossible for the local people to continue their traditional ways of life.

In some cases, Burma environmental civil society groups have helped revive the natural environment and the ways of life it supports. However, in the majority of cases, communities and people continue to suffer from the impacts of military activities and development projects in their area.
ASEAN must only support development and investment projects that fully respect the rights and desires of local communities as well as take sufficient efforts to protect the environment. Investments and development projects should have proper and independent monitoring mechanisms.

Political Oppression Must Stop and An Open Democratic Society Furthered

The unlawful trial of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi showed to the world again the corruption of Burma’s judicial system, and the absence of the rule of law. Instead of opening political space in the lead up to elections, Burma’s military regime continues to severely harass democratic opposition forces and human rights defenders. There are still over 2100 political prisoners in Burma. These people are not criminals, but rather are political leaders, journalists, mothers, religious leaders, ethnic leaders, students, and aid workers.

Despite Burma being one of the most restrictive countries in the world, people still work inside Burma and in exile to speak their opinion, share ideas, and promote peace, human rights, and sustainable development. ASEAN must support their efforts for true democratization and national reconciliation.

ASEAN’s Role in Burma’s National Reconciliation and 2010 Elections

Until now, ASEAN has seen its policy options on Burma in stark black and white terms—isolation versus constructive engagement—whereas the opposition movement has been calling all along for critical engagement. Burma’s movement for democracy and rights of ethnic nationalities is united in calling for political dialogue leading to national reconciliation. In August, this unprecedented grouping of major opposition alliances launched a formal ‘Proposal for National Reconciliation,’ as an expression of its willingness to dialogue and cooperate with the regime for the sake of the people of Burma. This outstretched hand must be met with strong support from the international community, particularly ASEAN, if any real/genuine progress is to be seen.

Some international observers see next year’s elections as an opportunity for change. However, under the rules laid out in the military’s 2008 Constitution, the showcase elections will serve only entrench military rule. The regime is determined to maintain its hold on power in a post-election Burma, even if it means putting key military leaders in civilian clothes.

Therefore ASEAN Must:

- Address all of Burma’s serious breaches of the ASEAN charter
- Strongly discuss Burma’s serious breaches of the ASEAN Charter at the 15th ASEAN Summit, recalling the charter’s provision that, “in the case of serious breach of the Charter or non-compliance, the matter shall be referred to the ASEAN Summit for decision.”
- Refrain from recognizing the 2010 elections unless the military regime meets the following key benchmarks:
  - The unconditional release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners.
  - Inclusive dialogue with all stakeholders, including the regime, pro-democracy and ethnic leaders.
  - An inclusive and open review of the 2008 Constitution.
- Investigate the SPDC’s efforts to obtain nuclear capabilities.
- Put support behind Burma’s opposition group’s historic ‘Proposal for National Reconciliation,’ and ensure that key benchmarks are met on such a path towards genuine democratization.
- Shift from a non-interference or “constructive engagement” policy to critical and aggressive policy
- Support a UN Security Council Resolution on Burma, including a global arms embargo and a commission of inquiry to investigate crimes against humanity.
A. SUMMARY

Burma’s upcoming 2010 election will not bring democracy, security, or national reconciliation to the country. The 2008 constitution was forged in an exclusive, undemocratic and non-reconciliatory manner and is only an institutional tool perpetuating militarism under the domination of the armed forces. A constitution, especially one coming out of a conflict/post-conflict period not derived from negotiations, reconciliation and trust building leads to untenable and often volatile results, especially when it is forcibly implemented from the start.

Genuine political dialogue involving democracy organizations and ethnic nationality groups has never been realized and continues to be banned in the lead up to the election. The military has stopped the process of holding talks with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and continues with its non-negotiable stance on dialogue. After drafting its own election rules, the military junta has severely limited political participation from opposition groups for the 2010 elections.

The military is taking firm measures to ensure complete dominance over the election process, including pressuring ethnic ceasefire groups, undermining the National League for Democracy (NLD) and other opposition groups, preparing to form proxy parties, harassing and imprisoning activists and lobbying the international community.

Democratic leaders of Burma and civil society will not accept the 2008 constitution and will not support the 2010 election without the release of all political prisoners, and fundamental benchmarks for national reconciliation met, including an inclusive constitutional review.

This paper provides an overview of the flaws of the 2008 Constitution, and why the 2010 election is problematic and far from the genuine democracy demanded by the people of Burma. It also presents key solutions and recommendations to the international community that will further sustainable peace and freedom in Burma.

B. BACKGROUND

Since it achieved independence, Burma has grappled with core questions relating to the role of ethnic minorities and the role of the military in governance. Burma’s most recent chapter of military interference can be traced back to 1988, when the Burmese army staged a coup after months of anti-government protests in the entire country. Soon afterwards, the military generals formed the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), promising to conduct multiparty elections to achieve national reconciliation and build the foundation for a multi-ethnic, pluralist state.

Elections were held on 27 May 1990. The National League for Democracy (NLD), Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s party, emerged victorious in terms of popular vote (60%) and the number of seats in Parliament (392 out of 485). Many other democratic parties of ethnic nationalities also won key seats. The National Unity Party (NUP), which was backed by the military, won only 10 seats. Despite the NLD’s landslide victory, the SLORC refused to recognize the results. The regime arrested the main leaders of the NLD and other opposition figures, stifling political dialogue. The SLORC also maintained martial law, continuing to exercise legislative, executive, and judicial power.

Page 1
In 1993, rather than cede power to the elected government, the SLORC commenced their National Convention to start the constitution drafting process. The junta initially claimed the delegates to the National Convention would be the elected representatives, but instead ensured over time that military leaders chose the vast majority of the delegates.

In 2003, the military government, now called the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) announced its so-called seven-step roadmap to democracy.¹ Civic and political leaders have made a good faith effort to participate in the Roadmap. However, the democratic transition plan has been flawed in process and substance from its onset.

The SPDC portrays the Burmese constitution as a step in a larger political transition, eventually leading toward a full democracy. Regrettably, the procedural and substantive flaws in the constitution are so severe, that the upcoming elections cannot be viewed in furtherance of the democratic transition process in Burma.

In the past few decades, the military’s zero-tolerance policy for dissent has landed many Burmese in prison, while others have been forced into exile in fear of violent retribution. The military government continues to misappropriate Burma’s wealth, and minority ethnic groups are particularly exploited. Nevertheless, when given the opportunity, the people continue to voice their preference for a democratic and representative government.

C. PROCEDURAL FLAWS

1. The constitutional drafting process failed to meet minimum international standards.²

The constitutional drafting process excluded democratic participation, was conducted in secrecy and heavily manipulated by the military regime. First, the junta handpicked candidates in the National Conventions, ignoring the results of the 1990 elections and banning the participation of civil society, NLD members, and several ethnic minority leaders. Democratic political groups and ethnic nationalities created and submitted policy papers on constitutional principles, democracy, federal affairs, and rights of ethnic groups – but the efforts from non-military groups, or statements that did not fall in line with military objectives were never recognized. The SPDC also criminalized open criticism of the process. Moreover, until April 2008, a month before the referendum, it was illegal to even discuss constitutional matters outside of the National Convention.

¹ Seven-step roadmap: (1) Reconvening of the National Convention that has been adjourned since 1996. (2) After the successful holding of the National Convention, step by step implementation of the process necessary for the emergence of a genuine and disciplined democratic system. (3) Drafting of a new constitution in accordance with basic principles and detailed basic principles laid down by the National Convention. (4) Adoption of the constitution through national referendum. (5) Holding of free and fair elections for Pyithu Hluttaws (Legislative bodies) according to the new constitution. (6) Convening of Hluttaws attended by Hluttaw members in accordance with the new constitution. (7) Building a modern, developed and democratic nation by the state leaders elected by the Hluttaw; and the government and other central organs formed by the Hluttaw.

2. The constitutional referendum failed to meet minimum international standards.

There was widespread domestic and international condemnation of the constitutional referendum that failed to meet a single basic international standard for a free and fair referendum process. Violations of international standards include: a) the SPDC affirmatively violated Burmese citizens’ right to vote on a broad and systematic basis; b) ballots in the constitutional referendum in Burma were not secret; c) citizens and the media reported that SPDC and its agents used threats, coercion, misinformation, deception, and violence to sway or force voters to approve the draft constitution; d) within Burma, many voters did not feel that they were provided adequate information to develop an informed opinion on the draft constitution; e) in the run up to the referendum, the SPDC systematically stifled all independent and opposition media coverage of the proposed referendum and the draft constitution; f) despite offers and appeals from Burmese democratic leaders and the international community, the SPDC refused to allow independent electoral monitors to observe the referendum voting in Burma; and g) in contrast to international standards, electoral administration in Burma was not neutral or independent at any level.

Despite international pressure to cancel or postpone the referendum following the devastation of Cyclone Nargis, the regime claimed a 92% approval rate for the referendum, which took place on May 10 and 24. This figure is not credible based on both the scope of the humanitarian crisis following Cyclone Nargis, as well as the reports calling the integrity of the referendum process into question.

