

PDC NEWS COMMENTARY

August 2010

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The activities of NLD and domestic opposition forces
The relationship between NLD and the military junta

On July 13, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi told her lawyers U Nyan Win and U Kyi Win to object to prohibition of talking about political matters rather than legal matters on their meeting. She also said that NLD's suing the SPDC regime do not imply closing off the dialogue pathway to national reconciliation.

The SPDC released Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's personal aide Capt. Win Htein on July 14 from Katha prison. He has been sentenced to fourteen years in jail but overshot the time by two months. On July 15, the SPDC sentenced NLD Youth Ko Than Myint Aung of Thuwanna Township, Rangoon, to ten years in jail under Electronics Law Article 33 (A). SPDC authorities brutally beat up NLD member Ma Htet Htet Oo Way on July 10 in Putao Jail, Kachin State. On July 20, the SPDC arrested fourteen-year old Maung Nay Lin at Parami Shwe Man Thu Bus terminal, South Okkla Township, on account of finding Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's *Freedom from Fear* and U Win Tin's *To Hell with Man-made Hell* books. SPDC authorities harassed NLD CECs Daw Khin Htay Kywe and Dr. May Win Myint who went to Naypyidaw to file a protest against National Democratic Force's use of bamboo hat logo.

The SPDC invited US citizen U Aung San Oo and wife Daw Lei Lei Nwe Thein to attend the 63rd Martyrs' Day commemoration on July 19 but did not invite Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Although the regime did not invite the NLD, it invited newly-registered political parties to send representatives to the event. Breaking the tradition of hoisting the national flag at half-mast in memory of Martyrs on July 19, government offices and PDC offices raised the flags at full mast this year.

Though the SPDC is imposing more restrictions on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD, Foreign Minister U Nyan Win said at the meeting of ASEAN Foreign Ministers in Vietnam on July 22 that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi would be allowed to contest in the 2010 elections. However, NLD leader U Win Tin rejected such talk. He said on July 25 that SPDC's 2008 Constitution must be eradicated since it is a menace to country's future and urged the people to boycott the elections. SPDC's failure to announce the election date till now implied unfairness upon political parties planning to run in elections, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi commented on July 28. On July 16, NLD CEC lawyer U Aung Thein also asserted that the SPDC should openly inform the people about the workings of USDA and USDP.

The NLD in cooperation with the ILO is planning to expose forced labor suffered by the people and violations of labor rights thereby giving protection to the people. It seems that the SPDC is not reacting harshly to NLD's activities yet because of prevailing political conditions. We assume that if the NLD increased its attacks on SPDC's 2008 Constitution and 2010 elections the regime would take strong measures against the League.

The relationship between ethnic groups and the military junta

The SPDC is planning to assault armed ethnic revolutionary groups to prevent them from obstructing the elections. It continues putting pressure on small ceasefire groups to transform into Border Guard Forces (BGF) or Home Guard Forces before the elections, trying to split those ceasefire groups refusing to change, and to attack the hardliners militarily.

The SPDC has conducted military offensives in Karen State's Phapon and Toungoo districts and Kawkareik Township. On July 23, No.2 Tactical Operations Command and army columns under the command of SPDC MOC-10 burned down Tha-dar-dei village in Phapon District's Lu-thaw Township, causing over 700 Karen villagers to flee and hide in the jungle. In the battles between KNU and SPDC troops, there were heavy casualties on SPDC side. Though some skirmishes broke out between KNU and DKBA forces, the two sides tried to negotiate for truce. Differences emerged among DKBA troops with regard to BGF transformation. Due to SPDC's pressure, some members defected to the KNU taking along their arms.

