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HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
Fifth special session

Written statement* submitted by the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (Rights and Democracy), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[1 October 2007]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

The Human Rights Situation in Burma/Myanmar

Rights & Democracy welcomes the Human Rights Council's decision to hold a special session on the human rights situation in Burma/Myanmar. Rights & Democracy has been following closely, since the Parliamentary elections of 1990, the extremely concerning and systemic human rights violations in Burma. Our institution has been supporting the Burma pro-democracy movement at the local, regional and international levels. In addition, Rights & Democracy awarded its John Humphrey Freedom Award in 1999 to Min Ko Naing & Dr. Cynthia Maung and in 2006 to Su Su Nway.

Together with the international community, Rights & Democracy was alarmed by the response given by the military rulers, the State of Peace and Development Council (SPDC), to the recent peaceful demonstrations in Rangoon and elsewhere in the country. The international community must act immediately if Burma is to avoid a repeat of the slaughter that greeted similar pro-democracy protests in 1988 and sparked the ongoing humanitarian crisis along Burma's borders.

Rights & Democracy therefore urges the Human Rights Council to take decisive and timely actions and in particular to:

1. Strongly condemn the Burma military's bloody crackdown on pro-democracy and pro-human rights demonstrators;
2. Calls for the immediate release of all political prisoners including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi;
3. Request SPDC to fully abide by its legal obligations in terms of international human rights and humanitarian law;
4. Urge SPDC to host and cooperate with the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy and to provide unhindered access to the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, and other relevant Special Rapporteurs, to monitor the human rights situation in light of the recent escalation;
5. Urge the United Nations Security Council to take concrete measures to see the situation resolved peacefully;
6. Seeks to establish and support a comprehensive international framework that would push the SPDC into genuine tripartite dialogue with both the National League for Democracy and ethnic representatives towards a negotiated political settlement;
7. To strongly consider the appointment by the Human Rights Council of a commission of inquiry on Burma to investigate the systemic and consistent violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, with a particular focus on the present crisis, and recommend concrete and durable solutions to the situation, in close cooperation with other relevant UN mechanisms;

8. Allow the submission of cases of international human rights and humanitarian law violations in Burma to the Human Rights Council's newly established complaint mechanism and urge the setting up of this process.