D. THE CONSTITUTION IS SUBSTANTIVELY FLAWED

In theory, creation of a new constitution leading to elections could form the basis of building security, national reconciliation and democracy. It is not unusual to adopt a new constitution in the context of civil conflict. Many civil disputes stem from the structure of the state, the distribution of power, and access to national resources—the very matters dealt with in a constitution.

In the case of Burma, however, the manner in which the constitution was developed and the substantive provisions as approved diminishes the likelihood of reconciliation and democracy. The constitution, drafted and approved with military interference, is substantially problematic because it ensures the military maintains implicit and explicit control over all of Burma’s institutions. Moreover, rather than reflecting the will of the people while protecting the vulnerable, the constitution exposes ethnic minorities and political opponents to considerable risk. Even if international monitors observed the elections to ensure fairness, this would still not bring national reconciliation and stability to Burma.

1. The structure of the legislature ensures the military maintains heavy control in parliament.

Twenty-five percent of all seats are allocated for the military, which will give the military veto power on any legislation process that needs over 70% approval vote. Furthermore, army members do not have to resign when appointed to legislature or executive branch, as other public servants must.

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3. “A free and fair referendum process provides for universal, equal, free, and secret suffrage, with monitoring of the voting process and mechanisms for appeal should any concerns arise over the process or the results. In the specific case of a constitutional referendum, voters must have open access to the constitution, unbiased media coverage related to the constitution, and forums to discuss the constitution freely. Voters in a free and fair referendum are also provided adequate information so they may understand the question on the ballot and the implications of their vote.” Public International Law & Policy Group (May 2008), Burmese Constitutional Referendum, Neither Free Nor Fair (May 2008). See also footnote two.

4. Cyclone Nargis hit Irrawaddy and Rangoon Divisions on the evening of May 2 and morning of May 3, 2008. The storm devastated a huge swath of the Irrawaddy Delta region, wiping out entire villages and leaving an estimated 138,000 Burmese dead or missing. UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
2. Parliament appoints the president; therefore, the executive branch will also be subject to military influence. Because the military makes up 25% of parliament, effectively, appointment to the presidency requires the support of the military. Once in office, the president yields enormous powers, including the power to appoint most positions of power. The relationship between the Commander in Chief and the President is also problematic and structured to ensure the military maintains control over Burma’s institutions. The Commander in Chief can remove the President and some Presidential actions require approval of Commander in Chief. During periods of “state emergency” the Commander in Chief can supersede both President and Parliament. In addition, he is the only counteracting weight of the President, for the constitution states that he is “not answerable to any parliaments.” The Commander in Chief is not appointed by parliament, has no period of tenure, and there is no procedure for removal.

3. The judicial system is deeply flawed and under the influence of the armed forces. The Burmese judiciary consists of ordinary courts, the courts martial and the Constitutional Tribunal. Overall, the procedure for the appointment of judges is highly politicized. The constitution does not stipulate rules about the independence of the judiciary. There is also no independent commission with the powers to organize and manage the courts. In addition, the Supreme Court lacks jurisdiction over the military forces.

4. Marginalizes ethnic nationalities
The constitutional crisis over ethnic plurality has been at the root of Burma’s conflict over the past several decades. Ethnic minorities have long agitated for a truly federal system ever since they were persuaded to join Burma at the time of independence. The fact that the 2008 Constitution stipulates that all regional and self-administered areas are subject to the rule of the national executive and legislature effectively abolishes the vision of a federal government structure in Burma. The complex structure of territorial division of the country and a plethora of institutions at every level of government is merely a subterfuge to hide the highly centralized nature of the state and administration. In other words, the 2008 constitution will centralize control over ethnic minority areas further. In a country in which most ethnic-nationalities have been fighting for greater self-determination for decades, a constitution that ignores Burma’s multi-cultural and multi-ethnic character and does not provide any adequate and proper recognition of its diversities is unsound and should be rejected.

On the issues of language, culture and religion, crucial to minorities, little authority is given to regional or self-administered communities. They will be prevented from using local languages in administration or education in their states. Moreover the ethnic communities will have little control over their traditional land, which is central to the culture of many communities. Furthermore, the regime’s push for ceasefire armed groups to relinquish their power and become “border guards” is already creating tension between the military regime.

5. There are no Mechanisms to Promote and Protect Fundamental Human Rights. Infringes on the fundamental human rights of the people in the name of state security and public tranquility. Many provisions outlined in the 2008 constitution relating to human rights and freedoms are deeply flawed, and several important rights are missing. Nothing is said, for example, about rights of minorities, children, and the disabled. Most rights are also confined to citizens of Burma—the definition of citizen in the constitution is questionable and appears to be politically motivated to exclude opponents of the regime. This is again in stark contrast to international law, which usually allows such restriction only for rights regarding elections and participation in public affairs. A number of key rights (including rights and freedoms of expression, assembly, associations and union, language, and culture) may also be limited for reasons of ‘state security, prevalence of law and order, community peace and tranquility or public order and morality’. For example, the ILO has stated concern that the constitution will allow for forced labor to continue.
Neither the process of constitution making nor the contents of the draft pay any heed to generally accepted human rights principles. It is likely that the judiciary—central to the maintenance of rights—will not be independent and will not be able to protect human rights. No other institutions, like a human rights commission or ombudsperson, is provided or envisaged. The actual terms in which rights are framed leave many possibilities of their derogation, and indeed suspension. Nor are the structures of state, dominated by the military, conducive to respect for rights.

6. Falls drastically below international standards of gender equality\(^5\). Women are disqualified from holding many positions of power because many posts require prior military service. This includes the Presidency, Vice-President, and key ministries. In addition, the most powerful position, the Commander in Chief, is solely reserved for those in active military service. Though the constitution says that there will not be discrimination based on sex in regards to appointments, the constitution also adds, “However, nothing in this Section shall prevent appointment of men to the positions that are suitable for men only.” It is contrary in guaranteeing equality regardless of sex difference and will fail to fulfill the obligation under Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women.

**E. POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS OF THE REGIME’S SHAM DEMOCRATIZATION**

The 2008 constitution and the upcoming election is **not a step towards further democratization of Burma’s political process**. While the military junta portrays the SPDC as a transitional body whose powers will cease to exist once the 2010 elections are over, the special privileges, representations, and immunities in state institutions as listed in the 2008 constitution will prevent any true transitional efforts. Various regulations adopted by the military show the junta’s true intentions. The fact that it is very difficult to amend the 2008 constitution is only one sign for the determination of the military to prevent full democracy and participation and the protection of rights.

The severe flaws in the 2008 constitution outlined above will have serious implications for the 2010 elections and beyond if not addressed immediately. As the recent history of ethnically diverse countries such as Burundi, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka or former Yugoslavia amply shows, a constitution that systematically entrenches injustice will eventually trigger chaos and unrest. **There is a strong possibility that the unresolved conflicts within Burma will continue or even aggravate** because of the blatant exclusion of ethnic nationalities in the constitution. Peace and stability cannot prosper in a climate of fear created by the political hegemony of a small military elite. With no strong measures of human right promotion or protection, widespread human rights atrocities will continue – particularly against ethnic groups and women, perpetuating instability and insecurity. Grossly disregarding the fundamental rule of law freedom of speech and association, the continuing imprisonment of political activists will contribute to the further eradication of the legitimacy of Burma’s political system.

The military is also resorting to coercive tactics, including pressuring ethnic ceasefire groups, undermining the NLD and other opposition groups, preparing to form proxy parties, harassing and imprisoning activists and lobbying the international community for their cause. The recent conflict in the Kokang area shows how the military regime is willing to take all necessary measures to assure that groups comply with the roadmap. **Without acknowledging the sovereignty of the people, deeper disagreement about nationalism and identity cannot be addressed.** The process of re-constituting the state often does not succeed because of the lack of agreement between diverse peoples on what the ‘nation’ means to each. This will also be true for the 2010 elections under the current circumstances.
Burma’s socio-economic situation has plummeted drastically under the control of the military regime, and there is no guarantee that Burma’s collapsed healthcare, education, and other social services will improve under a false democratic system. **A government still dominated by the same military will continue its disregard and violation of crucial development and stability issues of environmental sustainability, gender equality, refugees, migrants, and more.**

**F. SOLUTIONS: TOWARD THE CHANGE WE NEED**

A solution to overcome the hardships besetting the nation can be found in a short time if all political stakeholders work together by showing goodwill and keeping national reconciliation in mind. A review and/or amendment of the 2008 Constitution will help overcome the present political and socioeconomic hardships as well as guide the nation onto the correct path of development. Furthermore, the Tatmadaw (Defense Services) has an important political role to play during the transition period when. Together with the pro-democracy and ethnic nationality forces of Burma, it will be jointly responsible for guiding the nation towards democracy and development. With this conviction, all organizations in the Movement held a series of consultations and prepared a Proposal for National Reconciliation so that it can be presented to the SPDC, the people, the Tatmadaw and the international community.