Although Col. Saw Lar-pwe (Commander Mustachio), Commander of DKBA Brigade 555, is refusing to accept BGF status, Chairman Tha Htoo Kyaw and most of top commanders have agreed to transform. LIRs 405 and 409 under the command of MOC-8 TOC-1, under orders of SEC, carried out mopping-up operations since July 22 in Three Pagodas Pass Sub-Township's northern part where DKBA Brigade 555 is based. MOC-19 also conducted military operations in KNU Brigade 6 territory. Because of SPDC troops' military activities, nearly 1000 refugees from Wat-mi-htat, Lay-wor, Sonsee Myaing and Theit-baw-boe villages in Myawaddy Township fled across the border on July 25 to Maw-kel-htat and Molly-chai villages in Thailand's Phoppra Township. On June 26, KNU Vice-Chairman Pado David Thakapaw promised sanctuary to the DKBA if war broke out between them and SPDC forces.

Despite SPDC's permission to register forty-five political parties, the Kachin State Progressive Party (KSPP) was left out till today. KSPP leaders explained about this matter to the people of Myitkyina on July 3. KSPP Chairman Dr. Tuja, party secretary and organizers went to Naypyidaw on July 13 to ask the Elections Commission on the matter. Commission Chairman ex-Brig. Thein Soe told them on July 16 to carry on with party work.

One of the USDP leaders, SPDC Industry-1 Minister U Aung Thaung, told Kachin leaders on July 12 that the KSPP would not be granted registration, and helped set up the Unity and Democracy Party of Kachin State (UDPKS) comprising Kachin USDA leaders who started campaigning work in Kachin State. USDP Chairman SPDC Prime Minister Thein Sein made inciting talk on February 25 during his Putao trip, provoking Kachin tribes to kill each other.

It has been learnt that that the SPDC is planning to deploy Maj. Gen. Loi Mawng's SSA (North) ceasefire group which has agreed to change into a Home Guard Force in Htont Mawng aka Shweli valley near Chinese border. On July 14, Sao Sai Lin, leader of NDAA Mongla ceasefire group, remarked that Maj. Gen. Loi Mawng's SSA (North) which is conceding to SPDC's wishes is not worthy of the name "Shan State Army." Some lower ranks of SSA (North) were defecting to SSA (South) along with their arms. NEC Commander Maj. Gen. Aung Than Htut is annoyed with the SSA (North) for not being able to transform the whole force into a Home Guard Force.

Relations between UWSA and SPDC troops continued to be tense. On July 17, a shoot-out occurred between SPDC LID 99 and a Wa force in Nam Tit region, Hopang Township, Northern Shan State, resulting in one Wa soldier dead. As they have a strong army (UWSA)

and a strong party (UWSP), they doesn't care if the SPDC recognizes them or not and would not let SPDC's USDP, Khun Tun Lu's Wa Democratic Party or Sao Philip's Wa National Unity Party to campaign in UWSA-controlled territories such as Mongmao, Pangwai, Narphang and Panghsang, a Wa official asserted on July 28.

Inside those ceasefire groups which have transformed into BGFs, grievances and despair over SPDC's restrictions are coming up. Former commanders of New Democratic Army-Kachin which has been transformed into a BGF are suffering from depression as they have no power or authority anymore. Also in the KNPLF ceasefire group which has turned into a BGF last November, family members of decommissioned officers and other ranks are facing livelihood difficulties. Though KNPLF leaders have planned to set up a party and contest in elections, younger members did not accept the move so that the plan to form a party did not materialize. The Pa-O National Organization which has transformed into a Home Guard Force battled with SSA (South) troops in Mawkmai Township, Southern Shan State, over territorial claims provoked by the SPDC, and suffered some casualties. The Palaung State Liberation Army which had totally surrendered their arms under the leadership of Mai Aik Mone to the SPDC has now formed a Ta-ang (Palaung) National Party to contest in elections.

The New Mon State Party (NMSP) which has closed down its urban offices in April over tensions with the SPDC has now reopened all the offices, NMSP Central Executive Committee member Nai Honsa Bon-khaik disclosed on July 6. However, the SPDC instructed the SEC to make a constant watch on NMSP leaders' activities and to continue pressuring NMSP and KPF to transform into BGFs.

