

The Voice of Hope

by Alan Clements

Conversations with Aung San Suu Kyi,
Burma's imprisoned Nobel Peace laureate
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CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS IN BURMA



1824–26, 1852, 1885: Three successive Anglo-Burmese Wars force Burma to be annexed to British India.

1937: Britain separates Burma from India and makes it a crown colony.

December 1941: Japanese ground action against Burma begin. The first air raids on Rangoon occur on December 23 and 25. The Japanese army fully occupies Burma by May 1942 and soon thereafter grants false independence under a puppet regime led by anti-British nationalists, which later resist Japanese rule.

1945: Britain liberates Burma from Japanese occupation with help from the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL)—a coalition of nationalist forces—led by national leader General Aung San (Aung San Suu Kyi's father).

June 19, 1945: Aung San Suu Kyi is born in Rangoon, Burma to Daw Khin Kyi, Burma's only woman ambassador (to India and Nepal), and General Aung San, the architect of Burma's independence.

January 1947: General Aung San negotiates Burma's independence from the United Kingdom. He signs an agreement in London with British Prime Minister Clement Attlee who promises an interim government in preparation for Burma's independence.

February 12, 1947: General Aung San signs an agreement at the Panglong Conference, with leaders from other national groups who express solidarity and support for a united Burma.

July 19, 1947: General Aung San is assassinated, along with six of his cabinet ministers including his older brother Ba Wi, when a gang of armed paramilitaries break into the Secretariat Building in downtown Rangoon during a meeting of the Executive Council (the shadow government established by the British in preparation for the transfer of power). A cabinet secretary and a bodyguard are also killed. The assassination was supposedly carried out on the orders of U Saw, a rival politician, who subsequently was tried and hanged.

January 4, 1948: The Union of Burma becomes an independent nation outside of the commonwealth, carrying on the British tradition of parliamentary democracy. U Nu becomes the first democratically elected Prime Minister of independent Burma.

1955: U Nu, together with Indian Prime Minister Nehru, Indonesian President Sukarno, Yugoslav President Tito, and Egyptian President Nasser co-found the Movement of Non-Aligned States, declaring their desire not to become involved in the Cold War while adopting a "declaration on promotion of world peace and cooperation," that includes Nehru's five principles:

- 1) Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty.
- 2) Mutual non-aggression.
- 3) Mutual non-interference in domestic affairs.
- 4) Equality and mutual benefit.
- 5) Peaceful co-existence.

1958-60: Following a split in Burma's ruling AFPFL party, a caretaker government forms, led by army Chief of Staff General Ne Win.

1960: At fifteen, Aung San Suu Kyi accompanies her Ambassador mother to New Delhi, India, and attends Lady Shri Ram College in New Delhi, graduating in 1964.

1960: U Nu's party wins a decisive victory in Burma's general elections.

March 2, 1962: General Ne Win seizes power from U Nu's democratic government in Rangoon. U Nu and his ministers are jailed along with over thirty ethnic leaders. General Ne Win appoints himself Chairman of the Revolutionary Council and Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government.

July 2, 1962: General Ne Win, inaugurates the “Burmese Way to Socialism.” By military decree, he abolishes all political parties, except his own, The Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP). Parliament is destroyed. The constitution is suspended. A state controlled, centralized economy is introduced and all private enterprises are nationalized. Independent newspapers are terminated. Foreign visitors to Burma are limited to twenty-four hour, nonrenewable stay permits.

1969: Aung San Suu Kyi completes her BA in philosophy, politics, and economics at St. Hugh’s College, Oxford University.

1969-1971: Aung San Suu Kyi works as the Assistant Secretary to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for the United Nations Secretariat in New York City.

1972: Aung Suu Kyi works as the Research Officer at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Kingdom of Bhutan. She marries British Buddhist scholar Dr. Michael Aris.

1973: Aung San Suu Kyi’s first son, Alexander, is born in London.

