

## SECRETARY-GENERAL TO ASSIST IN IMPLEMENTING RESOLUTION

For the third consecutive year, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on 20 Dec.93 adopted a consensus resolution calling on the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) in Rangoon "to take all necessary steps towards the restoration of democracy in accordance with the will of the people as expressed in the democratic elections held in 1990, and to ensure that political parties can function freely." The resolution noted with concern that "most of the representatives duly elected in 1990 have been excluded from participating in the meetings of the National Convention" and that the Convention is designed to maintain the military in power. In addition to calling for the unconditional release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners, the UNGA, for the first time, requested the Secretary-General to assist in implementing the resolution [UN931220/1129].

## YOKOTA - BURMA NOT HEADING TOWARDS DEMOCRACY

On 24 Nov. 93, Yozo Yokota, UN Human Rights Special Rapporteur for Burma reported to the UNGA that "the composition, procedure, and other measures taken in connection with the National Convention seem to indicate that the constitutional process is not heading towards multi-party democracy as announced by the Government." Yokota visited Burma for the second time 9-16 Nov and Thailand 16-20 Nov.93. Like his predecessor, Dr Sadako Ogata, Yokota was again denied access to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi but was allowed to visit Insein Prison and see U Tin Oo, Chairman of the National League for Democracy, and Dr Aung Khin Sint, an NLD elected representative and delegate to the National Convention. He was arrested in Aug.93 for writing a pamphlet critical of the Convention. U Than Min, a township NLD Executive Committee member was arrested with him for distributing the leaflets. Both were sentenced to 20 years in prison in Oct.93. Ten other NLD activists including Ma Thida, a well-known author and surgeon, were arrested in mid-1993 and sentenced to 20 years imprisonment for opposing the Convention [UN931124, AI:ASA 16/03/94].

## SLORC NATIONAL CONVENTION DENOUNCED BY US GOVERNMENT

On Dec 6, Ambassador Victor Marrero, US Alternate Representative to the 48th session of the UNGA, said that SLORC's National Convention is "fundamentally flawed". It "does not have the mandate of the people and it is not contributing to progress toward putting political power in the hands of a freely elected civilian government. The Convention is a thoroughly contrived affair whose agenda and activities are determined by the SLORC...The main objective of the National Convention...is to maintain the participation of the armed forces in a leading role in the future political life of the state." The statement was made to explain why the US joined the consensus to adopt the resolution proposed by the Third Committee but was unable to co-sponsor it. The US said that the resolution "does not...fully address the human rights situation in Myanmar." The US wanted the Secretary-General to use his good offices to promote a peaceful solution among all concerned parties and wanted the resolution "to recognize the direct linkage between the SLORC's military forces and human rights violations in Myanmar." The US also wanted all UN specialized agencies in Burma "to use special care to ensure that all funds expended in the country reach the intended grass roots level recipients... and do not enrich the SLORC leaders or the military forces" [US931206].

## SLORC WANTS KACHINS TO DISARM

On 21 Jan, Colonel Kyaw Win, Deputy Director of the Directorate of Defence Services Intelligence, said that the Kachins must disarm if the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) wants to participate in the National Convention. This is a major departure from the established norm. Other groups like the Wa and Lahu have delegates attending the Convention but are still armed. Lieut-Gen Maung Thint, SLORC Minister for the Development of Border Areas and Ethnic Minorities confirmed that eventually the Kachins will have to lay down their arms. A KIO spokesman refused to comment but said that it was still too early to talk about eventually disarming. He said that the KIO wants to see a nationwide cease-fire [N940123].

