



**Part (D)
The Rule of Law**

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**Appeal to Take Action on the SPDC Military Regime in Burma
In Regard to Its Recent Oppression of Reporters and Journalists
who Exercise Freedom of Expression**

1. The 2nd Southeast Asia Media Legal Defense Network Conference was held in Cebu City, the Philippines, on Oct 27-27, 2009. The representatives from the international organizations, which are fighting for freedom of expression, and media related associations from Southeast Asia, and legal academicians, including those from the Burma Lawyers' Council, numbering over 90, participated there.

2. In addition to the fact that freedom of expression is basic human rights of individuals, it is also foundation for all democratic states. Oppression of media enterprises, reporters and journalists, who exercise freedom of expression systematically, means commission of human rights violations. As a negative result, people's right to know is denied and element for the emergence of a democratic state is ruined.

3. The SPDC military regime in Burma enacts draconian laws which prohibit freedom of expressions; inhumanely render harsh penalties on the democracy activists pursuant to those abusive laws; awfully restrict formation, establishment and operation of media enterprises, and excessively oppress reporters, journalists and publishers. It is time now for the people to take effective action on the regime, joining hands each other. To facilitate this, cooperation with the Southeast Asia Media Legal Defense Network should be made.

4. The ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) has come into existence formally for the first time in history of Asian countries. It is known that its meeting will be held soon. Despite that Term of Reference of the AICHR has a number of flaws, the CEBU Conference reached an agreement that it is a reasonable venue to raise the issues on freedom of expression there. Oppression of freedom of expression in Burma should be documented consistently and reports based on those documentations should be submitted at the forthcoming meeting of the AICHR. Civil society organizations and democracy activists struggling for promotion of human rights in Burma



should be a part of a broader movement arising in Southeast Asian countries to pressure their own governments in order to select human rights defenders, who sacrificed their lives for human rights, and send them to AICHR for being members of the said commission.

Burma Lawyers' Council

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