

# BURMA ALERT

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Burma News:

## KACHINS AGREE TO CEASEFIRE WITH SLORC

On 2 Oct, Rangoon Television broadcasted a ceremony in Myitkyina to mark the agreement between the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) represented by Vice President Major-General Zau Mai and the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) represented by Secretary 1, Lieutenant-General Khin Nyunt. SLORC immediately exploited the occasion by having its Foreign Minister U Ohn Gyaw tell the United Nations General Assembly on 12 Oct that 10 'terrorist groups' including the Kachins had 'returned to the legal fold' and have been reintegrated into the national mainstream. According to Kachin sources, they have agreed only to a ceasefire under external pressure in order to facilitate political negotiations. They maintain that political negotiations must follow if SLORC is serious about resolving the civil war. SLORC's National Convention with its various restrictions is not viewed as being adequate. To date, no political talks have taken place between SLORC and the KIO, and it cannot be claimed that the Kachins and others have been 'reintegrated into the national mainstream'. To complicate matters, KIO Chairman Brang Seng suffered a stroke in Oct and was hospitalized in Kunming, China, thereby delaying the official signing of the ceasefire agreement. The Democratic Alliance of Burma on 15 Oct suspended the KIO from its membership for not insisting on a nation-wide ceasefire which is a DAB pre-condition for talks with SLORC [BA].

## DR EM MARTA DETAINED AND DEPORTED BY SINGAPORE

Dr Em Marta, Foreign Minister of the Karen National Union (KNU) and a member of the National Council of Burma's (NCUB) delegation to the United Nations was detained on 21 Oct by Singapore authorities while in transit from Bangkok to New York. Singapore said that Marta's travel documents were false but inside sources claim that Marta had sufficient documentation to have entered the USA legally. Transit passengers do not normally have their passports examined. Some observers point to the abduction by SLORC of 11 dissident Burmese seamen while in transit in Singapore in June, and suspect a conspiracy. Earlier, other ethnic members of the NCUB delegation were denied exit from Thailand. Only Burman delegation members were allowed to leave, confirming reports that SLORC is trying to divide the Burmese democracy movement along ethnic lines. Marta was finally sent back to Bangkok after several nations and NGOs expressed concern for his safety and freedom of movement [BA].

## JAPAN CALLS ON SLORC TO RESTORE DEMOCRACY

On 30 Oct, Japanese Foreign Minister Tsutomu Hata told SLORC's Foreign Minister U Ohn Gyaw that Japan has 'considerable interest' in seeing an early transfer to democratic rule and greater respect for human rights. Hata expressed hope that SLORC's National Convention will lead to the earliest possible democratization of Burma. U Ohn Gyaw was in Tokyo on an unofficial visit and had a 40 minute meeting with Hata [Kyodo931030].

## REFORM FIRST BEFORE JOINING ASEAN - MANILA

A senior official said that Foreign Secretary Roberto Romulo explained to SLORC Foreign Minister U Ohn Gyaw that the Phillipines will oppose Myanmar's entry to ASEAN if SLORC fails to implement democratic reforms. The two met in Oct at the UN General Assembly [ST/BA].

## SLORC'S EXTERNAL DEBT MUSHROOMS TO US\$7.5 BILLION

Burma's foreign debt generally estimated at US\$4 billion with US\$1 billion in unpaid interest payments is now believed to be closer to US\$7.5 billion. US\$2 billion of the debt was denominated in Yen at the exchange rate of Yen220 to the US\$1 in 1985. The Yen has since appreciated against the dollar to Yen108, increasing SLORC's debt burden. The SLORC delegation to the World Bank-International Monetary Fund (IMF) annual meeting in Oct is said to have broached the possibility of an emergency rescue package but was turned down [BA].

**Burma News:****THAILAND TO KEEP WATCH ON BURMESE DISSIDENTS**

First Army Commander Lieut-General Chetha Thanajaro on his return 11 Nov from the 8th Burma-Thailand border meeting in Rangoon said that Thailand had been asked by SLORC to keep an eye on 13 Burmese dissidents who might use Thailand to get to third countries to conduct political activities against Rangoon. Chetha said that "We have to try much harder to show our sincerity towards Rangoon" [B931112].