As the SPDC is planning to outlaw and militarily crush the ceasefire groups which do not change into Border Guard Forces by the end of August, the situation could worsen.

The activities of NLD and domestic opposition forces

The NLD is stepping up political activities. Due to military regime's increasing restrictions over political parties' activities, the rightness of NLD's decision not to enter the elections is becoming more evident.

On July 1, 3, 6, 13 and 16, NLD Vice-Chairman U Tin Oo, U Win Tin and NLD Youth members visited the homes of ten political prisoners, viz. Ko Min Ko Naing, Ko Ko Gyi, Ko Zaganar, Ko Pyone Cho, Ko Min Zeya, Ko Thet Zaw, Ko Thaw Zin Tun, Ko Nyan Lin and Ko Mya Aye, so as to encourage their family members. They also handed out provisions for political prisoners. On June 5, the NLD HQ gave out about Kyat 2.55 million worth assistance to NLD officials of States and Divisions for 607 political prisoners. NLD Central Executive Committee (CEC) members U Hantha Myint, U Nyan Win, U Nyunt Lwin and U Soe Win toured around various States and Divisions to meet with NLD members.

A team led by NLD CEC U Hantha Myint and Sagaing Division Organizing Committee member Mon-ywa Aung Shin travelled to Sagaing Division and Kachin State to brief party members on NLD's current position and future programs. CEC member U Nyan Win also met with twenty organizing committee members from Pegu Division at a house in Sanchaung Township, Rangoon, on July 22, and discussed NLD's current stand and future programs. On July 30, U Nyan Win, U Nyunt Lwin and U Soe Win met with NLD organizers from eastern townships of Pegu Division in Pegu to talk about current position and future works. On July 5, NLD CEC Daw May Win Myint and lawyer Daw Khin Htay Kywe presented to the Elections Commission in Naypyidaw NLD's letter of objection to NDF's use of bamboo hat logo. When the Commission granted permission to use it despite NLD's objection, the latter condemned the act.

Vice-Chairman U Tin Oo and some CECs met with foreign diplomats at U Tin Oo's house. They received Deputy Charge d'Affairs of Italy Ms. Indijina on July 9 and First Secretary of British Embassy on July 12, and explained NLD's position and future programs.

The 63rd Martyrs' Day was commemorated at U Tin Oo's home and also at various townships. NLD members walked to Martyrs' Mausoleum to pay their respects. At the ceremony in Hlaing Thaya Township, the NLD handed out aid to family members of political prisoners. On that day, NLD members in Meikhtila carried out tree-planting ceremonies in seven places. NLD Youth Reading Circle which has been put off for four months resumed on July 15 at Mogok Township NLD MP Daw May Hnin Kyi's home in Rangoon. The HIV/AIDS assistance team led by NLD leader Ma Phyu Phyu Thin is expanding its works. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's chief of staff Capt. Win Htein who found freedom on July 15 after spending nearly twenty years in jail vowed to carry on with political work.

Students' activity occurred within July. Over 300 students from Akyab Technology University made a procession from their campus to State PDC office on July 5 in protest of doubling of ferry fares. ABFSU and other underground student groups active inside the country carried out campaigns to distribute pamphlets and postcards in commemoration of July 7 strike. Six students from the Government Technical Institute in Yenangyaung, Magwe Division, were expelled from school for defacing the school signboard.

The "National Trade Union" formed by U Par Lay and former lawyer U Po Phyu has changed into the "Workers' and Peasants' Union Creators Organization" because of military regime's restrictions and is now working energetically for workers and peasants' interests, Union's second in-charge U Tin Shwe said on July 21. SPDC army threatened some Union members in Taungdwingyi and forced them to resign from the Union. The Union Creators are now working to help advocating on the side of farmers in army's confiscation of farmlands in Aunglan Township, Magwe Division; SPDC's confiscation of over 40 acres of ricefields owned by 23 farmers in Twantay Township, Rangoon Division and; Yuzana Co.'s confiscation of farmlands in Phakant region, Kachin State in addition to giving legal counsel for ex-editor U Nyi Nyi Htun of Kantarawaddy journal for being subject to torture during detention and child soldier cases.

