

# **Media Workshop and Press Conference on SPDC'S 2010 Election and Burmese Refugees in India**

## **Recommendations from Participants at the Media Workshop**

During a media workshop on SPDC's 2010 Election and Burmese Refugees in India, held on September 27, 2010 in New Delhi and organized by Burma Center Prague and Burma Centre Delhi, within the framework of the India Base for the Transformation of Burma project, the following recommendations were formulated. Burma Center Prague and Burma Center Delhi hereby formally share these recommendations with the respective parties.

## **Recommendations**

### **To the Indian government:**

- to remember that democracy is an egalitarian and universal principle for the benefit of all people and that pursuance of the goal of enhancement of bilateral economic ties should not be at the cost of the democratic forces in Burma
- to grant the benefits of democracy, humanity and prosperity also to the peoples of India's neighbours
- to understand that sustainable stability and prosperity can only be based on mutual friendship and on trust of the people and their true representatives
- that India's advance ahead of China in Burma lies in their common history and the still open chance to win the hearts of Burma's people
- to continue to provide refuge to Burmese in India and ensure the release of the 34 freedom fighters in Kolkata jail
- to acknowledge the presence of refugees in the existing Foreigners' Act at a minimum, and to eventually draft a law on the status of refugees in India
- to carefully monitor the upcoming elections in Burma by sending election observers, and insist on their fairness and inclusiveness in collaboration with the UN and the international community

### **To Indian media:**

- to understand their role as proponents of truth above power constellations and to promote critical analysis of government policy
- to understand the mission of free media as one that follows national interests by defending universal values of humanity
- to perceive the presence of migrants and refugees amid Indian society as interconnected with the question of governance in their countries of origin
- to objectively report about the situation in Burma on the basis of all available sources while critically reviewing information provided by the Burmese military junta and its civilian successors

and proxies

- to closely consult with Burmese independent media and the Burmese pro-democracy movement in order to obtain a complete picture of the situation inside Burma and if possible provide training to them
- to advocate the rights of their colleagues inside Burma and to highlight the cases of Burmese journalists that fell victim to censorship or persecution solely for having practised their profession
- to also highlight issues related to ethnic and religious minorities in the context of the upcoming elections

**To democratic governments in Europe and the Americas:**

- to declare the SPDC's elections as deeply undemocratic and to reject their result as entrenchment of the present power constellations and as irrelevant to a true transition to democracy
- to demand a genuine, transparent and benchmarked transition of Burma's regime to a democracy with unhindered involvement of all Burmese democratic forces and ethnic groups
- to demand the respect of human rights in Burma and that those responsible for the violation thereof be held accountable
- to call for Burma's neighbours to prioritize the promotion of human rights and genuine democracy in Burma as key to their own long-term interests and stability in the region
- to condemn the Burmese authorities' decision to disband the NLD
- to maintain the current targeted sanctions until genuine democracy is restored in Burma

**To the European Union and international donors:**

- to acknowledge the right of the Burmese democracy movement to take a prominent role in decision making for the country
- to understand the significance of supporting Burmese civil society organizations in exile and independent Burmese media to develop capacity and stability both inside and outside Burma
- to facilitate a balanced distribution of aid and support for pro-democratic and social activities in all regions where needed

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