



PRESS RELEASE

18 June 2005 – for immediate release

Release Aung San Suu Kyi

On the occasion of Aung San Suu Kyi's 60th birthday, ARTICLE 19 is calling upon the Myanmar authorities to release unconditionally Aung San Suu Kyi - the Nobel Laureate and leader of the pro-democracy party the National League for Democracy (NLD) - and other Burmese political prisoners detained for the peaceful expression of their views and acts of dissent.

EVENT – Birthday -

On her 60th birthday, 19 June 2005, Aung San Suu Kyi, who is also an honorary board member of ARTICLE 19, will have spent nearly ten years in detention. Since 1988, she has worked relentlessly to help the cause of democracy in Burma. The National League for Democracy (NLD) won the majority of votes in elections in 1990 but the military authorities refused to recognize the result. Since then, Aung San Suu Kyi has been in and out of arrest and members of the NLD and other opposition parties, media workers, and student activists have been systematically harassed and sentenced to long prison terms.

Aung San Suu Kyi was held under house arrest from 1989-1995, and again from 2000-2002. She was again arrested in May 2003 after the NLD members and supporters were attacked by a mob that killed and seriously injured scores of them. By the time of her birthday, Aung San Suu Kyi would have completed two years of continuous detention. Her release from house arrest is completely dependent upon the arbitrary will of the authoritarian government.

Aung San Suu Kyi's continued house arrest is a gross violation of her right to freedom of expression under Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information through any media and regardless of frontiers."

ENDS

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