> - From The Proposal for National Reconciliation (2009)

The democracy movement inside and outside the country has stated on numerous occasions that they do not accept the military regime’s roadmap to democracy. We eagerly welcome genuine political dialogue and hope that the military regime demonstrates a sincere desire for national reconciliation. While the democracy movement has stated its willingness to engage in dialogue, the military regime must meet crucial benchmarks to demonstrate sincerity. Junta leaders have continually ignored calls from the opposition groups as well as the international community to release all political prisoners, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Khun Htun Oo, U Tin Oo and ‘88 generation students. Those imprisoned are crucial leaders whose role is vital for genuine national reconciliation. Without their voices it is impossible to say that democracy is happening.

Moreover, there must be a review of the 2008 constitution. Elections are meaningless as long as opposition groups are denied genuine involvement in the drafting of a democratic constitution. The 2010 elections could be an important juncture for the political landscape in Burma if all political prisoners are released and all stakeholders are allowed in a full inclusive dialogue for a negotiated settlement including the agreement on how the 1990 election result be validated. Even then it is not the end game or the everlasting solution to Burma’s problems.

Democracy and ethnic communities have also firmly demanded a cessation of systematic human rights violations committed by the regime against the populous; specifically ethnic and religious groups and women. These attacks stand as crimes against humanity and must end. The international community must support these calls and impose concrete and targeted sanctions and engage in critical/aggressive engagement to ensure national reconciliation takes place in Burma.

For the democratic process to be sustainable and effective, the grievances of ethnic minorities must be addressed, fundamental human rights must be protected, and governmental accountability must be safeguarded. The inclusion of democratic opposition parties to the Constitutional process would not only assure political pluralism, it would offer a more effective representation of the people through an already drafted federal constitution. The Burmese opposition forces, which include ethnic-nationalities leadership and pro-democratic forces based inside Burma, in Burma’s border areas and diasporically in developed nations, has developed an alternative draft constitution based on a federal system of states that guarantees the protection of rights of all people in Burma, especially the ethnic nationalities. Through the process of drafting this federal democratic constitution, the opposition movement has developed strategies to politically, not
violently, address key factors that currently underlie the nation-state’s security. The opposition movement is already addressing key constitutional concerns, as well as other fundamental factors of genuine democratic transition.

G. RECOMMENDATIONS

Unless Burma’s military regime cooperates and meets the key benchmarks of 1) release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners and 2) inclusive political process towards national reconciliation, the democracy movement has called on the UN and the international community to not support the 2010 elections and impose the following measures against the military regime:

To the United Nations Security Council:

Pass an Arms Embargo to hinder the military regime from its brutal offensive against civilians.

The Security Council should begin a Commission of Inquiry to investigate crimes against humanity.

To ASEAN:

In light of Burma’s serious breach of the principles of the ASEAN Charter, ASEAN leaders must place democratization and security in Burma on the agenda of the upcoming ASEAN summit.

ASEAN should appoint an envoy that will work directly with other international envoys.

ASEAN must take firmer actions against the military regime that continues to violate key principles of the ASEAN Charter: human rights, good governance, and rule of law.

To United States and European Union:

The EU should immediately send its Burma envoy, US should hasten efforts to appoint their envoy and dispatch immediately. ASEAN should appoint and send an envoy, and they should work in full coordination with each other, as well as Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki-Moon.

The US, UK and EU must impose stronger and targeted sanctions.

Key References:
- PIPLG
- UNDHR; ICCPR; CEDAW, etc
WILL ASEAN FAIL TO CONFRONT THE SPDC, AGAIN?

- With its new Charter, ASEAN now has the necessary tools to insist on democratic reform and national reconciliation in Burma.
- The SPDC’s relations with ASEAN and the international community sour over the arrest, detention, and conviction of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.
- Burma’s democracy movement both inside and outside of Burma offers credible solutions for Burma’s 2010 elections.
- The SPDC’s plans for 2010 elections are fueling instability within Burma and have already caused problems for Thailand, China, and Bangladesh.
- The SPDC’s human rights abuses continue unabated.
- The SPDC Army launches offensives against the KNU, MNDAA, and targets civilians in Shan State.
- SPDC Army aggression against ethnic nationalities increases the number of IDPs and refugees seeking shelter in neighboring countries.
- ASEAN fails to address and resolve root causes for Rohingya fleeing Burma.
- Burma remains the worlds’ #2 producer of heroin and Asia’s largest producer of amphetamines.
- The SPDC’s economic mismanagement continues to place Burma’s people in abject poverty.
- The SPDC continues to block humanitarian aid relief efforts.
- SPDC Army violence against women and children continues.

Recommendations to ASEAN:
- Pressure the SPDC to adopt the recommendations contained in the “Proposal for National Reconciliation”;
- Address and resolve the Rohingya problem;
- Pressure the SPDC to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners;
- Pressure the SPDC to stop human rights abuses and armed aggression against ethnic nationalities.

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Since the last ASEAN Summit concluded on 1 March, the political, social, and economic crises attributable to the SPDC have worsened while other critical existing issues from the last Summit remained unresolved. Meanwhile, Burma’s democracy movement proposed clear and reasonable solutions for the country that also meet the interests of Burma’s neighbors.

**DEMOCRACY**

**2010 elections: Democracy movement promotes solutions**

As the SPDC’s 2010 elections draw near, pro-democracy forces and ethnic groups inside and outside Burma not only voiced their opposition to the SPDC’s planned 2010 elections but also laid out alternative solutions to Burma’s political crisis.

- **29 April**: Following its first general meeting in more than a decade, the National League for Democracy (NLD) issued the “Shwegondaing Declaration”, which outlined the party’s conditions for participating in the 2010 polls. The NLD said it would take part in the elections only if the SPDC released all political prisoners, reviewed the Constitution, and held “inclusive free and fair” elections “under international supervision.”

- **13 August**: the Burmese exiled pro-democracy coalition Movement for Democracy and Rights for Ethnic Nationalities (MDREN) released their “Proposal for National Reconciliation” following a two-day meeting in Jakarta. The “Proposal for National Reconciliation” called for the unconditional and immediate release of all political prisoners including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, a declaration of a nationwide ceasefire, a review of the SPDC’s 2008 constitution, and a new or reformed electoral law ahead of the 2010 elections.

**Elections fuel instability**

In late April, the SPDC presented an ultimatum to the various ethnic ceasefire groups to incorporate their armed forces into a new Border Guard Force (BGF) prior to the 2010 elections. The plan is designed to implement Article 338 of the SPDC’s 2008 constitution which requires that “all the armed forces in the Union shall be under the command of the Defense Services.” The plan would essentially absorb the ethnic armies into the SPDC Army.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups that oppose the 2010 elections</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Committee Representing the People’s Parliament (CRPP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forum for Democracy in Burma (FDB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kachin Independence Organization (KIO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kachin National Organization (KNO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon National Democratic Front (MNDF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Council of the Union of Burma (NCUB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationalities Youth Forum (NYF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mon State Party (NMSP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palaung State Liberation Front (PSLF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palaung Women’s Organization (PWO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shan State Army – South (SSA-S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student and Youth Congress of Burma (SYCB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ta’ang Student and Youth Organization (TSYO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nationals Alliance (UNA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s League of Burma (WLB)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1. NLD (29 Apr 09) Shwegondaing declaration; AP (29 Apr 09) Myanmar party sets terms for taking part in polls
2. MDREN comprises the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma, the National Council of the Union of Burma, the Ethnic Nationalities Council, the Women's League of Burma, the Forum for Democracy in Burma, the Students and Youth Congress of Burma, and the Nationalities Youth Forum.
3. VOA (13 Aug 09) Exiled Dissidents Propose Democratic Transition for Burma
5. Mizzima News (28 Apr 09) Junta meets leaders of ethnic ceasefire groups; Irrawaddy (28 Apr 09) Junta Commanders Court Ceasefire Groups; Kachin News Group (04 May 09) KIA told to change to border force by junta; DVB (04 May 09) Intelligence chief meets with ceasefire groups; SHAN (04 May 09) Junta tells Wa ceasefire days are over
7. Irrawaddy (04 May 09) Armed Ceasefire Groups to be 'Border Guard Force'.
Many ethnic ceasefire groups have rejected the SPDC’s ultimatum. In response, the SPDC increased its military presence in Kachin, Shan, and Karen States. As a result, both the Kachin Independence Organizations and the United Wa State Army prepared for possible hostilities with the SPDC Army. During the SPDC offensive against the Myanmar National Democracy Alliance Army (MNDA) in the Kokang Self-Administered Zone of Northern Shan State in August, about 37,000 ethnic Chinese from the Kokang territory fled into China.

