



ARTICLE 19

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release – 19 June 2007

**Burma: Aung San Suu Kyi's 62nd Birthday -
Governments Called to Action**

This very morning, in a rundown villa in Burma's capital Rangoon, Aung San Suu Kyi, the Nobel Prize Peace Laureate and ARTICLE 19 honorary board member awoke to spend her 62nd birthday and 4,253rd day under house arrest. Like all others, she will pass this day alone: phone cut, post intercepted, no visitors allowed.

Dr Agnès Callamard, Executive Director of ARTICLE 19 said: *“Despite her enforced removal from public life, Aung San Suu Kyi's fight for freedom of expression and democracy in Burma is being remembered and celebrated around the world on this day.”*

Suu Kyi's remarkable struggle and the horrendous state of freedom of expression and other human rights in Burma has prompted many to speak out over the course of the last year. These include:

- In January 2007, the United Nations Security Council moved to pass a resolution on Burma, which was however vetoed by China and Russia.
- In May 2007, a letter from 59 world political leaders, including former UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and former US President Bill Clinton, was sent to Than Shwe, the Burmese dictator, calling for Aung San Suu Kyi's immediate release.
- In May 2007, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention determined that Aung San Suu Kyi is being detained illegally by the military junta in Burma.
- UK Chancellor Gordon Brown recently published a book entitled “Courage: Eight Portraits” in which he profiled Suu Kyi as one of his eight all-time heroes, saying “For me, Suu Kyi defines the meaning of courage.”

Sadly, despite the growing international comment and pressure, on the 27th May 2007, Aung San Suu Kyi's detention was extended for yet another year and countries including the three great regional powers, China, India and Russia, continue to build their already significant trade and financial links with Burma.

On this day, Aung San Suu Kyi's 62nd birthday, ARTICLE 19 urges the governments who have voiced their concerns to make Suu Kyi's case part of diplomatic and trade talks with countries which continue to lend direct or indirect support to the Burmese regime, including China, India and Russia. These three countries must be urged to play a leading

role in putting pressure on the military junta to restore respect for human rights and to secure the immediate release of Aung San Suu Kyi and all other prisoners of conscience.

NOTES TO EDITORS

- For more information, please contact Catrina Pickering, Programme Officer, catrina@article19.org +44 20 7278 9292
- ARTICLE 19 is an independent human rights organisation that works around the world to protect and promote the right to freedom of expression. It takes its name from Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which guarantees freedom of expression.