



Ref.:

H.E. Jean-Maurice Ripert
President of the Security Council
One Dag Hammarskjold Plaza
245 East 47th Street, 44th floor
New York
NY 10017

25 September 2007

Dear Ambassador Ripert,

Amnesty International requests the Security Council to send a mission to Myanmar to inform itself of the situation on the ground and to engage urgently with the authorities in efforts to avert any risk of a violent crackdown. The Security Council should also consider the possibility of imposing an arms embargo on Myanmar.

Mounting peaceful protests by tens of thousands calling for reform risk being met with violent repression that would aggravate an already grave human rights situation and pose serious threats to peace and security in the region. As you know, thousands of peaceful protestors led by Buddhist monks are demonstrating in the capital Yangon and other cities in Myanmar demanding political reform and the release of political prisoners. At least 150 protestors have been arrested by police and some were beaten by the state-sponsored Union Solidarity Development Association (USDA). Although the authorities have so far allowed demonstrations to continue, the experience of 1988 shows there is a real danger that the authorities may resort to deadly violence killing peaceful demonstrators to suppress dissent. The situation may escalate resulting in massive refugee flows and other serious threats to peace and security in the region.

The Council recently received a briefing from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr Ibrahim Gambari, who intends to visit the country soon. Amnesty International also appreciates that some Security Council members have reportedly made efforts to restrain the Myanmar authorities' reaction to the mounting, massive, demonstrations.

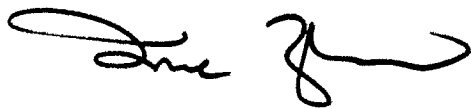
The situation in Myanmar is reaching critical dimensions as demonstrations occur against the backdrop of persistent and massive violations of human rights. These include the prolonged detention of over 1,160 political prisoners held in deteriorating prison conditions, the continued detention of Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other senior opposition figures who are prisoners of conscience, extrajudicial executions, and the widespread use of torture in detention. There is also massive suppression of freedom of expression throughout the country, the use of forced labour and child soldiers continue as do and crimes against humanity committed in counter insurgency operations in eastern Kayin (Karen) state.

Access by independent observers and international human rights organizations to many parts of the country continues to be denied. As you know the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Myanmar has been denied access to the country for several years.

The seriousness of developments in Myanmar, which are arousing worldwide concern, should now engage the responsibility of the Security Council as a whole. As world leaders recognized in September 2005, peace and security, development and human rights are the three pillars of the United Nations system and increased respect for human rights in Myanmar is therefore essential for collective security and well-being. Amnesty International urges the Council to send a mission to the country as soon as possible and stands ready to brief the Council on concrete steps that should be taken to address the dire human rights situation in Myanmar.

I am sending similar letters to other members of the Security Council.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Irene Khan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Irene Khan
Secretary General