## THAILAND TO CRACK DOWN ON ANTI-SLORC ACTIVITIES

On 8 Jan, the Deputy Chief of the Thai National Security Council, Khachadpai Burusapatana, said that anti-SLORC activities by exiled Burmese dissidents are damaging relations between Bangkok and Rangoon. Therefore, he said Thailand will clamp down on such activities. Non-government organizations will not be allowed to finance trips abroad for Burmese dissidents who will be carefully monitored. NGOs must not break Thai law, he said. On 20 Dec, Lieut-Gen Sanan Kajornklam, chief advisor on Thai-Burmese security affairs at the Thai Supreme Command alleged that "some of the NGOs are assisting anti-government minority groups...to fight the Burmese government. The military is gathering information and evidence" he said. In Jan.94, a joint meeting of the Thai Interior and Foreign Ministries, the NSC, the Supreme Command, the Army, and the Police and Local Administration Departments, discussed ways to tighten measures against illegal immigrants who are said to number over 500,000. Of these, 300,000 are from Burma. This does not include the 70,000 Burmese refugees on the Thai border. On 17 Jan, Thai authorities seized US\$33,200 worth of medical supplies on the border near Mae Sarieng. The supplies were allegedly bound for Manerplaw, headquarters of the Democratic Alliance of Burma (DAB). The move was seen by the Burmese democracy movement as another Thai tactic to force DAB member groups to negotiate separate cease-fires with SLORC. The NCGUB distributed US\$144,000 worth of medical supplies to its ethnic allies along the Thai border in 1993 without any harassment from Thai authorities. The last shipment worth US\$26,000 was made in Dec.93 [BWR940204, N931222, REU940108].

## KNU AGREES TO TALK WITH SLORC

In early January, the Karen National Union (KNU) executive committee held an emergency meeting in Manerplaw to discuss SLORC's rejection of the peace talk offer by the DAB (BA No.12, Vol.4, Dec.93). Since other DAB members were already negotiating with SLORC, the KNU decided to follow suit. The KIO reached a cease-fire agreement in Oct.93 and the New Mon State Party started negotiations in late Dec.93. The Karennis who are allies but not a DAB member, started negotiating in early Jan.94. According to a joint letter dated 3 Dec.93, sent to

one of the highest institutions in Thailand, the Karens, Karennis and Mons stated that for the past year, they had been subjected to increasing pressure by Thai authorities to negotiate with SLORC. The letter signed by Karen General Bo Mya, Karenni leader Saw Maw Reh and Mon leader Nai Shwe Kyin, alleged that the pressure involved threats to push ethnic refugees in Thailand back into the war zone in Burma, threats to cut off their food supply, and threats to restrict their travel even for medical treatment. The ethnic leaders called for Thailand to apply pressure equally to both sides in order to persuade SLORC to agree to a multi-party negotiation with the DAB. "Action perceived as not even-handed" will be counter-productive, they said. On 20 Jan, General Bo Mya said that although the KNU has decided to talk to SLORC, the KNU will not negotiate a cease-fire with SLORC at the expense of its DAB allies. He said that ceasefire agreements negotiated by SLORC separately with various ethnic groups do not guarantee a true peace and that the KNU will negotiate only if it can do so on equal terms. He promised that the KNU will try to obtain full rights and freedoms in the economic, social and political field for all Burmese citizens. The KNU and the Karenni favour a third country venue for the talks. But Thai Foreign Minister Prasong has ruled out Thailand as the venue unless SLORC requests it [B940122, F940127, N940110,0122, REU940109, SCMP940108].

## KNU-ABSDF MISUNDERSTANDING

On 17 Jan, the British Broadcasting Corporation reported that the KNU had disarmed students from the Moe Thi Zun faction of the All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF) and detained 12 of its leaders including Moe Thi Zun. It was alleged that the students opposed the KNU decision to negotiate with SLORC. Reports were also received that the students in Karenni had been disarmed and that the KIO was asking the students to leave their area. About 2,000 students from the ABSDF are active in Karen controlled areas, 800 in Kachin areas and 300 in Karenni areas. The ABSDF is a member of the DAB whose Central Committee held an Emergency Meeting from 11-14 Jan to consider the position of the KNU and the NMSP who are both members (the KIO was suspended from the DAB in Oct.93). The DAB meeting acknowledged that circumstances called for the

KNU and NMSP to negotiate separately with SLORC but continued to maintain that genuine peace can only be achieved through multi-party negotiations. On 19 Jan, the National Council of the Union of Burma (NCUB) which includes the DAB, the National Democratic Front (NDF), the National League for Democracy - Liberated Area (NLD-LA) and the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB), issued a clarification stating that the ABSDF endorses the DAB position on KNU peace talks and that there were no problems between the KNU and its allies. It also stated that the leadership of the KNU and ABSDF Moe Thi Zun faction were holding discussions to prevent a misunderstanding when the BBC announcement was made [B940120, BBC940117, DAB940114, N940122, NCUB940119].

