



Int Dept/Keth Thapper/gp

Date
2009-08-25
Your date

Our reference
KT/gp
Your reference

Senior General Than Shwe
Chairman of the State Peace and
Development Council
c/o Attorney General
Pyinmana
Burma

LO-Sweden hereby denounces the sentencing of Aung San Suu Kyi and demands her immediate release

The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO-Sweden), representing 1.6 million workers, categorically denounces the verdict against Aung San Suu Kyi and demands her immediate and unconditional release. After what LO-Sweden regards as a mock trial, the leader of the Burmese opposition was initially sentenced to three years in prison with forced labour for breaching the terms of her house arrest, though the sentence was subsequently commuted by the head of the junta Than Shwe to 18 months' house arrest.

At its meeting at Insein prison, in the north of Rangoon, the court found Aung San Suu Kyi guilty of breaching the terms of the house arrest she had been under since 2003. In May she had briefly had the American John Yettaw under her roof, as he had strangely succeeded in swimming up to her home, located beside a lake. The man himself was sentenced to 7 years' forced labour.

For LO-Sweden it is quite clear that this mock trial was mainly aimed at ensuring that the key figure in the Burmese opposition could play no part in the forthcoming national "elections", due to be held in 2010. Unless some form of pardon is announced between now and 2010, today's sentence is indeed likely to prevent Aung San Suu Kyi from standing in those elections.

Aung San Suu Kyi has been under house arrest for over 13 years since 1989, which the UN has described as a blatant violation of international law, and indeed of Burmese legislation.

In September 2007, a large non-violent movement of Buddhist monks and nuns and democracy campaigners demonstrated against the military regime. That "Saffron Revolution" ended in a bloodbath when the army opened fire on the crowd after 11 days of demonstrations and proceeded to make a huge number of arrests. Less than one year later, the regime took advantage of a

POSTAL ADDRESS 105 53 Stockholm
OFFICE ADDRESS Barnhusgatan 18
TELEPHONE +46 8 796 25 00 TELEFAX +46 8 24 52 28
E-MAIL mailbox@lo.se HOMEPAGE www.lo.se

The Swedish Trade Union Confederation

devastating cyclone to arrest more activists and got a new constitution ratified following a fraudulent referendum held just days after the cyclone had swept by.

Repeating its condemnation of the despicable repression suffered by the Burmese people, LO-Sweden hereby calls for the immediate and unconditional release of Aung San Suu Kyi and of the more than 2,100 other political prisoners currently held in Burma, who include trade union activists.

LO-Sweden also strongly protests against the Burmese regime's total lack of respect for the ILO Core Labour Standards and the denial of trade union rights for the Burmese workers.

Yours sincerely,
THE SWEDISH TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (LO)

Wanja Lundby-Wedin
President