

## **Women protest at Aung San Suu Kyi's detention as Un Secretary-General arrives in Burma**

As United Nations Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon today arrives in Burma for his long-awaited visit, leading women from across the world have joined together to call for the release of Aung San Suu Kyi.

In the latest move in the growing global condemnation of the actions of the Burmese authorities, Sarah Brown, Graca Machel, Ingrid Betancourt and Wangaari Mathai are joining fifty First Ladies, Nobel Laureates, and leaders from the world of politics, human rights and the arts, to issue a 64 word message calling for the immediate release of Aung San Suu Kyi.

The statement reads:

'Aung San Suu Kyi inspires us all. In recent weeks regional leaders have led demands for her freedom and for reform in Burma. Today we – women from all around the world – add our voices to that call. Until she, and the thousands of other political prisoners in Burma, is released we must keep the spotlight on their plight. The world must not stand by.'

These signatories add their call to the likes of Julia Roberts, Paul McCartney, Gordon Brown, Bono and Yoko Ono, who have issued statements of support in recent days, as part of the 64forSuu campaign. The campaign website 64forSuu.org has received over 16,000 messages of support for the campaign for reform in Burma and to ensure that her 64<sup>th</sup> birthday is the last that Aung San Suu Kyi's spends in detention.

Sarah Brown said today: 'The strength of support shown for Aung San Suu Kyi from all corners of the globe has been phenomenal. I am sure that the message we have posted today reflects the views of many who share our outrage at her treatment, and I would encourage them to go online and make their own voices heard too.'

Ban-Ki Moon will be in Burma on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> July to meet with Burmese leaders and add his voice to the growing international calls for the immediate release of Aung San Suu Kyi. Ban Ki-Moon has said that the release of all political prisoners, including Aung San Suu Kyi, is a top priority.

The list of signatories includes Christine Lagarde (French Minister of Economy, Finance and Employment), Dora Bakoyannis (Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs), Ela Bhatt (Founder of SEWA), Glenys Kinnock (UK Minister for Europe), Gro Bruntland (Former PM of Norway), Martha Lane Fox (Founder of Lastminute.com), Rebekah Wade (Editor, The Sun), Joanna Lumley (UK actress and campaigner), Rigoberta Menchu tum (Nobel Laureate), Shami Chakarbarti (Liberty), Shirin Ebadi (Nobel Laureate), Somaly Mam (Pianist), Tin Tin Aung (Womens League of Burma), Ulla Tornaеas (Danish Minister for Development Cooperation), Wangaari Mathai (Nobel Laureate).

## Notes to editors

The full list of women backing this campaign and statement are:

Arianna Huffington  
Carmen Callil  
Cheery Zahau  
Christine Lagarde  
Cathy Ashton  
Cynthia Maung  
Diane Von Furstenberg  
Dora Bakoyannis  
Ela Bhatt  
Gail Rebeck  
Gail Porter  
Graca Machel  
Glenys Kinnock  
Gro Bruntland  
Ingrid Betancourt  
Jane Hamlyn  
Joanna Lumley  
Jody Williams  
Kathy Ashton  
Khin Ohmar  
Liz Forgan  
Lucy Porter  
Lway Aye Nang  
Mairead Corrigan  
Maguire  
Martha Lane Fox  
Mary Labang  
Mary Robinson  
Margaret Wallstrom  
Marina Warner  
Majorie Scardino  
Mi Sue Pwint  
Rebekah Wade  
Rigoberta Menchu tum  
Rosie Boycott  
Sarah Brown  
Saw Mra Raza Lin  
Shami Chakrabarti  
Shirin Ebadi  
Somaly Mam  
Sue Perkins  
Theresa Rein  
Tin Tin Aung  
Trudi Styler  
Ulla Tornaes  
Wangaari Mathai

Ms Yoriko Kawaguchi  
Zipporah Sein  
Zoya Phan  
Prima Rusdi  
Fira Basuki

### **Background:**

Aung San Suu Kyi was arrested on May 14 and is now being held in Insein Prison in Rangoon. For the past month, the UK Government has been supporting the work of a coalition of NGOs in calling for her immediate release.

Campaign activity to date has included the following:

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### **64forSuu.org**

A website calling for the release of Aung San Suu Kyi was launched on 26 May – the day that, according to the Burmese regime, her house arrest expired.

64forSuu.org allows anyone to upload video, text, image or twitter, and in the run up to her 64<sup>th</sup> birthday encouraged them to leave 64 word/character messages of support.

With over 15,000 messages, and the backing of political leaders, major celebrities such as Julia Roberts, Yoko Ono, Paul McCartney and Bono, 64forSuu.org has demonstrated the scale of global outrage.

There have been over 76,000 unique visits, the site has proved popular in ASEAN countries.

Thailand and Singapore rank third and fourth in number of visits, while Burma is eighth.

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### **Burma VJ Screening**

To mark Aung San Suu Kyi's Birthday, Sarah Brown hosted No.10's first ever film screening.

Anders Østergaard's award-winning documentary, Burma VJ, shows a rare inside look into the 2007 uprising in Myanmar through the cameras of the independent journalist group, Democratic Voice of Burma.

Østergaard attended the screening and took questions from the audience.

### **Birthday**

On her birthday (June 19), outrage at Aung San Suu Kyi's detention was voiced throughout Europe, when her image was projected onto the side of European Parliament and Council buildings, and EU leaders released a statement calling for her immediate release. Added to this, over 100 political prisoners from around the world - including Terry Waite, Dr Kim Dae-jung and Lech Walesa - have added their names to a 64 word statement in support of the cause.

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## **Twitter**

Through replies and re-tweets, the campaign message reached an estimated 5 million people through Twitter alone in its first five days.

Celebrities who tweeted include:

- Stephen Fry
- Yoko Ono
- Kevin Spacey
- Demi Moore

Others signed an open letter on 64forsuu.org including

- Bono
- Paul McCartney
- Daniel Craig
- David Beckham

In total, over 6 million people have been exposed to the campaign, and this is the first political campaign to use twitter with an integrated website to harness the reach and influence of some of the world's most influential celebrities.

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## **Former political prisoners call for Aung San Suu Kyi's release**

On 15 June, over 100 former political prisoners added their names to a 64 word statement calling for Aung San Suu Kyi's release and for the United Nations Security Council to establish a global arms embargo on Burma/Myanmar.

'The continued denial of your freedom unacceptably attacks the human rights of all 2,156 political prisoners in Myanmar. As those also incarcerated for our political beliefs, we share the world's outrage. We call on the United Nations Security Council to press the Myanmar Government to immediately release all political prisoners, and to restrict the weapons that strengthen its hand through a global arms embargo.'

Signatories include: Anwar Ibrahim, former Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia; Ingrid Betancourt, former senator and Nobel Peace Prize nominee kidnapped by the Colombian FARDC; Dr Kim Dae-jung, former president of the Republic of Korea and Nobel Peace Prize laureate; Lech Walesa, former president of Poland and Nobel Peace Prize laureate; the Nelson Mandela Foundation; Shirin Ebadi, lawyer and

Nobel Peace Prize Laureate; Shao Jiang, a Tiananmen survivor; Terry Waite, the British humanitarian and author; Vaclav Havel, writer and former President of the Czech Republic; and Yuri Feodorovich Orlov, nuclear physicist and former Soviet dissident.