On July 23, ten members of ILO Communicators Network attended, for the first time, a workshop regularly held at Rangoon-based ILO office and reported their activity about distribution of anti-forced labor educational leaflets in their respective townships, U Aung Khin Bo, NLD Chairman of Irrawaddy Division Bogalay Township, said on July 26. The SPDC took two ILO staff from Rangoon ILO office into custody and questioned them before banishing them back to Rangoon. The two people were distributing educational leaflets in Bogalay. Farmers from Minhla Township in western Pegu Division also demanded the SPDC to re-open Panzan sluice gate that has been shut off by authorities.

The All Burma Monks Alliance issued a plea to Burmese people on July 18 not to cast votes at SPDC's 2010 elections. When news came out that one army deserter and two children have been caught trying to torch Ledi Monastery, Setta Thukha Monastery, Paypin Monastery and East Four Tier Monastery which were active during 2007 Saffron Revolution in Mon-ywa, Sagaing Division, police security was deployed at the monasteries. Because of Rangoon Division Commander's order to evict over 100 monks from Yandoon Pitaka Monastery, Daw Hla Sin Monastery and Shwe Hinthla Monastery near Shwedagon Pagoda's Eastern Entrance by July 25 at the latest, discontented monks complained to Deputy Commander of Rangoon Division Brig. Kyaw Kyaw Htun. Foreign travel permits for monks has become restricted since July 6 when such travels require Deputy Religion Minister's approval. As restrictions on monks become tighter, discontent is rising among the clergy.

Some pensioners and civil servants in Rangoon launched a six-hour long meditation act on July 26 in resolution of effecting Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's freedom and political dialogue. A "Non-Violent Nationalist Activists Organization" inside Burma demanded Senior Gen. Than Shwe in writing on July 27 to initiate dialogue for national reconciliation. Political forces inside the country also filed a signed protest letter against inviting Dr. Khin Zaw Win to represent Burma's pro-democracy activists at a conference of World Democracy Society in Poland. U Aye Myint's Guiding Star group is also helping parents and guardians of child soldiers report to the ILO. The Free Funeral Assistance Association led by movie actor Ko Kyaw Thu is not only assisting in people's funeral matters but also extending help in health, education and social affairs. *Amyothayay* U Win Naing is also endeavoring to do election monitoring and voter education legitimately.

Some political parties granted legal registrations have made criticisms on the military regime and Elections Commission. Union Democracy Party Chairman U Phyo Min Thein urged the Elections Commission to review the 2008 Constitution's 'flawed' section on convening of Parliament, to free all MPs elected by the people in 1990 elections and all political prisoners before the elections, and to take effective action on the USDP led by SPDC Prime Minister U Thein Sein for violating election laws.

Due to excessive party registration fees, candidate fees, party publications fees as well as high travel costs and campaign costs, and stringent campaigning rules, Democratic Party (Myanmar), National Democratic Force, Rakhine Nationalities Progressive Party, Shan Nationalities Democratic Party and Union Democracy Party were planning to form an alliance, Ko Phyo Min Thein disclosed on July 9. In order to get party funds and lobby the people, his party published 'The Union' bulletin on July 27. Peace and Diversity Party General Secretary Ko Nay Myo Wai also criticized SPDC Information Ministry's heavy censoring of domestic journals about political parties' activities and Election Commission's insistence on getting detailed bio-data of political parties' central committee members, adding that if such restrictions go on, they would have to review whether to contest in elections or not.