### Table: Name of ceasefire group and response to BGF order

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of ceasefire group</th>
<th>Response to BGF order</th>
<th>No. of soldiers</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kayan New Land Party (KNLP)</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mon State Party (NMSP)</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>Warned other ceasefire groups against becoming BGF.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDA) [aka Kokang]</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
<td>600 - 1,000</td>
<td>MNDA leadership fled Kokang region in late August after the SPDC offensive and is now hiding in Wa territory.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Wa State Army (UWSA)</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
<td>20,000 - 25,000</td>
<td>Rejection of BGF has led to SPDC on Wa drug trade.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shan State Army (SSA) “North”</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA) [aka Mongla]</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
<td>1,200 - 5,000</td>
<td>Along with the Wa, are seen as potential next targets for the SPDC.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kachin Independence Army</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
<td>4,000 - 5,000</td>
<td>It’s proposal to create independent Border guard force roundly rejected by SPDC.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pa-O National Organization</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayan National Guard (KNG)</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karenni Nationalities People’s Liberation Front (KNPLF)</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA)</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>Has gone a recruiting drive, to expand from 6,000 to 9,000 troops. Recruitment has included the recruitment of child soldiers.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kachin Defense Army (KDA)</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td>400 - 800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Democratic Army Kachin (NDAK)</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lasang Awng Wa Peace Group in Kachin State</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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8 Kachin News Group (11 Aug 09) Four ethnic ceasefire groups to take on junta in event of war; Mizzima News (14 Aug 09) KIO trains administrative staff; Irrawaddy (25 Aug 09) Tension Mounts between Junta and Kokang Ceasefire Group; SHAN (24 Aug 09) Tension sparks people to flee into China; SHAN (14 Aug 09) Junta’s ploy is to push Kokang to shoot first; Irrawaddy (10 Aug 09) Kokang Thwart Burma Army Drug Raid; Irrawaddy (13 Aug 09) Tension Mounts at Three Pagodas Pas; Irrawaddy (31 Aug 09) Junta Sends Major Reinforcements to Shan State
9 SHAN (02 Jun 09) Tension grows between southern Wa, junta
10 The Straits Times (02 Sep 09) Border intrigue, or was it?
11 Irrawaddy (8 Sep 09) New Mon Party Forming for Election; Irrawaddy (Mar-Apr 09) To Fight or Not to Fight
12 DVB (03 Sep 09) Mon party warn on border guard pressure
13 The Jamestown Foundation (10 Sep 09) Emerging Fault Lines in Sino-Burmese Relations: The Kokang Incident; Irrawaddy (Mar-Apr 09) To Fight or Not to Fight
14 Washington Post (29 Aug 09) China Urges Burma to Bridge Ethnic Militia Uprising at Border
15 SHAN (29 Sep 09) Boom days over for Wa
16 Irrawaddy (Mar-Apr 09) To Fight or Not to Fight
17 Irrawaddy (Mar-Apr 09) To Fight or Not to Fight; Mizzima News (09 Sep 09) Feuding militias come in the way of junta’s plans
18 Washington Post (25 Sep 09) Burma’s Junta Intensifies Bid For Unification Bringing Autonomous Ethnic Enclaves Back Into Fold Poses Major Challenges; SHAN (30 Sep 09) Wa and Mongla deny deal with junta
19 NYT (10 May 09) Ethnic Groups in Myanmar Hope for Peace, but Gird for Fight; Irrawaddy (8 Sep 09) Kachin’s Hard and Soft Strategy; Irrawaddy (Mar-Apr 09) To Fight or Not to Fight
20 Kachin News Group (08 Sep 09) KIO delegates arrive in Myitkyina for meeting with junta; Kachin News Group (10 Sep 09) Contentious KIO-junta meeting continues for second day
21 Irrawaddy (Mar-Apr 09) To Fight or Not to Fight
22 Irrawaddy (18 Jun 09) DKBA: Burma’s Second Largest Non-state Armed Group?
23 DVB (02 Sep 09) DKBA expands troops in eastern Burma
24 IMNA (24 July 09) DKBA ramps up civilian abuses and set sights on Brigade 6; RFA (14 Sep 09) Conflict Children in Forced Labor
25 Kachin News Group (14 Sep 09) Former KIA brigade warned not to help KIA in event of war on September 9; Irrawaddy (Mar-Apr 09) To Fight or Not to Fight
Most of the ethnic ceasefire groups have refused to comply with the SPDC’s BGF order because the provisions of the 2008 Constitution do not secure the human rights of ethnic communities. According to the 2008 Constitution, the President appoints the Chief State Ministers as well as the Minister of Border Affairs from a list provided by the Military Commander in Chief, which violates federal principles and cedes de facto control of the ethnic nationality areas to the military.  

HUMAN RIGHTS

Imprisonment on the rise

Arrest and imprisonment of pro-democracy activists has continued since the last ASEAN Summit. The ongoing jailing of pro-democracy activists is part of the SPDC’s ploy to ensure that the most viable pro-democracy candidates, including ethnic nationality leaders, will be unable to run in the elections. The SPDC-drafted constitution prohibits individuals who are serving prison sentences for any offense from standing for election to Parliament.  

- Over the past six months: The regime has arrested 196 dissidents, including 108 NLD members. The regime also sentenced 51 activists to lengthy prison terms.
- 11 August 2009: Following an 86-day sham trial, the regime sentenced Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to three years in prison with hard labor for allegedly violating the conditions of her house arrest. SPDC Chairman Sr Gen Than Shwe commuted the sentence to 18 months to be served under house arrest.  
- 4 September: According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), the number of political prisoners in Burma reached a record-high of 2,211. AAPP also said that at least 137 political prisoners were in poor health due to harsh prison conditions and the denial of adequate medical care.
- 17 September: The SPDC announced the release of 7,114 prisoners from jails across Burma “for their good conduct and discipline.” However, most of those released were common criminals. The SPDC released only 128 political prisoners.

Spotlight on SPDC’s abuses

International monitoring bodies and rights groups continued to highlight the SPDC’s ongoing and systematic human rights abuses.

- 12 March: Reporters sans Frontiers (RSF) named Burma among the 12 countries that enforce heavy internet censorship.

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26 Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Article 232  
27 Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Articles 121  
28 NLM (12 Aug 09) Judgments pronounced for Criminal Regular Trials against US Citizen Mr John William Yettaw, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Daw Khin Khin Win and Ma Win Ma Ma; NLM (12 Aug 09) Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council issues directive dated 10 August 2009 for Ministry of Home Affairs stating upon Court pronouncing sentence to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, sentence to be served by her under Criminal Procedure Code be amended to be remitted and suspended if she displays good conduct and pardon be granted accordingly; AFP (11 Aug 09) Myanmar's Suu Kyi gets 18 months house arrest; Reuters (11 Aug 09) Myanmar's Suu Kyi gets 18 months house arrest: official; BBC (11 Aug 09) Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi 'guilty'; Reuters (11 Aug 09) Myanmar's Suu Kyi found guilty in security case; WSJ (11 Aug 09) Myanmar's Suu Kyi gets 18 months house arrest; Bloomberg (11 Aug 09) Myanmar Suu Kyi House Arrest in Myanmar Extended by 18 Months; Bangkok Post (11 Aug 09) Junta returns Suu Kyi to house arrest; Irrawaddy (11 Aug 09) Myanmar's Suu Kyi get 18 months house arrest; IANS (11 Aug 09) Burma grants amnesty to over 7,000 prisoners.
29 Mizzima News (04 Sep 09) Former air force officer sentenced to two years
30 NLM (18 Sep 09) Myanmar frees thousands; Xinhua (17 Sep 09) Myanmar gov't grants amnesty to over 7,000 prisoners; DVB (17 Sep 09) Burma releases 7000 prisoners; Mizzima News (17 Sep 09) Burma announces amnesty for 7114 prisoners; Mizzima News (17 Sep 09) Junta releases prisoners amidst condemnation by HRW
31 AAPP (22 Sep 09) At least 128 political prisoners released
• **27 March:** The UN Human Rights Council (HRC) passed a resolution that condemned the SPDC for the “ongoing systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms” of the Burmese people. It was the 19th resolution passed by the Geneva-based body against Burma’s military regime since 1992.

• **30 April:** The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) identified Burma as the worst place in the world to be a blogger due to the SPDC’s extensive restrictions on blogging and other internet activity.

• **11 May:** In its annual global survey on media freedom, Freedom House ranked Burma second to last among the 195 countries surveyed. The US-based media watchdog has ranked Burma’s press as “not free” for the past 27 years.

• **6 June:** An International Labor Organization (ILO) Committee of Experts ruled that the practice of forced labor continues to prevail throughout the country.

Monks and nuns persecuted: jailed, not allowed to travel, not allowed to pray

The regime also stepped up arrest, harassment, and surveillance of Buddhist monks across Burma. According to Human Rights Watch, 237 monks and 35 nuns remain detained across Burma’s prisons and at least seven of the detained monks are in poor health as a result of their ongoing detention.

• **Mid-June:** The SPDC Ministry of Religious Affairs stopped issuing letters of recommendation to monks. This measure effectively prevents monk from applying for visas to travel abroad.

• **19 June:** SPDC authorities prevented monks from the Rangoon’s Maha Si monastery from participating in religious ceremonies for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s birthday. SPDC authorities also harassed four monks who attended the celebrations of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s birthday.

• **Late July:** The regime collected personal information and photographs of monks from monasteries nationwide.

• **Mid August:** Police in Myitkyina, Kachin State, escorted local monks during their morning alms procession.

• **5 August:** SPDC authorities in Yenanchaung, Magwe Division, barred monks at the Myat Saw Nyi Naung pagoda from reciting sutras during a full moon religious ceremony.

