

PUBLIC

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2 October 2006

Further Information on UA 261/06 (ASA 16/012/2006, 29 September 2006) – Fear of torture/ arbitrary detention/ medical concern

MYANMAR **U Htay Kywe (m), aged about 41**
 Ko Ko Gyi (m), aged 44
 Paw U Tun (alias Min Ko Naing) (m), aged 43

New names: **Min Zeya (m)**
 Pyone Cho (m)

Two more former political prisoners and former student leaders have been detained without charge. Min Zeya and Pyone Cho were taken away from their homes in Yangon, on 30 September by security officials. There is no information on where they are being detained. Amnesty International fears that they are at risk of torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

The arrest of Min Zeya and Pyone Cho follows the detention of three other former student leaders, Min Ko Naing, Ko Ko Gyi and Htay Kywe, on 27 September. Min Zeya and Pyone Cho were among the leaders of the 1988 nationwide demonstrations against 26 years of military rule. No reason has been given for the detention of the activists. They have been in custody well beyond the 24 hour period admissible in Myanmar law.

The arrests followed a day after the United Nations Security Council heard a first official briefing on the situation in Myanmar.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International has long-standing concerns at the deprivation of basic rights in detention. People are frequently arrested without warrant and held incommunicado. Torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment are common in pre-trial detention. Proceedings against political detainees have failed to meet international standards for fair trial. Defendants are often denied the right to legal counsel or to legal counsel of their own choice. Prosecutors have relied on confessions extracted through torture.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or your own language:

- expressing concern at reports that Min Zeya and Pyone Cho have been arbitrarily detained since 30 September;
- urging the authorities to release Min Zeya, Pyone Cho, and their fellow former student leaders U Htay Kywe, Ko Ko Gyi and Paw U Tun immediately and unconditionally, unless they are to be charged with a recognisably criminal offence;
- urging the authorities to ensure that, while they remain in custody, the five men are held only in an official place of detention, and are granted immediate access to lawyers, their families and any medical treatment they may require;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that all people in Myanmar are able to peacefully exercise the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly without fear of harassment, intimidation or arbitrary detention, in line with international human rights standards.

APPEALS TO:

General Than Shwe

Minister of Defence/Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council
c/o Ministry of Defence,
Ahlanpya Phaya Street,
Yangon
Union of Myanmar

Salutation: Dear General

Foreign Minister Nyan Win
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Pyay Court, Pyay Road,
Yangon
Union of Myanmar

Salutation: Dear Minister

Major General Maung Oo
Minister of Home Affairs and chairman of the Myanmar Human Rights Committee
Ministry of Home Affairs,
Corner of Saya San Street and No 1 Industrial Street,
Yankin Township,
Yangon
Union of Myanmar

Salutation: Dear Major General

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Myanmar accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 13 November 2006.