

## **Burma's Pro-Democracy Icon Aung San Suu Kyi Pay Constant and Serious Consideration on Ethnic Nationalities**

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The world most famous political prisoner Aung San Suu Kyi, also known as the lady of Burma , made a statement today through UN special envoy mentioning that she is ready to cooperate with her captors the military junta State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) for “the interest of the nation and to make the process of political dialogue a success”.

On his way back from a four days mission to Burma , the United Nations special envoy Nigerian diplomat Hon. Ibrahim Gambari told reporters at a midnight press conference in Singapore that “We now have a process going which will lead to a dialogue between the government and Aung San Suu Kyi.”

In a statement conveyed by the UN special envoy, the lady of Burma Ms. Suu Kyi said that "In this time of vital need for democratic solidarity and national unity, it is my duty to give constant and serious consideration to the interests and opinions of as broad a range of political organizations and forces as possible, in particular those of our ethnic nationality races,"

Many people may surprise why Ms. Suu Kyi pay constant and serious consideration to ethnic nationalities issue in Burma . But according to Harn Yawngwe, director of National Reconciliation Program and Euro-Burma office, it is very important to address the issue of ethnic nationalities in Burma .

“..when you take the seven ethnic states together, their population make up 40% of population of Burma (20 out of 50 million people), and their homelands together make up 60 % of the territory of Burma (almost the size of Germany ). The problem of the ethnic nationalities, therefore, is not a minority problem. It is a major constitutional problem” said Harn Yawngwe in his statement during the Parliamentary Seminar on Burma hosted by parliamentarians from Czech Republic on November 6, 2007 .

Dr. Lian Sakhong the General Secretary of Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC) said that the council warmly welcome Daw Aung San Suu Kyi statement. Dr. Sakhong also thanks UN special envoy for his efforts and skills in breaking Burma 's political stalemate.

While welcoming Aung San Suu Kyi Statement the ENC General Secretary express his disappointment saying that “I am quite disappointed that the SPDC rejected Mr. Gambari's proposal for the establishment of “a broad-based constitutional review commission and a broad-based poverty alleviation commission”. However, as the talk between Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and General Aung Kyi progress, I hope that the SPDC will change their position soon”.

The ENC is a political body representing 7 non-Burman ethnic states in Burma .

Burma gained the highest level of international attention in its modern history after the world witnessed the brutal crackdown on Buddhist monks led peaceful pro-democracy uprising in September where several protesters including a Japanese photo

journalist was shot to death at point blank by Burmese soldier. Several thousands more were arrested.

In response to the cry for positive change in Burma by the international community including the United Nations, the SPDC chief Senior General Than Shwe announced that he is willing to meet with the opposition leader Aung Sang Suu Kyi if she stops confrontation activities with the junta.

The junta soon appointed the labor minister Aung Kyi who is a retired army General to facilitate the talk between Aung San Suu Kyi and the SPDC.

Many Burmese activists reject the offer made by SPDC saying that the junta's offer for talk with preconditions is "unfair" and "unacceptable".

However the Ethnic National Council one of the biggest political stakeholders in Burma welcomes the offer and asked Aung San Suu Kyi to seriously consider the offer made by the SPDC.

"There is no better time than now. The world is focused on Burma . The UN Secretary-General' s Special Advisor Professor Ibrahim Gambari is fully engaged. The UN Security Council has also endorsed his role" said Harn Yawngwe one of the most capable strategists among Burma 's pro-democracy movements during his presentation two days ago at Czech parliament.

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