## SHANS DECLARE INDEPENDENCE, ELECT KHUN SA PRESIDENT

On 12 Dec, the Shan State Restoration Council declared independence from Burma and elected Khun Sa the president of Shan State. Earlier, on 5 Jun, President Deving of the Shan State People's Representatives Assembly had applied for Shan State membership to the UN and this was followed in Oct.93 by a letter from Khun Sa to US President Clinton proposing to terminate opium production in the Shan State in exchange for development aid. In Nov.93 the People's Representatives Assembly also appealed for the withdrawal of a US grand jury indictment for drug trafficking against Khun Sa and a warrant for his arrest. SLORC, however, responded by moving at least 10,000 crack troops from the 88th, 55th and 33rd light infantry divisions into position opposite Khun Sa's Merng Tai Army strongholds. An attack was launched on 10 December but was called off after Khun Sa paid Baht 10 million (US\$400,000) to the Ministry of Defence in Rangoon. A Burma Army helicopter reportedly picked up the money on 17 Dec at a secret rendezvous near the Salween river south of Mong Pan. New attacks were, however, resumed in January. Observers believe that SLORC may be planning to move against Khun Sa to gain international support and aid from the US Drug Enforcement Administration. The US government has accused SLORC of openly collaborating with drug traffickers and striking at Khun Sa would disprove the claim. However, according to a recent US Embassy analysis, Khun Sa's influence in the Burmese

drug trade is fast waning. Most of the 35-40 heroin refineries and more than half of the acreage under opium cultivation are now located in areas controlled by SLORC allies in the north. This lends some credence to Khun Sa's contention that he has been singled out as a fall guy, "Other people benefit much more than I do from the trade, but nothing is said about them. Maybe they are too powerful and influential?" [SSPRA, BWR931224, F940120,0203].

## THAI PARLIAMENTARIANS OBJECT TO SLORC IN ASEAN

In early Dec.93, the Chairman of the Thai Parliamentary Committee on Justice and Human Rights Nipon Wisityutthasart wrote to his counterparts in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore, urging them to oppose SLORC's membership in ASEAN. The Committee said that SLORC ignored the Burmese people following the NLD's election victory in 1990 and accused it of using forced labour, rape, forced relocation and summary executions against ethnic groups in a 'secret, ugly' war. The letter urged fellow parliamentarians to insist on three conditions before their governments considered accepting SLORC into ASEAN. The conditions are: the immediate and unconditional release of Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners, the cessation of political repression and violations of human rights against ethnic minorities, and a guarantee of peace and safety for all ethnic groups. The Thai Committee was also the first to sign a world-wide 'parliamentary petition' to the UN Secretary-General calling for the release of Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners in Burma. The petition to be signed by parliamentarians in 100 countries was launched in Bangkok in Oct.93 by Ed Broadbent of the Canadian International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development [B931229,1009, BWR940107].

## NEW ANTI-SLORC GUERRILLA GROUP FORMED IN BURMA

A new anti-Rangoon guerrilla group, the National Liberation Union for Justice in Burma (NLUJB) was formed in Sep.93 by Myo Thant, 36, a former teacher, from Monywa district in Mandalay Division. He claims to have 150 well-trained and well-armed soldiers all formerly from the ABSDF. The new group operates in Burma opposite Mae Hong Son [BM9310].