**TROUBLE AT RATCHABURI 'SAFE' CAMP**

Thai Interior Ministry officials reported a fire and a break-in at the UN High Commission for Refugees office in the Maneeloy 'Safe' Camp in Ratchaburi province in Oct. Death threats were also received by UNHCR staff in Sep. According to Thai officials, Burmese student refugees were unhappy with the UNHCR for having reduced their monthly allowance from US\$80 to US\$32 and blamed them for the incidents. The UNHCR then temporarily suspended payment of allowances to 135 student refugees. The students, however, claim that they were not responsible. Camp residents include illegal immigrants and other refugees from the border. Criminal elements in the camp with links to SLORC may have been responsible [B931013,N931012,BA].

**1992 NOBEL PEACE LAUREATE MENCHU VISITS THAI BORDER**

1992 Nobel Peace Laureate Rigoberta Menchu of Guatemala visited 2 refugee camps on the Thai-Burmese border in Sep. Speaking at a press conference, she said, "Considering the human rights violations in Burma and the level of persecutions there, Burma should not be included in ASEAN. The indigenous peoples have suffered oppression almost equal to genocide." Annoyed by the laureate's visit, SLORC threatened that Thailand would have to pay the price for allowing her into the country. Thai officials, however, pleaded that they could not prevent Menchu from entering Thailand because she was travelling on a UN passport [N930917,20].

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**International Action:****AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL - "CLIMATE OF FEAR CONTINUES"**

On 8 Oct, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL released a 24-page report on Burma documenting SLORC's continued human rights abuses especially against ethnic minorities and political activists.

**INTERNATIONAL PETITION TO FREE DAW SUU**

Dr Edward Broadbent, President of the Canada-based INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT on 8 Oct launched in Bangkok, a campaign calling on parliamentarians world-wide to appeal to the UN Secretary-General to pressure SLORC into releasing Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, all political prisoners, and to restore democracy according to the 1990 election results and to end human rights abuses.

**HONG KONG-BASED ORGANIZATIONS CONDEMN SLORC**

On the 5th anniversary of SLORC seizing power on 18 Sep.88, fifteen Hong Kong-based Christian groups led by the ASIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION and the ASIAN CENTER FOR THE PROGRESS OF PEOPLES, issued a statement condemning SLORC for its slave labour practices and the trafficking of Burmese women and children to Thailand. They also reaffirmed their commitment to boycott Pepsico. AHRC, Fax: (852) 698-6367.

**MANEKA GANDHI INAUGURATES 'GONG OF BURMA'**

The Gong of Burma - an art exhibition, a panel discussion, a slide show and a Burmese food/music festival, was launched 3-6 Sep in New Delhi by the BURMA STUDENTS LEAGUE, INDIA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE and MANUSHI JOURNAL in support of the democratic struggle of the people of Burma. The program was inaugurated by Maneka Gandhi, former Union Minister of India for the Environment and daughter-in-law of the late Indira Gandhi.

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**International Action:****JAPANESE NGO CRITICAL OF HATA STATEMENT**

Responding to Foreign Minister Tsutomu Hata's statement welcoming closer Thai and ASEAN links with SLORC, the JAPAN ASIA MONITOR in an editorial in Oct.93, accused the new Japanese government of putting economic interests ahead of human rights. The editorial said, "Constructive engagement has not worked and will not work. What is needed are comprehensive sanctions." CCRAI, 2-3-18-25 Nishi Waseda, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 169, Japan.

**NORWAY BURMA COUNCIL HOSTS 7 NATION NCGUB DONORS**

The NORWEGIAN BURMA COUNCIL hosted donor organizations from 7 nations (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway, Sweden and the USA) that have been supporting the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB) to a co-ordinating meeting 27-29 Sep in Oslo. The donors agreed to support the NCGUB's proposal to expand its cabinet representation, build up necessary infrastructure, and form an agency to co-ordinate relief and training.

