



Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma)

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Media Statement – for immediate release

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Very few political prisoners released from Burma's prisons

On Friday, Burma's ruling State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) announced that they would release 6,313 prisoners from 21 February 2009. The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma) can today confirm that so far only 24 political prisoners have been released.

Those released included National League for Democracy (NLD) Member of Parliament Dr Zaw Myint Maung, who spent almost 19 years in prison. Khin Khin Leah, who has been in prison since 1999, was also released. When the authorities were unable to locate and arrest her husband Kyaw Wanna for his role in planning a peaceful demonstration, they instead arrested his wife and daughter. Although her daughter was later released, Khin Khin Leah was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Daw Ponena Mee, the oldest nun in prison at the age of almost 80, was amongst those released. Others included U Thet Wai, who was sentenced to 2 years imprisonment for making a complaint to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) about labour rights violations, and U Tin Htay and U Than Htay, who were arrested for distributing DVDs of the lavish wedding of Senior General Than Shwe's daughter. And 9 monks, who have been detained since 2003, were also released.

Tate Naing, Secretary of the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma), said, "We cannot expect the political situation in Burma to improve

just because a few political prisoners were released. This is just a ploy to try and ease international pressure. Actually Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, U Tin Oo, ethnic nationality leaders, 88 Generation leaders and all other political prisoners must be released in order to make progress towards democracy and national reconciliation. We urge the international community to pressurise the SPDC more effectively for their release.”

-ENDS-

Notes to editors:

The released are:

Myintkyina prison

1. Dr. Zaw Myint Maung, Member of Parliament from the National League for Democracy party. He has been in jail since 1991.
2. U Pe Sein, Township organizer, Mohnyin, Kachin State
3. U Naw Naw

Insein prison

4. U Kaythara (a) U Kyaw Min Thet
5. U Ingura (a) U Aye Tun Thar
6. U Thireina (a) U Kyaw Moe
7. U Marlaina (a) U Min Zaw Aung
8. U Ardatesa (a) U Aung Ko
9. U Takekanateya (a) U Maung Zaw
10. U Damitika (a) U Tun Tun
11. U Tun Zaw Htay (a) Tun Tun
12. U Khaing Ba Myint
13. U Soe
14. U Nandathiri (a) U Htay Ye Tun
15. U Sandima (a) U Zaw Min Htet
16. Ma Hmwe (a) Ma Kyin Haw
17. Ma Khin Khin Leah
18. U Tin Hlaing
19. U Thet Wai
20. Ma Htay

21.Ponena Mee

Kale Prison

22.U Tin Htay

23.U Than Htay

Four Mile Labour Camp, Taungoo

24.Zaw Naing Htwe aka Ket Net

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