**Burma News:****KHIN NYUNT VISITS INDONESIA**

On 20 Dec.93, SLORC Secretary 1 Lieut-Gen Khin Nyunt visited Indonesia for 5 days at the invitation of I R Hartarto, Coordinating Minister for Industry and Trade. He was accompanied by Lieut-Gen Kyaw Ba (Hotels and Tourism), Lieut-Gen Thein Win (Air Force C-in-C), Brig-Gen David Abel (National Planning & Economic Development), U Ohn Gyaw (Foreign Affairs), Brig-Gen Myo Thant (Information), and U Soe Tha (Communications, Posts & Telegraphs). The New Light of Myanmar said that the visit "turned a new page in Myanmar-Indonesia relations, further cementing the already strong ties." The host, however, played down the visit "because Indonesia does not want to be tainted by Burma's pariah status" said an official. Indonesia would like to be able to persuade SLORC to reform and be accepted by the world community in order to boost its own image as an international mediator. SLORC is interested in Indonesia because its military dominates the country's political life. The constitution being drafted by SLORC is said to be based on the Indonesian model. On 15 Sep.93, SLORC also announced the formation of the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) to take the place of the ill-fated National Unity Party and its predecessor, the Burma Socialist Programme Party. The USDA is said to be modelled after Indonesia's ruling party, the Golkar to rally the people behind SLORC. However, many are reportedly signing up not out of conviction but to get the special privileges being offered: members can get a Myanmar passport easily, they can buy air tickets without any problems, and they will be given preference in the selection process for civil service jobs [F931125, N931223, SLORC9401].

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**NEWS SOURCES THIS ISSUE:** AI = Amnesty International, B = Bangkok Post, BA = Burma Alert, BBC = British Broadcasting Corporation, BM = Burma Monitor, New York, BWR = Bangkok Post Weekly Review, DAB = Democratic Alliance of Burma, F = Far Eastern Economic Review, N = The Nation, Bangkok, NCUB = National Council of the Union of Burma, REU = Reuters, SCMP = South China Morning Post, SLORC = State Law and Order Restoration Council/Embassy, SSPRA = Shan State People's Representative Assembly, UN = United Nations, and US = US Government.

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**International Action:****DEMOCRACY MARCH IN OTTAWA**

Burmese student refugees including ethnic Mons and Karens who were experiencing their first Canadian winter braved a minus twenty-five celsius temperature and bitterly cold winds, to demonstrate for democracy in Ottawa on 3 Jan. The rally organized by the Canadian Friends of Burma to mark Burma's independence marched from the Human Rights monument to the eternal flame on Parliament Hill.

**MON COUNCIL FORMED**

The Indigenous Mon Council of Burma (IMCOB) announced its formation on 4 Jan. It is committed to helping end the civil war, bring genuine democracy and self-determination for the the people of Burma. Exec Director Venerable Abbot Ramanya Kelasa, 10735, 105th Street, Apt.205, Edmonton. Alberta, Canada. Tel: 1 (403) 441 3950. Coordinators G Saik Ong & Cham Lavi, 712 South St, Apt.2, Lafayette, IN.47901, USA. Tel: 1 (317) 742-3221.

**RALLY AT DELHI EMBASSIES**

The Burmese Students League and the Tibetan Youth Congress organized a protest rally in New Delhi on 10 Dec, Human Rights Day. Over 150 people attended the rallies in front of the SLORC, Chinese and Thai embassies.

**CANDLELIGHT VIGIL IN DELHI**

India-based human rights organizations, the Burmese Students League and the Tibetan Youth Congress organized a candle light march from Jantar Mantar to the Constitution Club in New Delhi on 11 Dec to draw attention to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the human rights situation in Burma. Over 250 people joined the procession which ended with a speech by Mr H Karlekar, Deputy Editor of the Indian Express. Mrs Malavika Karlekar is a close friend of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

**TIBET-BURMA CULTURAL NIGHT**

Following the candlelight march on 11 Dec, a fund-raising dinner was held and a joint Burmese-Tibetan cultural presentation was given. About 300 people attended including diplomats from the USA and Sweden. Member of Parliament George Fernandes was a keynote speaker. Proceeds from the dinner will go towards establishing a support group for Burmese democracy activists.