• **11 August:** Plain clothes policemen in Rangoon’s Bahan Township arrested and forcibly disrobed 36-year-old monk U Sanda Dika.

• **27 August:** SPDC authorities arrested an assistant chief monk from Shwe Zaydi Parli University monastery in Yenanchaung Township, Magwe Division.

• **28 August:** SPDC authorities arrested a young monk from Mandalay monastery in Pakokku, Magwe Division.

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33 RSF (12 Mar 09) Internet Enemies - Burma
34 Reuters (27 Mar 09) U.N. rights body condemns systematic abuses in Myanmar; HRC, 10th session, Situation of human rights in Myanmar, 20 March 2009, UN Doc A/HRC/10/L.28
35 CPJ (30 Apr 09) 10 Worst Countries to be a Blogger; Irrawaddy (30 Apr 09) Irrawaddy: Burma named worst online oppressor; Mizzima News (30 Apr 09) Burma worst internet oppressor: CPJ
36 Freedom House (01 May 09) Freedom of the Press 2009
37 IMNA (18 Aug 09) Monks searched as they travel through Mon state; Mizzima News (20 Aug 09) Junta alert about possible monk-led protests; Narinjara News (21 Aug 09) Sittwe Security Beefed up with Riot Police
38 DVB (22 Sep 09) Rights group highlights persecution of Burma monks
39 Irrawaddy (15 Jun 09) Junta Bans Monks from Traveling Abroad
40 Irrawaddy (19 Jun 09) Suu Kyi’s 64th Birthday Celebrated amid Repression
41 Irrawaddy (05 Aug 09) Monks Question Gov’t Use of Personal Photographs; Irrawaddy (15 Aug 09) Are Monks Preparing to Return to the Streets?
42 Kachin News Group (17 Aug 09) Police escorts for monks accepting offerings
43 Irrawaddy (06 Aug 09) Burmese Authorities Ban Chanting of Metta Sutta
44 Mizzima News (04 Sep 09) Political prisoners on the rise in Burma: AAPP
45 Mizzima News (01 Sep 09) Monks under close surveillance
46 Mizzima News (01 Sep 09) Monks under close surveillance
• **29 August**: SPDC authorities in Chauk Township, Magwe Division, arrested U Thumana, a monk from Pakokku.47
• **29 August**: Special Branch police arrested abbot U Gaw Thita, as he landed at Rangoon International airport from Taiwan.48
• **30 August**: SPDC authorities in Chauk Township, Magwe Division, raided the room of the head monk U Yaywada of Ngwe Taung monastery.49
• **9 September**: police in Akyab briefly detained for questioning several monks who went to local pagodas to honor the 70th anniversary of the death of revered Rakhine monk U Ottama.50

**MILITARY AFFAIRS**

The junta also continued military offensives in Eastern Burma as part of an intimidation campaign to ensure the ethnic nationalities’ compliance with the SPDC’s election plan.

• **Early June**: Joint forces from the SPDC Army and the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) launched a new offensive against Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) bases along the Thai-Burma border in Southern Karen State.51 On 18 June, SPDC Army forces captured three KNLA positions.52
• **Late July**: The SPDC Army launched a military offensive against civilian populations in Shan State. The SPDC Army burned more than 500 homes and forced an estimated 10,000 people in Central Shan State out of their villages.53
• **Late August**: SPDC offensive against the Myanamr National Democracy Alliance Army (MNDAA) in the Kokang region in Northern Shan State led to the break down of a 20-year ceasefire agreement and the resumption of hostilities between the Kokang and the SPDC Army.54

**DISPLACEMENT**

**Refugees and IDPs**

SPDC military offensives in Eastern Burma led to a recent spike in refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). An estimated 43,800 have fled to neighboring countries from Karen and Shan States since June. In addition, the SPDC Army has internally displaced an estimated 10,000 people and burned more than 500 homes in Central Shan State.55 Military observers and analysts predict that if war break out between the SPDC troops and the UWSA, an estimated 50,000 Shan and Wa refugees would flee to neighboring Thailand, and even more into China.56

• **Early June**: SPDC Army and DKBA forces launched a joint operation in Hpa-an District, Karen State.57 While hundreds remained trapped by the fighting, an estimated 6,800 Karen

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47 DVB (03 Sep 09) Monks intimidated close to 2007 anniversary
48 Mizzima News (08 Sep 09) Abbot returning from Taiwan arrested
49 Mizzima News (01 Sep 09) Monks under close surveillance
50 Narinjara News (10 Sep 09) Ottama Day Celebrated in Sittwe
51 Irrawaddy (06 Jun 09) Attacks on KNLA Continue
52 Reuters (18 Jun 09) Myanmar troops threaten Karen rebel bases
53 Irrawaddy (13 Aug 09) 10,000 Villagers Forcibly Relocated in Shan State: Rights Groups; DVB (13 Aug 09) 500 Shan houses burned in scorched earth campaign
54 SHAN (27 Aug 09) Rebel say junta shell kills Chinese soldiers
55 Irrawaddy (13 Aug 09) 10,000 Villagers Forcibly Relocated in Shan State: Rights Groups; DVB (13 Aug 09) 500 Shan houses burned in scorched earth campaign
56 Mizzima News (10 Sep 09) Civil war imminent in Burma: Observers
57 Mizzima News (08 Jun 09) Thousands flee latest military offensive in Karen State; Irrawaddy (06 Jun 09) Attacks on KNLA Continue; Mizzima News (05 Jun 09) Karen villagers flee to escape battlefront; Mizzima News (09 Jun 09) Fresh clashes force many Karen to flee; Mizzima News (09 Jun 09) Fresh clashes force many Karen to flee; Irrawaddy (11 Jun 09) Joint Forces Concentrate on Mortar Attacks against KNU
fled into Thailand. Karen refugees reported that many fled fearing forced recruitment into the DKBA or forced labor to porter military supplies for the SPDC Army.

- **Late July:** The SPDC Army launched a military offensive against civilian populations in Shan State. The SPDC Army forced an estimated 10,000 people in Central Shan State out of their villages. It was the single largest forced displacement in Shan State since 1998, when the SPDC Army uprooted over 300,000 people.

- **Late August:** SPDC baiting and aggression led to the break down of a 20-year ceasefire agreement and the resumption of hostilities between the Kokang and the SPDC Army. The regime attacks pushed nearly 37,000 refugees into China.

### Rohingya: new name, same problem

ASEAN leaders acted on their promise to solve the plight of the Rohingya boat people during the 14th ASEAN Summit by deciding to simply re-name them “illegal migrants from the Indian Ocean.” ASEAN leaders deferred the Rohingya issue to the non-binding regional forum on illegal human trafficking, commonly referred to as the “Bali Process.” The Bali Process failed to find any meaningful solutions.

- **1 March:** Singapore PM Lee Hsien Loong warned that ASEAN must seriously address the issue of stateless Rohingya refugees fleeing Burma or risk losing credibility.

- **14 April:** A two-day meeting of the “Bali Process” regional forum began in Indonesia. During the meeting, SPDC Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig Gen Khin Yi denied that Rohingya were from Burma or that they faced persecution in Burma. The delegates at the meeting ultimately decided to form a team to establish whether Rohingya are economic migrants or refugees.

- **17 August:** Thai officials confirmed that two Rohingya teenagers died in a detention facility in Ranong while the health of 13 others was also at risk.

Meanwhile, the root causes pushing Rohingya out of Burma have not subsided. Rohingya are still at risk in Burma and more of them are likely to leave during the upcoming season when monsoon winds subside. Rohingya continued to suffer persecution at the hands of the military regime:

- **12 March:** Na Sa Ka forces prevented Rohingya farmers from selling seasonal farm produce in local markets in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State.

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58 BBC (08 Jun 09) Burma’s Karen flee army offensive; AP (07 Jun 09) Aid groups: 3,000 villagers flee Myanmar shelling; AP (07 Jun 09) Aid group says 4,000 refugees flee to Thailand from Myanmar; DVB (10 Jun 09) UN staff sent to assess Karen refugees; BBC (11 Jun 09) Burma’s Karen unable to return home; Irrawaddy (13 Jun 09) Burmese and DKBA Troops Block Civilians Fleeing Conflict

59 Reuters (08 Jun 09) Nearly 1,800 Karen flee Myanmar fighting – Thailand; Irrawaddy (08 Jun 09) Clashes Force More Karens to Thailand; Free Burma Rangers (08 Jun 09) Thousands of Refugees Flee Per Her Camp as Burma Army Attack Begins; DVB (10 Jun 09) UN staff sent to assess Karen refugees; IMNA (24 July 09) DKBA ramps up civilian abuses and set sights on Brigade 6; Irrawaddy (21 Aug 09) 30 More Karens Flee Hlinebwe; DVB (06 Aug 09) More Karen refugees flee to Thailand

60 Irrawaddy (13 Aug 09) 10,000 Villagers Forcibly Relocated in Shan State: Rights Groups; DVB (13 Aug 09) 500 Shan houses burned in scorched earth campaign

61 DVB (13 Aug 09) 500 Shan houses burned in scorched earth campaign

62 Xinhua (31 Aug 09) China resolves issue with Sino-Myanmar border inhabitants; AP (30 Aug 09) Myanmar says 26 forces, 8 rebels killed at border; VOA (29 Aug 09) Fresh Fighting Erupts in Burma; SHAN (27 Aug 09) Rebels say junta shell kills Chinese soldiers

63 IRIN (02 Mar 09) ASIA: Regional approach to Rohingya boat people

64 Straits Times (02 Mar 09) Asean must address Rohingya

65 Jakarta Post (15 Apr 09) RI expects Myanmar to speak up on Rohingya issue at Bali meeting

66 Nation (18 Aug 09) Two migrants dead, 13 more "failing"

67 Kaladan News (12 Mar 09) Authorities stop farmers from selling produce in local areas
• **27 March:** The UN Human Rights Council’s resolution on Burma urged the SPDC to recognize the rights of Rohingya and to end the “unacceptable discrimination, human rights abuse and severe economic deprivation they face.”

