



Release of Mr. U Zaw Myint Aung, Mr. U Soe Oo, Mr. Maung Tun Nyein, Ms. Khine Lin Myat and Ms. Shwe Yi Nyun

New information

MMR 001 / 0409 / OBS 060.1

Release

Burma

April 16, 2009

The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, a joint programme of the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) and the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), has received new information on the following situation in Burma.

New information:

The Observatory has been informed by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) about the release of **Mr. U Zaw Myint Aung, Mr. U Soe Oo, Mr. Maung Tun Nyein, Ms. Khine Lin Myat and Ms. Shwe Yi Nyun**, five members of the Federation of Trade Unions of Burma (FTUB). They are all campaigners for workers' rights and for the improvement of wages and working conditions for workers inside Burma.

According to the information received, on April 10, 2009, Mr. U Zaw Myint Aung, Mr. U Soe Oo, Mr. Maung Tun Nyein, Ms. Khine Lin Myat and Ms. Shwe Yi Nyunt, also a member of FTUB Women's Committee, returned safely to their homes in Rangoon, albeit after having been warned to cease any activity with the FTUB.

The Observatory welcomes the release of Mr. U Zaw Myint Aung, Mr. U Soe Oo, Mr. Maung Tun Nyein, Ms. Khine Lin Myat and Ms. Shwe Yi Nyunt, and wishes to thank all the persons, organisations, and institutions that intervened on their behalf.

Background information:

On April 1, 2009, Mr. U Zaw Myint Aung, Mr. U Soe Oo, Mr. Maung Tun Nyein, Ms. Khine Lin Myat and Ms. Shwe Yi Nyunt, also a member of FTUB Women's Committee, were arrested by the Burmese military junta at their places of residence in Rangoon as they returned home from the First National

Congress of the FTUB, which ended on March 24.

Furthermore, an unspecified number of family members of the five workers' rights defenders in question were also arrested, threatened and intimidated in an effort by the authorities to compel cooperation from the five FTUB members.

Since its foundation in 1991, FTUB has been working to end violations of fundamental workers' and other human rights, notably the systematic use of forced labour by the military.

Action requested:

Please write to the Burmese authorities urging them to:

0. Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Mr. U Zaw Myint Aung, Mr. U Soe Oo, Mr. Maung Tun Nyein, Ms. Khine Lin Myat and Ms. Shwe Yi Nyunt, as well as of their relatives;
0. Put an end to all acts of harassment - including at the judicial level - against Mr. U Zaw Myint Aung, Mr. U Soe Oo, Mr. Maung Tun Nyein, Ms. Khine Lin Myat and Ms. Shwe Yi Nyunt as well as against their relatives and all human rights defenders in Burma;
0. Conform with the provisions of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, especially its article 1, which states that “everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to promote and to strive for the protection and realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels” as well as Article 12.2, which provides that “the State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, *de facto* or *de jure* adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present Declaration”;
0. Ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments ratified by Burma.

Addresses:

- Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council, Pyinmana, Burma, c/o Permanent Mission of Myanmar to the United Nations in Geneva, 47 avenue Blanc, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland, Tel: + 41 22 906 98 70; Fax: + 41 22 732 89 19; Email: mission.myanmar@ties.itu.int
- Maung Oo, Minister for Home Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs, Office No. 10 Naypyidaw, Myanmar; Tel: +95 67 412 040/ 069/ 072; Fax: +95 67 412 016/ 439; E-mail: ddg.gad@gad.gov.mm
- Brigadier-General Kyaw Hsan, Minister of Information, Ministry of Information, Bldg. (7),

Naypyitaw, Union of Myanmar, Fax: +95 67 412 363

- Lt Sein Thein, Prime Minister, c/o Ministry of Defence, Signal Pagoda Road, Yangon, Myanmar, Tel: + 95 1 372 681; Fax: + 95 1 652 624
- H.E. Mr. Wunna Maung Lwin, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Myanmar to the United Nations in Geneva, 47 avenue Blanc, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland, Tel: + 41 22 906 98 70; Fax: + 41 22 732 89 19; Email: mission.myanmar@ties.itu.int
- Embassy of Myanmar in Brussels, 9 boulevard Général Wahis, 1030 Schaerbeek, Brussels, Belgium, Fax: + 32 2 705.50.48.

Please also write to the diplomatic representations of Burma in your respective countries.

Geneva - Paris, April 16, 2009

Kindly inform us of any action undertaken quoting the code of this appeal in your reply.

The Observatory, a FIDH and OMCT venture, is dedicated to the protection of Human Rights Defenders and aims to offer them concrete support in their time of need. The Observatory was the winner of the 1998 Human Rights Prize of the French Republic.

To contact the Observatory, call the emergency line:

E-mail: Appeals@fidh-omct.org

Tel and fax FIDH + 33 (0) 1 43 55 20 11 / +33 1 43 55 18 80

Tel and fax OMCT + 41 (0) 22 809 49 39 / + 41 22 809 49 29

L'OMCT a son siège à Genève, en Suisse. Elle coordonne le réseau SOS-Torture composé de 282 organisations régionales et internationales dans 93 pays sur cinq continents.

Contact : omct@omct.org