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**International Action:****DELHI INDEPENDENCE DAY RALLY AND SLORC VISIT PROTEST**

On the 48th anniversary of Burma's independence, the BSL organized a rally to inform the public that people in Burma were on that day staying home as a silent protest against SLORC. Again on 19 Jan, the BSL organized a demonstration in front of the Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to protest the visit of a SLORC delegation headed by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, U Nyunt Swe, who was at the time meeting with Foreign Secretary J N Dixit.

**JAPANESE ASYLUM FOR BURMESE**

On 24 Dec.93, the Japanese government granted political asylum to Dr Kyaw Tint, 38, and Dr Min Nyo, 45, of Nagoya, and U Thein Ngwe of Tokyo. Dr Kyaw Tint refused to obey SLORC orders in 1989 to terminate his studies at Nagoya University and return to Burma. Dr Min Nyo could not get his passport renewed because of his anti-SLORC activities and applied for asylum in 1989. U Thein Ngwe is the Vice Chairman of the Burmese Association in Japan and has been actively campaigning against SLORC. Three other Burmese were granted asylum by the Japanese Government in April 1992.

**JAPANESE DIET WRITES CHUAN**

On 30 Nov.93, members of the Japanese Diet including Minister for Science and Technology Satsuki Eda and Speaker of the Lower House, Takako Doi, wrote to Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai urging him to persuade SLORC to unconditionally release political prisoners, lift restrictions on the freedom of association and expression, allow the UNHCR to monitor refugee repatriation from Bangladesh, and to investigate and bring to justice those responsible for torture, abuse of women, forced labour and summary executions.

**TOKYO MARCH FOR DEMOCRACY**

On 4 Jan, the Nagoya-based International Network for Burma Relief, the Nara-based Burmese Relief Center - Japan, and the Tokyo-based Burma Youth Volunteer Association organized a march in Tokyo calling for democracy in Burma and the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Human rights activists from Australia, Japan, New Zealand, the Philippines and the USA participated.

**'PRISONERS IN OUR OWN COUNTRY'**

On the anniversary of Burma's independence day, 4 Jan, the Burma Youth Volunteer Association in Tokyo place an advertisement in the Daily Yomiuri newspaper quoting Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, "We want the world to know that we are prisoners in our own country".

**TOKYO CONCERT FOR DAW SUU**

On 12 Dec, Amnesty International - Japan and the National Network for Burmese Concerns co-sponsored a concert at Tokyo Town Hall to mark the 2nd anniversary of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's Nobel Peace Prize.

**'BURMA AS SOUTH AFRICA'**

In the Far Eastern Economic Review of 16 Sep.93, Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa (1984 Nobel Peace Laureate) compared Burma to South Africa and said, "the policy of constructive engagement with the SLORC is a failure, even as it failed to persuade the apartheid regime in South Africa to make more than cosmetic changes...An international arms embargo is a first step. Trade and investment restrictions should follow. International pressure can change the situation in Burma. Tough sanctions, not constructive engagement, finally brought the release of Nelson Mandela and the dawn of a new era in my country. This is the language that must be spoken with tyrants - for, sadly, it is the only language they understand.

**'BURMA CAN BE FREED'**

A multi-media kit designed to help activists promote awareness of Burma is now available for US\$300 from Burma Issues, P O Box 1076, Silom PO, Bangkok 10504. Ten panel displays, two posters and two videos (NTCS or PAL format) - 'Faces of Burma' and 'The Burma Deception,' a professionally produced 37 minute documentary on Burmese refugees are included. Fax: 66 (2) 234-6674.

**THAI POLICE OUTNUMBER BURMESE DEMONSTRATORS**

An attempt by Burmese students to demonstrate outside the SLORC Embassy in Bangkok on 4 Jan fizzled out when Thai police and reporters outnumbered the dissidents by a ratio of more than eight-to-one. Two students without suitable identification papers were detained.