• **7 April:** Na Sa Ka in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, detained a 30-year-old Rohingya religious leader on charges of theft.

• **12 April:** A teenage Rohingya girl died of starvation at Teknaf after crossing the Burma-Bangladesh border. The victim fled Arakan State into Bangladesh on 10 April, after facing days of starvation in her native village in Maungdaw Township.

• **23 April:** Na Sa Ka personnel in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, detained about 200 Rohingya from Balukhali Village. Local Rohingya had clashed with SPDC Army personnel on 22 April, after soldiers had stolen fish from villagers.

• **23 September:** Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) went on red alert after pushing back five Rohingya families to Burma. The families fled to Bangladesh border after Na Sa Ka forcibly evicted them from their homes in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State.

### INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### ASEAN-SPDC relations

ASEAN leaders continue to deal with fact that the presence of the SPDC in the group stigmatizes the organization and hamstrings ASEAN’s effectiveness in international fora. Since the last ASEAN summit, Rohingya, SPDC human rights abuses, the SPDC’s planned 2010 elections, and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s detention, trial, and convictions were focal points in ASEAN’s deliberations.

• **1 March:** The 14th ASEAN summit concluded. Thai PM Abhisit Vejjajiva said that ASEAN heads of state called on the SPDC to release of political prisoners and to have an “all-inclusive process” when the SPDC holds elections in 2010.

• **16 March:** Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono urged the SPDC to prove to the world that its road map to democracy could work by holding “fair” and “inclusive” general elections in 2010.

• **17 March:** Singapore PM Lee Hsien Loong told SPDC PM Gen Thein Sein that the SPDC needed to take bolder steps towards national reconciliation and to engage the international community.

• **19 May:** Thailand, the current ASEAN Chair, issued a statement on the trial of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The statement expressed “grave concern” about to the situation of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and added that “the honor and the credibility” of Burma were at stake.

• **26 May:** Thai FM Kasit Piromya said, “It is worrisome that the trial to extend her detention would not be a good thing for the region.” “We are not interfering in domestic affairs, but showing our concern,” Kasit added.

• **27 May:** ASEAN ministers confronted the SPDC on its treatment of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in an informal meeting. “The discussion in the room […] was that it affects ASEAN’s image and ASEAN’s collective interests,” ASEAN Sec-Gen Surin Pitsuwan said.

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70 HRC, 10th session, Situation of human rights in Myanmar, 20 March 2009, UN Doc A/HRC/10/L.28
71 Kaladan News (11 Apr 09) Nasaka arrests religious leader
72 Kaladan News (14 Apr 09) Rohingya girl starves to death in Teknaf
73 Kaladan News (25 Apr 09) Rohingya men still in custody of army authority in Northern Maungdaw; Kaladan News (27 Apr 09) Authority announces prize money for garnering information
74 Kaladan News (25 Sep 09) BDR on red alert on Burma-Bangladesh border
75 Irrwaddy (02 Mar 09) Asean Leaders Call for Political Reform in Burma
76 Jakarta Post (17 Mar 09) RI, Myanmar discuss democracy, refugees
77 Reuters (18 Mar 09) Singapore urges Myanmar to reconcile with opponents
78 DVB (19 May 09) Thailand ‘concerned’ but will not pressure Burma junta
79 Nation (27 May 09) Jailing Suu Kyi again ‘not good for region’: Thai FM
80 Mizzima News (26 May 09) E.U. backs Thailand over Suu Kyi’s trial
81 AFP (28 May 09) ASEAN press Myanmar on Suu Kyi’s trial
• **28 May:** Thailand’s FM Kasit Piromya noted that Burma, as a member of ASEAN, has an obligation to comply with ASEAN Charter which guides the regional grouping to a people caring community. “It is very rare the international community from the United Nations Security Council, the United States, the European Union, ASEAN and countries in East Asia took the same stance on the Burma,” he said.82

• **28 May:** A meeting of ASEAN and EU FMs issued a statement calling on the SPDC to release all political prisoners and lift restrictions on political parties.83

• **8 June:** Indonesia’s FM Hassan Wirajuda expressed frustration with the SPDC’s lack of human rights. Wirajuda also called on the SPDC to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi immediately.84

• **19 July:** Thai FM Kasit admitted that compromises were made to ensure that Burma endorsed the bloc’s new right body, the ASEAN Inter-governmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR).85 The new body cannot investigate alleged human rights violations or punish offending member states such as Burma, a weakness that prompted sharp criticism from activists and disappointment from Indonesia.86

• **20 July:**
  o The ASEAN Ministerial Meeting issued a 12-page Joint Communiqué. The document urged the SPDC to hold “free, fair and inclusive elections in 2010” and reiterated ASEAN’s calls on SPDC “to immediately release all those under detention, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.”87
  o Thai FM Kasit Piromya said that ASEAN cannot move forward until changes occur in Burma.88
  o ASEAN Sec-Gen Surin Pitsuwan said that as long as Burma's political problems are not resolved, ASEAN will continue to have a burden on its lap to explain to the world.89

• **21 July:** Indonesia’s FM Hassan Wirayuda said that the SPDC must release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi if its 2010 elections are to be credible.90

Following Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s conviction and sentence, ASEAN failed to agree on a common position other than a timid note of its disappointment. ASEAN FM s never acted on plans to adopt a call for amnesty for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

• **12 August:** ASEAN expressed its “disappointment” over the SPDC’s ruling on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. A statement from the Thai Foreign Ministry, representing the ASEAN Chair, reiterated the organization’s calls for the immediate release of all political prisoners, including Aung San Suu Kyi.91

• **14 August:** Thai FM Kasit Piromya sought a consensus from the other nine ASEAN members to urge the SPDC to grant Daw Aung San Suu Kyi a pardon. Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia supported Thailand’s initiative, while Laos and Vietnam opposed the move.92

• **21 August:** Senior ASEAN officials meeting in Jakarta recommended that their respective Foreign Ministers issue a joint appeal to the SPDC for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.93

• **27 September:** Thai FM Kasit Piromya said that ASEAN had scrapped a plan to appeal to the SPDC for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.94

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82 Nation (29 May 09) Burma should listen to the world: FM
83 AFP (28 May 09) ASEAN press Myanmar on Suu Kyi
84 AP (08 Jun 09) Indonesian FM: US sanctions hurt Myanmar’s people
85 AFP (20 Jul 09) SE Asia defends ‘toothless’ rights watchdog
86 Jakarta Post (21 Jul 09) Indonesia criticizes military-ruled Myanmar; AFP (20 Jul 09) SE Asia defends ‘toothless’ rights watchdog
87 Mizzima News (21 Jul 09) ASEAN Foreign Ministers expect Burma to act responsibly
88 Bangkok Post (21 July 09) FM:Burma key to fate of Asean
89 VOA (21 Jul 09) Indonesia says Burma must release democracy leader for elections to be credible
90 VOA (21 Jul 09) Indonesia says Burma must release democracy leader for elections to be credible
91 Nation (12 Aug 09) Asean calls for release of Aung San Suu Kyi
92 Kyodo News (16 Aug 09) Thai call for ASEAN appeal to Myanmar to pardon Suu Kyi gets backing; Mizzima News (15 Aug 09) Thailand urges Asean for a consensus on Burma
93 DPA (21 Aug 09) ASEAN officials agree on joint appeal for Suu Kyi's release
ASEAN MPs slam SPDC

ASEAN MPs confronted the SPDC over Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s trial and continued detention. Regional legislators also acted to show solidarity with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

