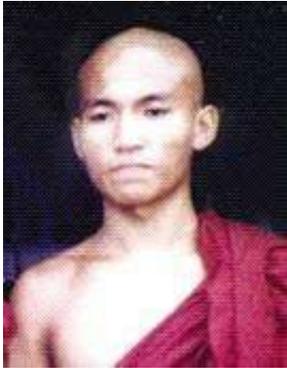




MYANMAR: Monk Receives 68 Years in Prison



Buddhist monk and activist U Gambira was arrested on 4 November 2007 in the search for the organizers of the major anti-government demonstrations that began in August 2007. The authorities brought the protests to an end with a violent crackdown in late September 2007.

U Gambira is currently on trial under at least nine charges for his role in the demonstrations of August and September 2007. The laws he has been charged under include three security laws that have been used arbitrarily to criminalize peaceful political dissent.

U Gambira's lawyer, Aung Thein, withdrew from the case on 1 October 2008 stating that U Gambira was not receiving a fair trial. He cited the court's failure to allow him to prepare a defense and complained that the court had not provided him with a copy of the prosecutor's file in advance of the trial. The court had also rejected his request for more time to discuss the allegations presented in the file with U Gambira.

On 18 November 2008, U Gambira was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment by a special court inside Insein Prison. This was swiftly followed by two further sentences: on 20 November he was sentenced to 15 years in jail and then on 21 November he was given an additional 12 years with hard labor. Exact details of the sentences remain unclear but as of November 21, 2008, U Gambira has received a total of 68 years' imprisonment. A total of 16 charges have been brought against U Gambira. He remains on trial for a number of those charges and will likely receive additional sentences.

U Gambira is currently detained in Kale Prison, Sagaing Division). He has been stripped of his monk's robes. According to reliable sources, he has been tortured. On one occasion, U Gambira refused to appear in court after claiming that the trial of a disrobed monk damages the dignity of Buddhism.

He suffers from nervous tension and is in generally poor health. He has frequently been denied access to his lawyer, Aung Thein.

(continued)

YOU CAN HELP:

WRITE A LETTER TO THE MYANMAR OFFICIALS, ASKING THEM TO:

- Bring about the immediate and unconditional release of U Gambira
- Provide him with any medical treatment he requires
- Protect him from torture and other ill-treatment
- Allow him access to family members and a lawyer of his choosing
- Stop the imprisonment of all prisoners of conscience
- Conduct fair trials
- Protect prisoners' welfare
- Stop the misuse of security laws to punish peaceful political dissent

mail to:

Chairman, State Peace and
Development Council
Senior General Than Shwe
c/o Ministry of Defense
Naypyitaw
Union of Myanmar

Salutation: "Dear Senior General
Than Shwe"

Minister of Foreign Affairs
U Nyan Win
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Bldg. (19), Naypyitaw
Union of Myanmar

Salutation: "Dear Minister"

International airmail postage: \$0.98

Is the Country Called "Myanmar" or "Burma"?

In 1989, the military government changed the English form of the name of the country from "Burma" to "Myanmar." (The name of the country in the Burmese language – "Myanma" – did not change.) While the official name of the country is the "Union of Myanmar," many organizations, including the U.S. government, have chosen to continue using the old name of Burma. Some sources may refer to the capital city by its current name of "Yangon," while others may use the old name of "Rangoon."

Amnesty International uses the term "Myanmar" in any official description of the country. You should always use only the word "Myanmar" in your letters when you are writing to the Myanmar Government. However, on your envelopes, it is best to put both, like this: "UNION OF MYANMAR (Burma)" This is because the U.S. Postal Service continues to recognize "Burma" as the name of the country. To ensure that your letters reach their destination, be sure to use both names on your envelopes.