**International Action:****AMNESTY URGES SLORC TO IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

Amnesty International's report "Myanmar - Human Rights Developments, July to December 1993" (ASA 16/03/94), welcomed the 'incremental improvements' made by SLORC. However, Amnesty said that it is concerned because SLORC "has refused to make more fundamental changes...It is imperative that the General Assembly take all possible steps to urge the Government of Myanmar...to halt these severe violations of human rights...by implementing the recommendations made to it by the Commission on Human Rights."

**WATERSHED POLITICS**

On 29 Sep.93, the Environmental Research Division of the Manila Observatory in the Philippines presented a paper entitled "Refugees on the Burma-Thai Border, Watershed Politics" to the Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London, SW7 2AR.

**'A STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM'**

On 11 Dec, the Jesuit Refugee Service and the US Congressional Human Rights Foundation co-sponsored 'A Struggle for Freedom,' a one-woman show by Burmese performer and activist Yuzana Khin, in Washington DC.

**BURMA CONGRESS IN NEW YORK**

An International Burma Congress organized by Dr Tyn Myint-U and Daw Aye Aye Thant was held in New York City 13-14 Nov.93. Speakers included Dr Sein Win (NCGUB), Dr Thaung Htun (ABSDF), Dr Gene Sharp (Albert Einstein Institute), Jim Ross (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights), James Adam (International Human Rights Law Group), Robert Helvey (American Friends of Burma), Simon Billenness (Franklin Research) and Harn Yawngwe.

**SLORC WAR CRIMES**

US-based organizations are initiating war crimes proceedings against commanders of the Burma Army's 99th Division based on compelling evidence that the Division deliberately committed severe abuse of civilians in the Pa-an, Papun and Thaton areas in 1993. Anyone with information on the 99th Div and its officers are urged to contact: Project Maje, 14 Dartmouth Rd, Cranford, NJ.07016.

**Foreign Trade & Investments:****CHINA:**

Since the Oct.93 Burma Alert report, thirty 107mm Type 63 multiple rocket-launcher systems, US\$5million worth of radio equipment, 900 five-tonne trucks, 150 Type 85 tracked armoured personnel carriers, 20 more T69 main battle tanks, 20 more T63 light amphibious tanks, one more squadron of twelve F7 jet fighters, and 4 more Hainan class fast attack patrol boats (accompanied by 70 Chinese naval personnel) have been delivered to SLORC. 300 trucks of varying sizes, one more squadron of twelve F7 jet fighters, and two squadrons of A5M ground attack aircraft are expected within the next few months. New Chinese radar equipment is also being installed in the Coco Islands off India's Andaman Islands [F931216].

**JAPAN:**

KYODO-MYANMAR OIL & GAS PRODUCTION CO is a Japanese-SLORC joint venture formed in Jan.93

**SWITZERLAND:**

SLORC has a US\$8million UNION BANK OF SWITZERLAND (HK) credit line (Nov.90).

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:**

APACHE CORPORATION terminated all its operations in Burma in 1993. It found that Block RSF-9 and EP-3 had insufficient economic potential for oil production. Roger Plank, V President, External Affairs, 2000 Post Oak Blvd, Suite 100, Houston, Texas 77056-4400.

HOME SHOPPING CLUB has been promoting Burmese ruby rings and jewelry on its TV shopping network (Sep.93). Address: Customer Service, P.O.Box 9090, Clearwater, FL.34618-9090. Tel: 1 (800) 284-3900.

PEARL CRUISES is advertising a new (Oct.93) 18-day Burma & Siam cruise with 3 days "in this stunning nation time left behind" (Bahamas ship registry). 6301 N.W. 5th Way, Fort Lauderdale, FL.33309. Tel: 1 (800) 556-8600.

SEVEN SEAS CRUISE LINE is advertising a cruise to Southeast Asia (Oct.93) including Burma (Its "Song of Flower" cruise ship has Norwegian registry). Anders Stenersen, President, 333 Market St, #2600, San Francisco, CA.94105. Tel: 1 (800) 285-1835.