While USDP leaders cum SPDC ministers were freely campaigning around the country, local authorities, Police Special Branch and MAS were frequently turning up and questioning office-opening ceremonies and signboard-erecting ceremonies of other parties, frightening those who wished to join the parties, Ko Nay Myo Wai and Democratic Party (Myanmar)'s Chairman U Thu Wai said. In connection with calling for donations in North Okkla Yadana Theingi market, Municipal Court sued Central Committee member Ko Khin Maung Win and three from '88 Generation Students Youths (Union of Myanmar) and U Aung Min Thu and three from Union of Myanmar Federation of National Politics on charges of Municipal Act Article 28 on July 27. Union of Myanmar Federation of National Politics Chairman Ko Aye Lwin who is reputed to be close to SPDC regime strongly protested against the prosecution and contrasted it with activities of USDP led by SPDC Prime Minister U Thein Sein.

On July 9, the SPDC granted registration to the NDF party formed by NLD renegades, also recognizing their party logo of bamboo hat. The Commission summoned NDF leaders U Khin Maung Swe, U Sein Hla Oo, U Tin Aung and U Tha Saing to Naypyidaw on July 30 and told them that they would be allowed to contest in elections only if they submitted petitions about their desire to cooperate with the regime for national reconciliation because they have once been convicted of treason. U Han Shwe, one of the leaders of the NUP, told *Myanmar Times* that if their party wins the elections they would carry out market economy and work towards sharing of economic progress and affluence among all walks of life.

Among ethnic political parties, the Shan Nationalities Democratic Party, the All Mon Region Democracy Party and some small ethnic parties are getting support from relevant local people. A junior party of USDP, the Unity and Democracy Party (Kachin State) (UDPKS) applied for registration on July 23 and started doing party organizing works. Despite no official campaigning has been permitted to political parties, the USDP and its underling parties are openly campaigning all over the country.

The military junta and domestic situation

The situation of the activities of the military junta

On July 10, C-in-C (Army) Office called regional commanders to Naypyidaw for an emergency meeting. They decided to draw plans to help the USDP win in the forthcoming elections in their respective command areas, to lure as much as possible those ceasefire groups refusing to transform into BGFs, to outlaw and militarily annihilate stubborn groups and to drive out Thailand-based armed groups and opposition groups by pressuring Thai government.

As an act of pressure on Thailand, the SPDC seized cars and goods imported from Thailand, beginning from early July. Citing Thailand's construction of embankments on Maesot side of Thauang-yin River, the SPDC temporarily closed off the border trade bridge between Myawaddy and Maesot on July 9 and 11, and then closed it off again on July 17 till end of the month on orders of Naypyidaw. Also at the Three Pagodas Pass, the SPDC closed off border gate on July 9 when Thailand objected to the regime's construction of a concrete road on common land. When Thailand agreed to pay compensation for road construction expenses, the SPDC suspended the construction and reopened the border gate.

Under the pressure of Thai merchants who were hit by a loss of nearly 100 million Baht daily because of closure of Myawaddy-Maesot border bridge, Thai Deputy Foreign Minister Alongkorn Pollabutr led an economic delegation to Naypyidaw on July 23 to negotiate. The two sides met again on July 30 in Myawaddy, Burma, with SPDC Deputy Foreign Minister U Maung Myint and Foreign Ministry Director General U Min Lwin representing Burma and Mr. Viti Vedavichi, Chairman of Thai-Burma border cooperation Committee, leading 36 delegates of Thailand.

Though proceedings of the meeting were not published, Thailand did not concede to SPDC's demands thus prompting the latter to continue closing the border passes till end of July. On the pretext of SPDC Generals being fully occupied with other matters, the Burmese regime postponed Thai Prime Minister's trip to Burma planned for early August. However, Thai Prime Minister Abhithit expressed his hope on July 22 for SPDC's reopening of border passes soon.

If Thailand does not agree to SPDC's demands we assume that the latter could further threaten to cease daily gas exports of over 1000 million cubic feet to Thailand from its Yadana and Yetagun offshore gasfields, and construction projects such as the ongoing Kanchanaburi-Tavoy highway project and Tavoy deep sea port project.