**NELSON MANDELA AGREES TO SEEK RELEASE OF DAW SUU**

South African leader NELSON MANDELA who won the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize together with Prime Minister De Klerk, agreed in Oct to join others in calling for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Mandela was in the US to receive the 1993 J William Fulbright Prize for International Understanding at the State Department: The Honourable Nelson R Mandela, c/o Tladi Ditshego, Office of the President, 51 Plein St, Johannesburg 2000, South Africa.

**'BURMESE STUDENTS STILL IN DANGER' & THE IRRAWADDY**

An 8-page report on the condition of Burmese student activists was released by the BURMA INFORMATION GROUP in Aug.93. BIG also began publishing a bi-monthly newsletter, 'The Irrawaddy' in Sep. Available from P.O.Box 22, Rajathevi Post Office, Bangkok 10401, Thailand.

**"THE SILENCED VOICES OF BURMA" IN NEW YORK**

PEN AMERICAN CENTER and the NEW SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH sponsored an evening of readings of contemporary Burmese writings in New York on 23 Sep. Alexander Aris and Wendy Law-Yone were among the readers. PEN is an international association of writers.

**BURMESE STUDENTS PROTEST AT THE UNITED NATIONS**

From 11-13 Oct, Burmese student activists in the United States rallied in front of the United Nations to protest the ongoing injustices and crimes being committed against the Burmese people. SLORC Foreign Minister U Ohn Gyaw spoke at the UN on 12 Oct.

**COALITION FOR CORPORATE WITHDRAWAL FORMED**

On 18 Oct, the COALITION FOR CORPORATE WITHDRAWAL FROM BURMA announced that it will file shareholder resolutions with Amoco, Texaco, Unocal, Pepsico and others, to disclose information about their investments in Burma or cut business ties that benefit SLORC. Coalition members include Associates to Develop Democratic Burma, BURMA Issues, Canadian Friends of Burma, Franklin Research & Development Corp, Institute for Asian Democracy, Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers Union AFL-CIO, Sierra Club and Working Assets Common Holdings. Address: Simon Billenness, c/o Franklin Research, 711 Atlantic Ave, Boston, MA.02111, USA. Tel: 1 (617) 423-6655, Fax: 482-6179.

**US SENATE SEEKS STRONGER US POLICY ON BURMA**

The US SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE wrote to President Clinton on 25 Oct expressing concern over human rights abuses and the suppression of democracy in Burma. The letter, initiated by Sen D Patrick Moynihan, was signed by every member of the Committee.

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NEWS SOURCES THIS ISSUE: B = Bangkok Post, BA = Burma Alert, BM = Burma Monitor, New York, Kyodo = Kyodo News Agency, Japan, N = The Nation, Bangkok, and ST = Strait Times, Singapore.

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**Foreign Trade & Investments:****UPDATE: FOREIGN FIRMS IN BURMA - 6**

