

URGENT ACTION

JAILED ACTIVIST DENIED VITAL MEDICAL TREATMENT

Imprisoned pro-democracy activist Robert San Aung is in need of urgent medical attention: he has lost the sight in one eye since he was moved to the north-western prison of Kale, in Sagaing Division, in late 2008. He has not been allowed to see an eye specialist.

Robert San Aung was arrested on 19 June 2008 for his part in a peaceful demonstration outside the home of detained pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi. He was sentenced to two-and-a-half years' imprisonment for his involvement in the peaceful demonstration. He was transferred from Insein prison, in his home town, Myanmar's main city, Yangon, to Kale prison, 1090km (680 miles) away, on 24 November.

According to a reliable source who has regular contact with him, he recently lost the sight in one of his eyes, and the prison authorities have not allowed him specialist treatment. All governments are required to ensure that every prisoner has access to adequate healthcare. However, since he was moved to Kale prison, Robert San Aung is only known to have been visited once by a doctor, on 25 June. During this visit, the doctor gave him 10 painkillers, but he has received no medical treatment since then.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in English or your own language:

- √ urging the authorities to ensure that Robert San Aung receives immediate specialist medical treatment for his eye condition, and any other medical treatment he may require;
- √ calling on them to release Robert San Aung immediately and unconditionally, once he has received the urgent medical treatment he needs;
- √ reminding the authorities that governments are obliged to ensure that all prisoners have access to appropriate medical care and treatment whenever necessary.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 9 NOVEMBER 2009 TO:

Minister for Home Affairs
 Maung Oo
 Ministry of Home Affairs
 Office No. 10
 Naypyitaw, Union of Myanmar
Fax: +95 67 412 439

Salutation: Dear Minister
Minister of Information
 Brigadier-General Kyaw Hsan
 Ministry of Information
 Bldg. (7), Naypyitaw,
 Union of Myanmar

Salutation: Dear Minister
Minister of Foreign Affairs
 Nyan Win
 Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 Naypyitaw, Union of Myanmar
Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO: Diplomatic representatives of Myanmar accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Robert San Aung is a lawyer who was disbarred in 1993 for providing legal representation to pro-democracy leaders, and for criticising the country's legal system. He was imprisoned from 1997 to 2003 for his political activities in the pro-democracy movement. He was previously the subject of UA 27/09 (ASA 16/001/2009, 26 January 2009).

There are over 2,000 political prisoners in Myanmar's jails. All political prisoners in the country are at risk of torture and other ill-treatment. Under a government amnesty announced on 17 September, 7,114 prisoners were released on "humanitarian grounds." Only 127 of those released were political prisoners. Political dissidents and pro-democracy campaigners are regularly harassed and detained in Myanmar.

The poor conditions and lack of adequate healthcare in Myanmar's jails mean that prisoners are often sick. Amnesty International receives regular reports of prison authorities denying medication or treatment to political prisoners. Another political prisoner, Hla Myo Naung, is in danger of losing his sight completely after being denied specialist medical treatment (see UA 83/09, 26 March 2009, ASA 16/002/2009). The International Committee of the Red Cross has not been allowed in to prisons in Myanmar for nearly four years

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