

**The 6th session of Human Rights Council
Palai Nations, Geneva, Switzerland
December 10-14, 2007
International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs**

Agenda item 4: Human Rights Situations that require the Human Rights Council's attention



Mr. President,

I'm making this statement on behalf of IWGIA and I like to take this opportunity to introduce Ethnic Nationalities Council- ENC (Union of Burma) which I represent. The ENC is state-based Council representing the seven Ethnic States of the Union of Burma: Arakan, Chin, Kachin, Karen, Karenni, Mon and Shan and its main objective is to establish a genuine Democratic Federal Union of Burma. The ENC members include all groups within each state. Therefore, it is the legitimate and credible body to speak on behalf of all the Ethnic States of Burma.

Mr. President,

The world was shocked to see how cruelty and brutality of Burmese military regime against her own people in the crackdown on recent peaceful demonstrations in which non-law enforcement official militias such as Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) and Swan Ah Shin (SAS) had involved and there is no reason to deny their activity is as terrorism under existing international standards and norms.

We fully endorse report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Burma/Myanmar to this session as it is well grounded and reflected the reality including the recommendations while response from the regime is totally unacceptable. For instance, the regime declined to invite an international commission of inquiry citing that they have already formed their own team chaired by minister of home affair. What credibility will such an internal inquiry have if the culprit is to lead it.

Mr- President,

The arrest on human rights defenders and opposition leaders are still going in Burma. Furthermore, pressurize against cease-fire groups those who declined to denounce Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's statement has intensified. Military operation including burned down villages, destroyed the people's orchards, plantations, harvests and rice barns, arrest, torture and execution of innocent civilians, looted properties, extortion, planting land mines in villages and forced labour in ethnic states including Karen, Chin, Karenni and Shan state, has increased leading more than (20) thousand civilians to become refugees or internally displaced persons in this year in Karen state alone.

Mr. President,

Yesterday, the ambassador of the military regime said "people all over the country have been holding peaceful mass rallies within the bounds of the law to welcome the successful conclusion of the National Convention as well as establishment of the commission for Drafting of the State Constitution and to demonstrate their aversion of the recent provocative events". In fact, these people were forcibly dragged by order to join the rallies otherwise imposed a huge fine which is more than their one-month income. Furthermore, the drafting of the constitution, it current is the third step of the road-map is with hand-picked 54 members. In this regard, everyone shall respect integrity and credibility of the Council as well as ourselves.

Therefore, the Human Rights Council must;

- (1) Establish an International Commission of Inquiry led by the Special Rapporteur to investigate in a more comprehensive manner on situation of human rights in Burma;
- (2) Urge the regime to stop military operation in ethnic territories as well as so-call process of road-map, and instead to hold tripartite dialogue between the regime, 1990 election winning parties and leaders of ethnic nationalities;
- (3) Call for the release of all political prisoners including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Khun Htoon Oo;
- (4) Urge the military regime to ban militia group like Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) and Swan Ah Shin (SAS) as illegal groups. For instance, the UN Security Council lists the two groups as terrorist organizations.

Thanks you!