

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Myanmar: New evidence of mass detentions, hostage taking, deaths in custody and disappearances**

Amnesty International has today written to Myanmar's authorities with a briefing paper outlining grave and ongoing human rights violations committed since the start of September's crackdown.

The briefing comes ahead of next week's visit to Myanmar by the UN's Special Rapporteur on human rights Paulo Sergio Pinheiro.

"Widespread arbitrary detentions, hostage taking, beatings and torture in custody and enforced disappearances clearly disprove any claims from the Myanmar Government of returning normality," said Catherine Baber, Amnesty International's Asia-Pacific programme director.

"Instead of protesting about interference in sovereignty, the Myanmar authorities must honor their promises of 'full cooperation' with the UN through full access for Mr Pinheiro and full delivery of concrete human rights improvements identified by the UN Human Rights Council and Security Council."

Amnesty International's key concerns include:

- The continued detention of some 700 political prisoners including at least 15 individuals sentenced to prison terms of up to nine and a half years;
- An official policy of taking family members and friends as "hostages" to force others to turn themselves in;
- Deaths in detention due to severe beatings and others forms of torture;
- Appalling detention conditions including the denial of adequate food, water and sanitary facilities as well as the keeping of detainees in "dog cells";
- Enforced disappearances since the crackdown, including at least 72 individuals whose whereabouts the authorities have failed to account for;
- Failure by the Myanmar authorities to account for the number of people killed during the crackdown;
- Evidence of marksmen atop military trucks and bridges using live ammunition to target individual demonstrators during the crackdown resulting in the death of at least two students and the serious wounding of others;
- Ambulances being denied access to victims on the streets during September's demonstrations and private medical clinics ordered not to treat the injured.

Amnesty International is calling on Myanmar authorities to account for all those killed and those who have disappeared. The authorities must also provide the Special Rapporteur with a full list of all those detained and sentenced since the crackdown as well as full and unrestricted access to all detention facilities and crematoria.

For a full copy of the briefing, please see: <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGASA160372007>

First-hand audio testimony from monks who witnessed the brutal attack on a monastic training school in Myitkyina, in the far north of the country on 25 September will also be available at: [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

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