Source: Burma Alert

**THAILAND:**

A.G.D. GEM DEALER CO, Apr.91	Top gem buyer, office in Rangoon - Gems
AGRICULTURE MINISTRY, Sep.92	Tech assistance in seed, fish, livestock - Agriculture
ANANDA TOURS, Chiang Rai, Jul.93	Owens 20% of ROYAL ORCHID AIR SYSTEM - Tourism
ASIA INT'NL TRANSPORT, Aswin Suwannarit, Apr.93	Ranong-Rangoon tours - Tourism
B & F ENTERPRISE, Apr.90	Timber for 2 highways, US\$10 million - Infrastructure
BAIYOKE GROUP, Robert Thein Pe, Oct.92	Jade Pavilion Hotel, Rangoon - Tourism
BAIYOKE GROUP, Apr.93	30-yr management Kandawgyi Hotel, US\$1 million - Tourism
BANG SAPHAN SAWMILL, Prachuab Kiri Khan, 1993	15,000 tons - Forestry
BANGKOK AIRWAYS, Aug.93	Flying between Chiang Mai and Mandalay - Tourism
BANGKOK BANK OF COMMERCE, Apr.93	Planning expansion to Burma - Banking
BANGKOK OPTICAL DISTRIBUTION, Jan.90	Agent for ESSILOR FRANCE - Retail
BERLI JUCKER, Apr.93	Opening Rangoon Agency office - Trade
BURAPHA COAL, Nov.90	Coal mining in Mawthaung area - Mining
BURAPHA COAL, Prachuab Kiri Khan, 1993	20,000 tons - Forestry
CHAITHANASAN (Chaithanakarn?), Ratchaburi, 1993	20,000 tons - Forestry
CHIANG RAI Governor Kamron Booncherd, Dec.92	Road to China - Infrastructure
CHOKEPANA (Chokepanya?), Chumpol, 1993	35,000 tons - Forestry
CHUMTHONG SAWMILL, Ratchburi, 1993	15,000 tons - Forestry
DEFENCE COLLEGE Jan.92	Military delegation to Rangoon - Arms
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER Pow Sarasin, Feb.92	Visited Rangoon - Trade
DELTA EXPRESS	Export of used cars - Trade
EDEN GROUP, Jul.91	Setting up factories - Textile
ELECTRICITY GENERATING AUTHORITY (EGAT), Sep.88	Hydro dams, \$6 billion - Energy
E.G.A.T.	Proposed 25 megawatt dam on Nam Mae Sai, 1989 - Energy
E.G.A.T.	Proposed 40 megawatt dam on Klong Kraburi 1989 - Energy
E.G.A.T.	Proposed 70 megawatt dam on the Moei river - Energy
E.G.A.T.	Proposed 100 megawatt dam on the Kok river - Energy
E.G.A.T.	Proposed 120 megawatt dam on the Moei river - Energy
E.G.A.T.	Proposed 250 megawatt dam on the Moei river - Energy
E.G.A.T.	Proposed 6,400 megawatt dam on the Salween - Energy
EPSON ELECTRONICS, Feb.93	Appointed INCHCAPE as Burma agents - Computers
FINANCE MINISTRY, Panas Simasathien, May.92	Urged ADB to finance SLORC- Aid
FOREIGN MINISTRY, Prasong Soonsiri, Jan.93	Economic and Trade Joint Commission - Trade
FOREIGN MINISTRY, Prasong Soonrasi, Feb.93	Road link to Sipsongpanna - Infrastructure
FOREST INDUSTRY ORGANIZATION, 1993	15,000 tons - Forestry
FOURTH ARMY Commander L-G Kitti Rattanachaya, Feb.93	Seminar - Trade
GENERAL FISHERIES CO, Feb.93	Marine products, US\$5 million - Fisheries
GEM & JEWELRY TRADERS ASSOC, Feb.90	Owens A.G.D. GEM DEALER - Gems
INDIES ENTERPRISE, Nov.90	Mfg & export of T-shirts and denims - Textile
INDUSTRIAL FINANCE CORP OF THAILAND	Shareholder of Thai Factory Development
J.V.O., Sep.92	20 trawlers, 20 purse-seiners - Fisheries
JANSOM HOTEL, Apr.93	Negotiating boat tours to Song & Pabasin Islands - Tourism
KHAN SAWMILL, Kanchanaburi, 1993	24,000 tons - Forestry
KOR NANTHMANOP SAWMILL, Kanchanaburi, 1993	20,000 tons - Forestry
KRUNG THAI BANK, Nov.92	Permission for Rangoon branch office - Banking