- **15 May**: The President of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Myanmar Caucus (AIPMC) Kraisak Choonhavan said that the charges faced by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi were “just ridiculous” and urged fellow ASEAN governments not to fall for the “fallacy” of the SPDC’s elections next year.95
- **20 May**: Female Democrat Party MPs in Thailand called for the SPDC to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.96
- **21 May**: Thirty-two Philippines MPs called for a Philippines’ government resolution denouncing the trial of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and demanding her release.97
- **25 May**: Anwar Ibrahim, leader of the Malaysian opposition, said that there had been an “utter abdication of responsibility in the region [regarding Burma],” and added that the policy of constructive engagement in Asia had become a mockery.98
- **26 May**: Thirty Malaysian MPs joined half a million other signatories on a petition organized by an umbrella group called “Free Burma’s Political Prisoners Now!”99
- **26 May**: AIPMC called on ASEAN to suspend Burma’s membership from the regional bloc as long the SPDC continued to detain Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.100
- **28 May**: Thirty Thai senators submitted a petition that urged the SPDC to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and to create political stability in Burma. The senators submitted the petition to the SPDC Prime Minister through the Burmese Embassy in Bangkok.103
- **29 May**: One-hundred MPs from Southeast Asian countries added their voices to the growing international calls for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.104
- **19 June**: MPs from ASEAN Parliaments urged ASEAN to reconsider Burma’s membership in the bloc. AIPMC President Kraisak Choonhavan said that it was time for ASEAN to revise the status of Burma in the group because the SPDC had failed to respond to repeated calls by the international community to improve the human right situation in the country.105

China-SPDC relations

China failed to criticize the SPDC over the arrest, detention and, conviction of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. However, the situation was very different when the SPDC Army’s launched its offensive in the Kokang region of Shan State along the Sino-Burma border. China expressed its serious concern with regard to the SPDC Army’s treatment of ethnic Chinese and the exodus of 37,000 refugees into its territory.
• **10 August**: Chinese officials from Yunnan Province warned SPDC Northeastern Military Command Commander Maj Gen Aung Than Htut not to fuel instability on the Sino-Burma border. The Chinese Army moved over 700 troops to the Sino-Burma border.106

• **28 August**: China issued a rare warning to the SPDC to “maintain stability” along the Sino-Burma border. The Chinese Foreign Ministry issued a statement that called on the SPDC to “properly handle domestic problems and maintain stability in the China-Burma border region.” The statement also urged the SPDC “to protect the security and legal rights of Chinese citizens in Burma.”107

• **21 September**: China’s Consular Affairs Department Chief Wei Wei urged the SPDC to investigate reports that military conflicts in Northern Burma in August had harmed the rights and interests of Chinese citizens living there.108

• **25 September**: The SPDC ordered the 10,000 Chinese nationals living in the Kokang region to return to China.110

**US-SPDC relations**

The US kept existing sanctions against the SPDC in place. However, on 23 September, the US announced a major shift in its Burma policy and said that it would pursue direct high-level engagement with the SPDC but keep sanctions in place.

• **15 May**: US President Barack Obama formally extended sanctions against the SPDC for another year, saying the actions and policies of the junta have not changed and continue to be hostile towards the US and its foreign policy.111

• **28 July**: US President Barack Obama extended the 2003 Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act for one more year.112

• **23 September**: Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said that the US plans to change its approach to Burma by enlisting a combination of sanctions and direct high-level engagement.113

**EU-SPDC relations**

The EU kept in place or strengthened sanctions against the regime as result of the SPDC’s unjust detention, trial, and conviction of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

• **27 April**: The EU extended its sanctions on the SPDC for another year. Along with the extension of sanctions,114

• **11 August**: The EU imposed new targeted financial sanctions on the four judges who presided at Daw Suu’s trial.115 New sanctions also subjected state-owned media associated with the junta to an asset freeze along with 58 other enterprises, 48 of which were already affected by an investment ban.116

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106 *Irrawaddy* (14 Aug 09) China Warns Commander to Avoid Instability in Shan State
107 *SHAN* (25 Aug 09) PLA moves to the Kokang border
108 *FT* (30 Aug 09) China rebukes Burma after border fighting
109 *VOA* (26 Sep 09) China Urges Burma to Protect Rights of Chinese Nationals
110 *DVB* (25 Sep 09) Burma orders 10,000 Chinese to leave; *Kachin News Group* (25 Sep 09) Chinese citizens from eastern Burma asked to return;
111 *Mizzima News* (16 May 09) US renews Burma sanctions for another year
112 *AP* (23 Jul 09) US Senate approves Myanmar resolution; *AFP* (29 Jul 09) US extends Myanmar sanctions
113 *WSJ* (24 Sep 09) U.S. to engage Myanmar's junta
114 *DVB* (27 Apr 09) Burma suspends border fence construction
115 *EU* (13 Aug 09) The Council adopts additional restrictive measures against Burma/Myanmar
116 *NYT* (14 Aug 09) U.S. Senator in Myanmar to Meet Leader
North Korea-SPDC relations

Recent developments gave substance to reports of increasing military cooperation between the SPDC and the North Korean regime.

- **Early June**: Various new outlets published photos of tunnel construction near Naypyidaw. The photos, taken between 2003 and 2006, show that North Korean technicians helped the SPDC in the construction of an extensive network of some 800 underground tunnels near the SPDC’s new administrative capital.

- **21 June**: A report by South Korean television YTN said that the 2,000-ton North Korean cargo ship Kang Nam I was heading towards Burma and was suspected of carrying missiles or related parts for the SPDC. The SPDC, possibly as a result of diplomatic pressure by India, China, and ASEAN countries, allegedly asked the ship to turn around. The Kang Nam I returned to its point of origin, Nampo, on 6 July.

- **29 June**: Japanese police arrested three men, including a North Korean national, Lee Kyoung Ho, for allegedly attempting to export to Burma in January a magnetic measuring device that can be used for long-range ballistic missiles.

- **24 July**: Japanese authorities served a second arrest warrant on Lee Kyoung Ho on suspicion of illegally exporting to Burma in November 2008 a machine that can be used to develop missile control systems and centrifuge machines for uranium enrichment.

UN-SPDC relations

UN-SPDC relations remained rocky because of the SPDC’s refusal to allow UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon to meet with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi during his July visit. In addition, there was a chorus of criticism over the trial and conviction of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The UN Security Council, the UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon, the UN Special Rapporteur of human rights in Burma Tomás Ojea Quintana, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay, the UN Special Advisor on Burma Ibrahim Gambari, and the ILO, all called for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s immediate and unconditional release.

- **22 May**: The UN Security Council issued a press statement that expressed concern over the political impact in Burma of the detention and trial of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The Council reiterated “the importance of the release of all political prisoners,” and repeated the need for the SPDC to “create the necessary conditions for a genuine dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all concerned parties and ethnic groups in order to achieve an inclusive national reconciliation.”

- **3-4 July**: In a highly scripted two-day visit to Burma, UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-Moon met twice with SPDC Chairman Sr Gen Than Shwe. During the two meetings, Ban requested that he be allowed to meet with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Than Shwe refused both requests.

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117 Irrawaddy (26 Jun 09) Tunnel Construction Pictures Spark Questions
118 DVB (24 Jun 09) Burma’s military regime: Digging the tunnels
120 VOA (01 Jul 09) Shadowed North Korean Freighter Reverses Course; Irrawaddy (09 Jul 09) Did Foreign Pressure Make Ship Turn Back?; Irrawaddy (06 Jul 09) N Korea using Malaysian bank for Burmese weapons deals: Yonhap
121 Irrawaddy (09 Jul 09) Did Foreign Pressure Make Ship Turn Back?
122 Bloomberg (30 Jun 09) Japan Police Arrest Three for Illegal Exports, Yomiuri Says
123 Zee News (24 Jul 09) Tokyo trader charged with selling sensitive machine to Myanmar
124 AP (12 Aug 09) Suu Kyi Begins House Arrest amid Outrage; UN News Center (12 Aug 09) UN human rights chief joins call for release of Myanmar opposition figure: AFP (11 Aug 09) UN Head demands release of Myanmar activist Aung San Suu Kyi; VOA (11 Aug 09) UN Envoy to Burma Calls for ‘Immediate Release’ of Aung San Suu Kyi
125 UN News Center (22 May 09) Myanmar: Security Council voices concern over detention of pro-democracy leader
126 DVB (07 Jul 09) DKBA meeting with UN chief ‘scripted’ by junta
127 SHAN (04 Jul 09) Shan party meets UN chief, non-party activists might be released
128 NLM (07 Jul 09) Senior General Than Shwe receives UNSG for two times
• **4 July:** In a speech delivered in Rangoon, Ban urged the SPDC to release all political prisoners including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The UN Sec-Gen also demanded the SPDC allow Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to participate in genuine dialogue.  

• **13 July:** Ban told UN Security Council members that the 2010 elections may not be regarded as legitimate or credible if Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is not released and the NLD is not allowed to campaign freely.  

• **13 August:** The UN Security Council issued a press statement that expressed “serious concern” at the conviction and sentencing of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The Council also reiterated the importance of the release of all political prisoners and urged the SPDC “to create the necessary conditions for a genuine dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all concerned parties.”  

• **22 September:** UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon said he would continue to seek Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s release and the release of all political prisoners in Burma “so that this election can be credible and fair and transparent”.  

• **23 September:** UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon urged the SPDC to create conditions for credible elections in 2010 and to allow the UN a role in the process of national reconciliation.  

• **26 September:** UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon urged ASEAN FMs to take a tougher line with the SPDC in hopes the junta will free political prisoners and hold fair elections. Ban said it was in ASEAN’s best interest to press the SPDC to free political prisoners, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.  

**AID**

The SPDC’s ongoing restrictions on aid and the failure to provide adequate relief to its own people continued to have a negative impact in the Irrawaddy delta and beyond.  

