

**Indian Parliamentarians' Forum for Democracy in Burma  
Statement**

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We, Indian Parliamentarians' Forum for Democracy in Burma, release this statement ahead of and in relation to the upcoming elections in Burma on 7 November 2010 which have been proposed by the military regime as a clear attempt to entrench and legitimize military rule in Burma. We strongly feel that India should not endorse Burma's military regime's sham constitution and elections, as they will only lead to the entrenchment of military rule in Burma.

The "elections" will enact the 2008 Constitution, which not only contains many undemocratic measures including giving the military effective veto power over decisions made by the new parliament and government, but also depriving people of their basic human rights by stipulating "exception clauses," and preserving draconian laws that explicitly prohibit freedom of speech, association, and assembly. Thus, this constitution is designed to keep the dictatorship in power and will not bring any new freedom to the people of Burma.

Furthermore, the election cannot be free and fair under the present situation. Democracy activists in Burma have been imprisoned, intimidated, tortured and put to death for demanding justice, peace, human rights and a democratic government. Presently, there are over 2,200 political prisoners in Burma, including Nobel Peace Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, recipient of Jawaharlal Nehru's Award for International Understanding, who has been under house arrest for 15 of the past 20 years and is being barred from participating in this year's elections.

We, Indian Parliamentarians' Forum for Democracy in Burma, have endorsed the persistent call on the military regime by Burmese pro-democracy groups to meet the following three benchmarks, which are essential for bringing about peace and stability in Burma:

All political prisoners, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Khun Htun Oo and Min Ko Naing, must be released before the elections.

Inclusive dialogue with key stakeholders from all pro-democracy groups and all ethnic nationalities must be convened, including a comprehensive review of the 2008 Constitution.

Systematic human rights abuses and criminal hostilities against ethnic groups, political activists, journalists, and other civil society organizations and individuals must be stopped.

At this point in time, when Burma is in a critical situation, and especially now that India has been elected to the UN Security Council, we believe that India must use its political and moral authority in the region and globally to play a crucial role in the process of national reconciliation and restoration of democracy in Burma.

We, Indian Parliamentarians' Forum for Democracy in Burma will continue to stand firmly in solidarity with the peoples of Burma till genuine democratic change is restored.

Signed

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