## Foreign Trade &amp; Investments:

## UPDATE: FOREIGN FIRMS IN BURMA - 7

Source: Burma Alert

## THAILAND: (continued)

MARS & CO, Dec.88	40 vessels, 250,000 tons, US\$3 million - Fisheries
MAE MOEI LOGGING INDUSTRY, Mae Hong Son, 1993	10,000 tons - Forestry
MAE SOT PANAKIJ, Prachuab Kiri Khan, 1993	47,000 tons - Forestry
N & N CO, Ratchaburi, 1993	15,000 tons - Forestry
NARONG CANNING, Sep.92	70 trawlers, 20 purse-seiners - Fisheries
O.N.K. MINING & CONSTRUCTION, Jul.93	Plywood factory, US\$24 million - Forestry
OCEAN FOOD, Sep.92	30 trawlers, 20 purse-seiners - Fisheries
P.A.E. THAILAND, Sep.91	Site preparation for SHELL, US\$10 million - Oil & Gas
PADAENG INDUSTRY, Oct.90	- Mining
PAKNAM FISHERIES, Sep.92	20 purse-seiners - Fisheries
PETROLEUM AUTHORITY, Jan.90	10% of UNOCAL's concession, US\$7 million - Oil & Gas
PETROLEUM AUTHORITY, Feb.92	Unsuccessful oil exploration, US\$3.8 million - Oil & Gas
PETROLEUM AUTHORITY, Nov.92	Planning retail oil distribution network - Trade
PETROLEUM AUTHORITY, Jun.93	30% of TOTAL's (FRANCE) concessions - Oil & Gas
PETROLEUM AUTHORITY, Jun.93	350 km natural gas pipeline, US\$2 billion - Oil & Gas
PHOLASITH TUK-TUK, Mar.90	Assembling motor-tricycles, US\$4.7 million - Automotive
PORNCHAI RANONG, Sep.92	20 trawlers, 20 purse-seiners - Fisheries
RANONG Governor Chamnong Chalermchat, Feb.93	Seminar - Trade
ROYAL ORCHID AIR SYSTEM, Jul.93	Chiang Rai-Kengtung airlink, US\$0.4 million - Tourism
RICE ENGINEERING, Nov.91	Rice mill machinery & spare-parts, US\$3 million - Industry
SAHA PORNTRI, Jun.90	Retail joint venture - Trade
SAHA PONGSIRI, Nov.90	Lead mining, US\$0.1 million - Mining
SAHAVIRIYA O.A. GROUP	Owens EPSON ELECTRONICS (Thailand) - Computers
SEA EXPLORATION & MINING CO, Feb.90	Tin dredging, Blk IV, US\$54 million - Mining
SEA EXPLORATION & MINING CO, Jun.90	Tin dredging, Blk X, US\$38.6 million - Mining
SIAM CEMENT, Mar.93	Studying Burma expansion - Industry
SIAM CITY BANK, Feb.93	Planning branch office - Banking
SILA INTERNATIONAL, 1993	37,000 tons - Forestry
SIN PETCHRATNA, Sep.92	- Fisheries
SIRICHAH FISHERIES, Feb.89	35 vessels, US\$2.3 million - Fisheries
SKYLINE TRAVEL SERVICE, Jan.90	Mandalay Myanmar Tours - Tourism
SONGSEEM INT'L, Aug.90	Raw matl for brewery, US\$20 million - Foodstuff
SONGSEEM INT'L, Aug.90	Brewery, US\$15 million - Foodstuff
SOONG THAI CONSTR & TRADING, Apr.90	Tin dredging, Blk VII, US\$13 million - Mining
SRIDENCHAI, Kanchanaburi, 1993	15,000 tons - Forestry
STATE RAILWAY, Aug.92	Agreed to Three Pagoda Pass rail link - Transport
SUK-UAH-ANANT CO, Apr.93	Chiang Rai-Kengtung Hwy, US\$13 million - Infrastructure
SUKAWMA CO, Apr.90	20 vessels - Fisheries
SUWANNEE INDUSTRIAL, Kanchanaburi, 1993	15,000 tons - Forestry
T.B.E. COMPANY, Feb.93	Owens GENERAL FISHERIES CO - Fisheries
TALAY THONG PATANA, Sep.92	20 trawlers, 20 purse-seiners - Fisheries
THAI BURMA, Sep.92	40 trawlers, 20 purse-seiners - Fisheries
THAI FACTORY DEVELOPMENT, May 93	Studying Burma - Infrastructure
THAI PRESIDENT FOODS, Apr.93	Vermicelli factory - Foodstuff
THAI MILITARY BANK, Jan.93	Opened Rangoon branch - Banking

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**Foreign Trade & Investments:****UPDATE: FOREIGN FIRMS IN BURMA - 8**