• **3 March:** Relief workers with Thai-based Emergency Assistance Team-Burma (EAT-Burma) said that 35 villages in Labutta Township, Irrawaddy Division, faced a water crisis. SPDC red tape requiring aid workers to obtain prior permission for water distribution had frustrated the delivery of sufficient water supplies.  

• **20 March:** The SPDC ended a program to fast-track visa applications for foreign aid workers, despite the continued humanitarian crisis in the Irrawaddy delta. By July, over 200 visa applications remained pending with the SPDC’s Foreign Affairs Policy Committee.  

• **10 June:** international donors and UN agencies met with ASEAN Sec-Gen Surin Pitsuwan in Bangkok, Thailand, and explained that SPDC actions and policies adversely affected international efforts to help the country’s recovery.  

• **4 July:** Heavy monsoon rains triggered landslides that swept away a jade miners’ settlement in Phakant, Kachin State, killing over 30 people and leaving over 1,300 left homeless. SPDC authorities failed to provide any immediate relief to affected communities.  

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129 Mizzima News (05 Jul 09) Ban Ki-Moon's remarks on Burma  
130 UN News Center (13 Aug 09) Security Council voices ‘serious concern’ at Aung San Suu Kyi verdict  
131 DVB (23 Sep 09) UN chief takes credit for prisoner amnesty  
132 Mizzima News (24 Sep 09) Ban urges junta to create conditions for credible election  
133 Daily Star (28 Sep 09) UN urges Asian nations to get tough on Myanmar  
134 Mizzima (03 Mar 09) Cyclone Nargis victims badly need potable water  
135 Irrawaddy (19 Mar 09) Drinking water crisis in Delta  
136 Irrawaddy (20 Mar 09) Regime stops fast-tracking visas for relief workers  
137 Irrawaddy (03 Jul 09) INGOs Kept Waiting for Visas; Irrawaddy (21 Jul 09) Visa Backlog Holds Up Irrawaddy Delta Relief Work  
138 Irrawaddy (22 Jul 09) As Foreign Aid Workers Leave, Food Security Concerns Grow  
139 Reuters (10 Jun 09) Suu Kyi trial clouds Myanmar cyclone aid effort; Washington Post (11 Jun 09) Burma’s Trial of Suu Kyi Hinders Cyclone Relief  
140 Reuters (09 Jul 09) Landslide caused by rain kills 30 in Myanmar; Reuters (14 Jul 09) Myanmar "Jade Land" mudslide uproots 1300; Kachin News Group (06 Jul 09) Floods in Hpakant jade land, hundreds suffer, Kachin News Group (09 Jul 09) Jade tycoons distribute food, water to flood victims. NOTE: wires services reported a death toll of 30, while the Kachin News Group quoted local officials’ figures of “over 100” on Jul 9.
• **Early July:** The Chin State Peace and Development Council Chairman Col Hung Ngai banned all local SPDC officials from receiving foreign assistance, despite the continued famine.\(^{142}\)

### ECONOMY

**Gas exports enrich the SPDC while the regime bankrupts the country**

The SPDC continues to enrich itself through trade deals with major international extraction firms.

- **June:** Daewoo International signed an MoU with China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) for the sale of natural gas from the offshore Shwe gas field.\(^{143}\) CNPC announced construction plans for new oil and gas pipelines through Burma to begin in September 2009. The 2,800km pipeline will deliver oil and gas from the Middle East and Africa into Southwestern China’s Yunnan Province by 2012.\(^ {144}\)
- **July:** Indian ONGC Videsh announced plans to take a stake in the nearly US$2 billion CNPC gas pipeline project to transport natural gas from the field.\(^ {145}\)
- **2 September:** Daewoo International said it will invest US$1.7 billion in expanding gas exploration and production of A-1 and A-3 offshore blocks in the Andaman Sea.\(^ {146}\)

Rising gas prices and increasing demand caused the value of Burma’s gas exports to soar.\(^ {147}\) The IMF confirmed in an unpublished report that strong natural gas exports had swollen the SPDC’s foreign exchange reserves to a record high US$3.6 billion.\(^ {148}\) While the SPDC added to their coffers, families in Burma suffered from the SPDC’s economic mismanagement.

- Extravagant spending by the SPDC was paid for by printing money, which led to inflation rates of 30% in 2008.\(^ {149}\)
- Social spending by the SPDC remains the lowest in Asia, according to the IMF.\(^ {150}\)
- The IMF report concluded that Burma’s economic prospects “look bleak” unless it abandons failed polices - including the multiple exchange rate system and stifling economic controls.\(^ {151}\)

### DRUGS

Burma remained the world’s second top producer of heroin and Asia’s largest producer of amphetamines. Amphetamine use in the regions continued to have a devastating impact.
• 24 June: The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released its annual drug report that stated Burma remained the world’s second largest source of opium behind Afghanistan.152

WOMEN & CHILDREN

SPDC Army soldiers continued to terrorize ethnic women through violence and rape as part of their military campaign in ethnic nationality areas.153

• 10 June: SPDC Army Lt Col Kyaw Thura raped a 24-year-old Rohingya woman in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State.154
• 12 June: SPDC soldiers from Light Infantry Battalion 205 raped and murdered two teenage Karen girls from Hpa-an District, Karen State.155
• 2 August: SPDC Army forces gang-raped a woman in front of her husband in Laikha Township, Shan State.156
• 3 August: SPDC soldiers from LIB 514 attacked and beheaded a 29-year-old woman in Mongkeung Township, Shan State.157
• 5 August: An SPDC Army Captain and other soldiers from IB 132 gang-raped a 15-year-old girl in Kehsi Township, Southern Shan State.158

Despite SPDC’s attempts to hide its enlistment of child soldiers, the practice continues.

• 6 May: The Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, a global coalition of human rights advocacy groups, released a 60-page study, “No More Denial: Children Affected by Armed Conflict in Myanmar (Burma).” The report documents killing and maiming of children, use of child soldiers, rape, abduction, forced displacement, attacks on schools, denial of humanitarian access, and other violations against children in Eastern Burma.159
• 3 June: Reports surfaced that the SPDC Army forcibly recruited children aged 12 to 15 from 27 villages around Mongpiang Township in Shan State.160
• 2 June: A 16-year-old boy who went missing after being arrested in 2008 by SPDC police in Pegu Division contacted his parents and informed them that he had been recruited into the SPDC Army.161
• 7 June: SPDC Army Sgt Win Myint abducted two 14-year-old boys and took them to the Danyingone SPDC Army recruitment center in Rangoon’s Insein Township.162
• 9 June: UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon reported to the UN Security Council on the recruitment of children by the SPDC Army.163
• 18 June: It was reported that SPDC Army apprehended and conscripted three youths from Arakan State at the border town of Myawaddy in Karen State.164

152 DVB (25 Jun 09) Opium poppy cultivation in Burma rises
153 SHAN (06 Aug 09) Burmese Army troops behead woman; Kaladan News (11 Aug 09) Refugee woman gang-raped by local youths; Kaladan News (10 Aug 09) Burmese woman gang raped by Bangladeshi youths; SHAN (11 Aug 09) Teenage girl gang raped by Burmese Army personnel; SHAN (07 Aug 09) Burmese Army personnel gang-rape Shan woman; Mizzima News (07 Aug 09) Women’s groups urge Security Council to act on Burma; Irrawaddy (07 Aug 09) Women’s Groups Want to See Than Shwe before the ICC
154 Kaladan News (12 Jun 09) Army Commander rapes girl in Maungdaw
155 Mizzima News (15 Jun 09) KNU Rejects Regime Version of Fighting
156 SHAN (07 Aug 09) Burmese Army personnel gang-rape Shan woman
157 SHAN (11 Aug 09) Teenage girl gang raped by Burmese Army personnel; SHAN (06 Aug 09) Burmese Army troops behead woman
158 SHAN (11 Aug 09) Teenage girl gang raped by Burmese Army personnel
159 Irrawaddy (06 May 09) Rights groups focus on Burmese children; Mizzima News (06 May 09) Child soldiers a reality in Burma: Rights Group; VOA (07 May 09) Human rights groups urge UN Security Council to protect Burmese children; Irish Sun (07 May 09) Children being abducted and raped in military Myanmar
160 SHAN (03 Jun 09) Children forcibly recruited as Burmese Army cadets
161 DVB (04 Jun 09) Teenager recruited by Burmese army
162 DVB (24 Jun 09) Two children abducted into Burmese army
163 Irrawaddy (10 Jun 09) Serious violations against children in Burma: Ban; Mizzima News (10 Jun 09) Child soldiers still a fact of life in Burma: Ban
• **24 June**: It was reported that the SPDC Army abducted and recruited a 16-year-old youth in Pegu Division.165

• **1 Aug**: SPDC Army recruits six Rakhine youth from the Indo-Burma border area in Chin State.166

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164 Narinjara News (18 Jun 09) Arakanese youth arrested and conscripted by Burmese Army
165 Irrawaddy (24 Jun 09) Burmese army still recruiting under-age soldiers
166 Narinjara News (04 Aug 09) Six Youths Conscripted into Burmese Army