The SPDC is trying to entice support from China, India and some ASEAN countries for 2010 elections. On July 3, SPDC Secretary-1 Gen. Thihathura Tin Aung Myint Oo led a high-level mission to China. At the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' meeting in Hanoi, Vietnam, SPDC Foreign Minister U Nyan Win asserted that though he did not know the election date, the regime has allowed Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to contest in the elections. Senior Gen. Than Shwe led a top-level delegation to India from July 25 for a five-day goodwill visit and struck

a number of agreements that included anti-arms trafficking, anti-drug trafficking and on energy.

As an act of defiance against Western nations, the SPDC made a formal invitation to North Korean Foreign Minister Pak Ui Chun to visit Burma from July 29 to August 1 with SPDC Prime Minister personally receiving him. The military regime turned a blind eye to Rangoon-based North Korean Embassy's confiscation on July 27 of President Kim Jung Ils' biography compiled by writer Hein Latt who has obtained Press Scrutiny Board's approval to publish.

As political parties as well as domestic and international observers questioned the mingling of USDA, USDP and SPDC regime, the latter disbanded the USDA on July 6, handing over its assets to the USDP, the BBC reported on July 16, citing USDA Deputy Chief of Staff Thura Myint Oo. Rumors also came out in late July about SPDC planning to make Prime Minister U Thein Sein and USDP members cum ministers resign from all duties and form an interim government consisting of Lt. Gen. Myint Swe and regional commanders.

Even though USDA members such as civil servants, students and senior citizens have been retired, the USDP still has more than eight million hard core members, a party official disclosed. The USDP is also carrying out a recruitment drive using all sorts of means. The USDP Constitution says that the party has been formed legally in accordance with "objective historical necessity" and that it would uphold education, health, social, economic and political programs laid down by the SPDC military regime.

Though the SPDC is forbidding other political parties from campaigning, USDP member cum SPDC ministers are freely campaigning around the whole country through travelling on government duty. Constituencies have been allotted to USDP member military leaders who would be contesting in the elections. In his travels in Shan State, USDP Chairman SPDC Prime Minister exhorted Shan people, "Don't forget to vote for the lion!" referring to the lion logo of the USDP. SPDC Deputy Education Minister Brig. Aung Myo Min threatened while addressing to the University of Foreign Languages in Kamayut Township, Rangoon, on July 20 that if military-sponsored parties were not voted in, there could be coups again. On July 27, SPDC Forestry Minister U Thein Aung campaigned for the USDP at the PDC office in Demawso Township, Kayah State. The SPDC is propagating views that NLD's landslide victory in the 1990 elections was prompted by polling booth officials' irregularities. During campaigning in Sagaing Division Kalay Township, the USDP and the NUP lashed out at each other.

Though the SPDC is carrying on with preparations for elections, it is still watching the situation and has yet to announce the election date. We assume that this might be due to disgruntlement inside the SPDC over allotment of seats and positions; concern among the SPDC leadership over election results and; fear of disintegration of army unity as lower ranks are increasingly coaxed by domestic and foreign elements. We think that if the military regime deems necessary to postpone the elections proclaimed to take place this year, they would launch civil war on ceasefire groups refusing to change into BGFs and thus hold on to power.

The socio-economic situation of the people

The SPDC military regime is hastily handing over state-owned-enterprises and institutions to military-owned Holdings Ltd. and cronies before the elections, resulting in many government employees laid off. Foreign Direct Investment fell by two thirds last year due to international sanctions, and unemployment soared. Out of over one million Burmese working in neighboring Thailand, about two hundred and fifty thousand are facing

imprisonment and deportation because of inability to afford temporary passports, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) reported on July 8.