Source: Burma Alert

**THAILAND:** (continued)

THAI TIMBER FEDERATION, Jun.93	47 logging companies - Forestry
THAI-MYANMAR, Sep.92	60 trawlers, 40 purse-seiners - Fisheries
THAI-MYANMAR FISHERIES Consortium, Apr.90	225 vessels - Fisheries
THIP THARN THONG, Jan.89	50 vessels, US\$3.8 million - Fisheries
TOURISM AUTHORITY, 1990	Thailand as Gateway to Burma - Tourism
TRITHAM AIR SYSTEM, Jul.93	Owns part of ROYAL ORCHID AIR SYSTEM - Tourism
UNION FARM ENGINEERING, Nov.90	Thahtay Kyun Resort Hotel, US\$10 million - Tourism
UNION PAR, Apr.93	Awarded logging concession - Forestry
VALUE INDUSTRIES, Feb.90	US\$ 1 million - Textile
VITAVAS INTERNATIONAL, 1989	Golden Triangle Paradise Resort, US\$10 million - Tourism
YES GROUP, M-D Vikrom Aisiri, Aug.92	Joint venture - Gems

**MALAYSIA:**

AIR FORCE, Feb.90	Trained SLORC personnel on C130 aircraft - Arms
BURMAL HOLDINGS, Aug.89	Wholesale & retail - Trade
HOISOON IMPORT EXPORT, Apr.90	10 vessels in 'bareboat' charter, US\$3 million - Fisheries
MBf CARD SERVICES, Loy Hean Hong, Apr.90	MasterCard - Tourism
PADI RICE AUTHORITY, Jan.90	Import of Burmese rice - Trade
PALM OIL PROMOTION COUNCIL, Feb.92	Seminar "Use of Palm Oil" - Trade
PETRONAS, Aug.92	Interested in exploration - Oil & Gas
SEAL INC via SEAL INVESTMENT HK, Oct.92	200,000 hectare, US\$1 million - Forestry
SERGE PUN ASSOCIATES	Hotel in Rangoon - Tourism
SOON H. LEE, Aug.90	Teak export - Forestry
SOPHIA INDUSTRIES, Feb.89	US\$2.9 million - Fisheries

**INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES:**

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, Dec.91	Feasibility of hydro-electric projects - Infrastructure
A.D.B., Dec.91	Bridge across Moei river to Thailand US\$20 million on hold - Infrastructure
A.D.B., Aug.93	Feasibility studies, Burma/China highways - Infrastructure
FOOD & AGRI ORG'N, Oct.90	Horticulture, Chin Hills, US\$0.2 million - Infrastructure
HABITAT, 1990	Announced support for SLORC's BAD Program - Infrastructure
INT'L FUND FOR AGRI DEV, 1992	Studying 1994-99 development project - Infrastructure
O.P.E.C. FUND FOR INT'L DEVELOPMENT, May.90	Loan US\$7.3 million - Aid
U.N. CAPITAL DEV FUND, 1992	Studying 3-yr Water supply project - Infrastructure
U.N. DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, 1993-94	Border development, US\$18 million - Health
U.N.D.P., 1986-91	Border Development - Shan State, US\$17.5 million - Infrastructure
U.N.D.P., 1986-91	Re-Forestation - Central Burma, US\$19.5 million - Infrastructure
U.N. DRUG CONTROL PROGRAMME, Apr.92	Crop substitution, US\$4.5 million - Drugs
U.N. FAMILY PLANNING AGENCY, 1990	Had US\$3 million budget (unspent) - Infrastructure
U.N. FUND FOR DRUG ABUSE CONTROL, 1990	US\$10 million budget (unspent) - Drugs
U.N.I.C.E.F., 1991-95	Health & Nutrition, US\$20 million - Health
U.N.I.C.E.F., 1991-95	Water Supply & Sanitation, US\$12.5 million - Health
U.N.I.C.E.F., 1991-95	Early Childhood Development, US\$5 million - Health
U.N.I.C.E.F., 1991-95	Communications, Advocacy, Statistics, US\$1.25 million - Health
U.N.I.C.E.F., 1991-95	Capacity Building Support Services, US\$1.25 million - Health