

URGENT ACTION

BURMESE MONK NEEDS URGENT MEDICAL CARE

U Gambira, a Buddhist monk imprisoned in Myanmar because of his role in anti-government protests in 2007, is seriously ill in prison. Amnesty International has recently received information that his injuries resulted from torture he suffered in 2009. He urgently needs to be transferred to a hospital and treated for his injuries.

U Gambira is held in solitary confinement in Kale prison, northern Myanmar. Some former prisoners who were able to visit him reported that he has difficulty speaking, and that he has scars and marks on his hands, arms and body. In addition, U Gambira is reported to suffer from very severe headaches several times a week, which cause him to cry out in pain. When this happens, prison guards administer an injection, which results in U Gambira falling asleep for about five hours. When he wakes up he is in a daze and finds it very difficult to speak. There is concern that U Gambira is being injected with drugs rather than being treated for his injuries. He is not thought to have received any appropriate treatment since he was tortured. The former prisoners asked authorities at Kale prison to send U Gambira to hospital for treatment. Amnesty International has learned that a former prison official has also written to the authorities calling for U Gambira to receive medical treatment and expressed his fear that the injections administered to U Gambira may be harmful.

U Gambira is believed to have been tortured in April 2009, when he was held in Hkamti prison, north of Kale. Reports suggest he was tortured after requesting permission to exercise. Prison guards shackled him and handcuffed him to a chair, stuffed a cloth in his mouth, and placed a black cloth bag over his head. They then beat him on the head with a stick. U Gambira is reported to have been left handcuffed to the chair for extended periods during which time he was spoon-fed by the guards. He was transferred to Kale Prison on 12 May 2009.

Please write immediately in English or your own language:

- Calling for U Gambira to be admitted to hospital immediately for a full and independent medical examination, and for him to be given all necessary medical treatment;
- Calling for U Gambira to be released immediately and unconditionally, as he is a prisoner of conscience, detained solely as a result of his peaceful activism;
- Urging the authorities to conduct a full and impartial investigation into the reports that U Gambira was tortured, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- Note that torture and other forms of ill-treatment are absolutely prohibited under international law.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 12 DECEMBER 2011 TO:

Minister of Home Affairs

Lt Gen Ko Ko
Ministry of Home Affairs
Office No. 10
Nay Pyi Taw
UNION OF MYANMAR
Fax: 011 95 67 412 439
Email: ddg.gad@gad.gov.mm
Salutation: Dear Minister

Chairman

U Win Mya
Myanmar National Human Rights
Commission
27 Pyay Road
Hline Township, Yangon
UNION OF MYANMAR
Fax: 011 95 67 412 439
Salutation: Dear Chairman

And copies to:

Warden of Kale Prison

U Go Kyin Paung
Kale Prison
Sagaing Division
UNION OF MYANMAR
Salutation: Dear Warden

Also send copies to:

U Soe Paing, Minister-Counselor, Charge d'Affaires Ad Interim
Embassy of the Union of Myanmar
2300 S St. NW, Washington DC 20008
Tel: 202 332 3344 | Fax: 1 202 332 4351 | Email: pyi.thayar@verizon.net

Please check with the AIUSA Urgent Action Office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

U Gambira is serving a 63-year prison sentence for his peaceful activities in the major anti-government protests that began in Myanmar in August 2007. He is a founding member of the All Burma Monks Alliance (ABMA), which was formed in September 2007 and went on to mobilize tens of thousands of monks to join the demonstrations. U Gambira was sentenced in November 2008 after an unfair trial.

U Gambira was sent to Hkamti Prison, Sagaing Division in northern Myanmar on 22 November 2008 and was transferred to Kale Prison, also in Sagaing Division in May 2009. Kale Prison is more than 1000 kilometers from Yangon, his home town. In his Progress Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar in March 2011, Tomas Ojea Quintana, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, urged the Myanmar authorities to "halt the practice of transferring prisoners of conscience to remote locations, a practice that reportedly began in late 2008, and appears to be further punishment that deprives prisoners of regular family visits as well as crucial supplemental food and necessary medicine. This practice endangers prisoners of conscience, as they suffer additionally from these even harsher conditions of detention, and creates additional hardship for the families of the prisoners."

Rule 22 (2) of the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners stipulates that: "Sick prisoners who require specialist treatment shall be transferred to specialized institutions or to civil hospitals. Where hospital facilities are provided in an institution, their equipment, furnishings and pharmaceutical supplies shall be proper for the medical care and treatment of sick prisoners, and there shall be a staff of suitable trained officers."

Name(s): U Gambira (m)

Issue(s): Torture, Ill-treatment, Medical concern, Legal concern

UA: 319/11

Issue Date: 31 October 2011

Country: Myanmar