Tensions between DKBA troops and SPDC forces in Myawaddy Township, Karen State, caused nearly 1000 Karen refugees to flee into Thailand but on July 26, Thai Army forcibly repatriated them. Negotiations have been conducted with the SPDC regime to repatriate more than 140,000 Burmese refugees currently taking shelter at refugee camps in Thailand after elections when conditions become tranquil, Tawin Soom Plang, Secretary of Thailand's National Security Council, affirmed on July 27. Such talk has caused fears among Burmese refugees. The TBBC disclosed that number of people from Thai-Burma border refugee camps resettled to third countries in 2010 has significantly dropped. The two refugee camps in Bangladesh have not seen their population fall off while about 51,000 babies were born in the past nineteen years, Bangladesh daily *The Samudrabarbata* reported on July 30.

Military regime's seizure of goods imported from Thailand and closure of border passes have caused shortage of basic food and consumer goods in addition to higher prices. Citing security causes, the SPDC banned roadside stalls in thirty-three townships of Rangoon municipality since July 7. The City Municipal and Revenue Department also announced renewal of business licenses of shops, food stalls and small-scale industries on the condition that they must pay two years' taxes in advance, causing hardships for petty business people and shopkeepers. In spite of onion cultivation doubling this year, absence of export caused drastic fall of prices and huge losses for onion farmers.

International Pressure

On July 22, President Barack Obama put his signature of approval to the resolution of two houses of US Congress extending economic sanctions upon the SPDC military regime by another year. US State Department spokesperson Mr. Phillip Crowley commented on July 12 that SPDC's elections are too far off from legitimacy because it could not be free and fair. He also expressed his hope on July 29 for Indian government to warn visiting Senior Gen. Than Shwe about SPDC's human rights violations.

On July 22, at the ASEAN regional security conference held in Vietnam, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated her concern on relations between North Korea and the SPDC regime with regard to nuclear weapon production. US government stated again on July 30 that it was constantly watching Burma-North Korea relations which were but opaque. On July 30, thirty-two US senators wrote to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, demanding Obama administration to give support to establishment of a commission of enquiry to investigate war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the SPDC military regime. The US government gave over \$130,000 to the Clear Path International (CPI) group for the first time to help landmine victims on Thai-Burma border.

At the "Conference on Protection of Civilians in War and Conflicts" held at the UN Security Council on July 6, British government spoke about SPDC military forces targeting ethnic minority civilians in their attacks. British government would not accept SPDC's 2010 elections because it could not reflect Burmese people's desire, Jeremy Browne, Junior Minister of British Foreign Office, asserted on July 18. On July 9, an EU court turned down a plea by SPDC crony businessman U Tayza's son to lift visa ban.

Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada also demanded his SPDC counterpart U Nyan Win on July 21 to let Daw Aung San Suu Kyi enter 2010 elections. He also warned that Japan would not give full economic assistance if the SPDC failed to change its election policies. At

the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' meeting in Vietnam, host Foreign Minister Phan Gia Khiem said that SPDC's elections need to be free and fair.

At the dinner of foreign ministers on July 19, ASEAN Secretary-General Surin Pitsuwan warned SPDC Foreign Minister U Nyan Win that the SPDC has to hold an election that is credible. Other ASEAN foreign ministers also buzzed around U Nyan Win about the elections, Surin Pitsuwan told reporters later. ASEAN foreign ministers decided to terminate ASEAN countries' humanitarian aid to Nargis victims by July 31. SPDC Foreign Minister returned home on July 22, failing to attend the ASEAN regional security meeting.

International Attorneys' Association in New York and OSI jointly sponsored a seminar on July 13 to consult ways to take action on the SPDC military regime that is committing crimes against humanity. US-based ERI also revealed on July 6 that the SPDC is using money earned from US Chevron and France Total companies for nuclear weapon production. On July 21, the Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL) announced that forbidding international monitors at 2010 elections would make it unfair. ILO representative for Burma Mr. Steve Marshal said on July 29 that he would cooperate with the NLD to gradually reduce cases of forced labor, child soldier recruitment, human trafficking and land confiscation in Burma.

Exhortation by ASEAN countries including Vietnam to the SPDC is a unique thing. We assume that as elections draw closer, international pressure could rise.

//End of Report /Thursday, August 12, 2010//

//End of Translation/Saturday, August 21, 2010//