

# URGENT ACTION

## PROMINENT STUDENT UNIONIST MUST BE RELEASED

**After almost eight months in hiding, prominent student unionist Kyaw Ko Ko has been detained for his role in organizing student protests in Myanmar. He is a prisoner of conscience who must be immediately and unconditionally released.**

**Kyaw Ko Ko** (age 34) prominent student unionist and Chairman of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU) was arrested by plain clothes police officers on 29 October in Thingangyun Township, in Yangon, Myanmar's largest city while he was in hiding. He was held overnight at the Myanmar's Special Branch interrogation centre known as Aung Tha Pyay. His arrest relates to a peaceful protest he organized on 10 March in Yangon against the violent dispersal of a student march earlier that day in Letpadan, Bago region. After the protest on 10 March the police issued an arrest warrant against him for his role in organising the protest and he went into hiding.

On 30 October he was brought before the Kamayut Township Court in Yangon and was later transferred to Insein prison where he is currently held. He has been charged with taking part in an unlawful assembly (Article 143 of the Penal Code), joining or continuing an unlawful assembly knowing it has been dispersed (Article 145 of the Penal Code), "rioting" (Article 147 of the Penal Code), and inciting the public to commit offences against the State or the public tranquillity (Article 505(b) of the Penal Code). He faces up to six years and six months imprisonment. Kyaw Ko Ko might be facing additional charges but they have not been confirmed yet. His next court hearing will be on 5 November. As of 30 October, he had not been allowed to meet with a lawyer or his family.

### **Please write immediately in English, Burmese or your own language:**

- Calling on the Myanmar authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Kyaw Ko Ko and drop all charges against him;
- Urging them to ensure that pending his release, Kyaw Ko Ko is not tortured or otherwise ill-treated, nor transferred to a remote prison, has regular access to family members and a lawyer of his choice and is provided with any medical treatment that he may require;
- Calling on them to repeal or else amend all laws which unlawfully restrict the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, to comply with international human rights law and standards.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 11 DECEMBER 2015 TO:**

President

Thein Sein

President's Office

Office No.18

Nay Pyi Taw

Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Fax: +95 1 652 624

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Minister of Home Affairs

Lt Gen. Ko Ko

Ministry of Home Affairs

Office No. 10

Nay Pyi Taw

Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Fax: +95 67 412 439

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**And copies to:**

Chairman, Myanmar National Human Rights Commission

U Win Mra

27 Pyay Road, Hline Township

Yangon

Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Fax: + 95 1 659 668

Email: [chmyanmarnhrc@gmail.com](mailto:chmyanmarnhrc@gmail.com)

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Kyaw Ko Ko's friend who was supposed to meet him on 29 October at the time of his arrest was also shortly detained on 30 October by Myanmar Special Branch for questioning and released in the evening.

Kyaw Ko Ko and other members of the ABFSU have been leading student protests since the end of 2014, after the National Education Law was adopted on 30 September 2014. They claim the law curtails academic freedom and are calling for it to be amended. A nationwide student march was blocked in Letpadan, Bago Region and violently dispersed on 10 March by Myanmar police. More than 100 students were arrested that day. Since then, some have been released on bail but more than fifty remain in detention in Tharawaddy prison, Bago region.

Kyaw Ko Ko is now facing trial in the same case as prisoner of conscience Nandar Sitt Aung – another student leader from the ABFSU. See UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa16/2484/2015/en/>

Kyaw Ko Ko was previously arrested in 2008 for his involvement in the Saffron Revolution. He was released thanks to a presidential prisoner amnesty in January 2012.

The Myanmar authorities continue to arrest and imprison activists and human rights defenders simply for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression which is enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Amnesty International is concerned about a number of laws in Myanmar which restrict the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

In October, Amnesty International has published a briefing highlighting how Myanmar's authorities have intensified repression over the past two years and in particular by clamping down on freedom of expression in the lead up to general elections scheduled for 8 November. See: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa16/2457/2015/my/>

Amnesty International continues to receive reports about poor prison conditions in Myanmar, which do not comply with those set out in the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. These concerns include a lack of access to adequate medical treatment, clean drinking water, nutritious food and water for bathing.

Name: Kyaw Ko Ko  
Gender m/f: m

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