December 1974: Burma’s military government declares martial law. Later that year, a new constitution comes into effect, transferring power from the armed forces to Ne Win who becomes president of the Socialist Republic of Burma.

1974-1988: Under Ne Win’s leadership the country steadily deteriorates. By mid-1988, rice shortages and popular discontent reach crisis proportions. A currency devaluation wipes out many people’s life savings, triggering anti-government protests. The police slay a protesting university student. National conscience ignites, sparking nationwide demonstrations by university students. Buddhist monks, nuns, and civil servants join in support of the demonstrations. Even some policemen and soldiers join in cities and towns nationwide.

1977: Aung San Suu Kyi’s second son, Kim, is born in Oxford.

1985-1986: Aung San Suu Kyi attends the Center of Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, as a visiting scholar.

March 1988: Aung San Suu Kyi returns to Burma to tend to her ailing mother.

August 8, 1988: An infamous date in Burma’s history known as “8-8-88.” Hundreds of thousands of protesters peacefully assemble in the streets nationwide, demanding that Ne Win’s ruinous one-party rule be replaced by a democratically elected civilian government. Soldiers loyal to the dictator fire into crowds of unarmed protesters. Thousands are killed.

August 23, 1988: Aung San Suu Kyi takes a leading role in the movement, addressing half a million people at the famous Shwedagon rally.

September 18, 1988: The military announces that a “fair and free” election will be held on May 27, 1990.

September 24, 1988: The National League for Democracy (NLD) is founded with Aung San Suu Kyi as its general secretary. In a further attempt to silence the nationwide pro-democracy demonstrations, an estimated 3,000 unarmed students, Buddhist monks, and civilians are killed on the streets by the Burmese Army. Thousands of other activists are arrested, interrogated and tortured. The military places the country under martial law. They form the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC). Those accused of breaching martial law are tried by military tribunals. The tribunals have the power to pass only three punishments: life imprisonment; death or a minimum of three years hard labor.

1988-1989: Aung San Suu Kyi tours the whole of Burma delivering numerous public addresses, encouraging people to stand up for their rights despite their fears of persecution. Thousands of student activists flee Burma’s main cities and congregate in camps along the Thai-Burma border region. They determine to wage a guerrilla war against a dictatorship that has crushed democracy in Burma. While engaged in rescuing their country, they fall victim to malaria, malnutrition, and relentless attacks both by the Burmese military and Thai authorities inside Thailand. The students struggle. Many are caught and jailed in Thai detention centers. Some are repatriated back to Burma where they are jailed and tortured. In other cases, some are granted political asylum in Australia, UK, Norway, Canada, and the United States.

July 20, 1989: Aung San Suu Kyi is placed under house arrest at her lakeside home in Rangoon.

May 27, 1990: SLORC’s “free and fair multi-party general elections” are held. The National League for Democracy wins decisively with 392 out of 485 seats in Parliament, despite Aung San Suu Kyi being under house arrest and the NLD’s other principle leaders imprisoned.

SLORC nullifies the results and refuses to hand over power to the democratically elected leaders. They arrest and imprison numerous key organizers of the NLD and most elected officials.

July 1990: SLORC issues “Order No. 1/90,” stating that it will not accept the establishment of a civilian government based on an interim constitution. It also states that SLORC will maintain power until it convenes a national convention with the authority to pass a new constitution.

October 12, 1990: Aung San Suu Kyi is awarded the Thorolf Rafto Memorial Prize for

embodying the ideals and principles underlying Universal Human Rights.

December 18, 1990: The National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB) is formed as the government in exile by representatives elected in the May 27 general elections. Dr. Sein Win, a first cousin of Aung San Suu Kyi, is elected as the NCGUB's prime minister.

July 10, 1991: Aung San Suu Kyi is awarded the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought by the European Parliament.

August 10, 1991: The military regime retroactively amends the law under which Aung San Suu Kyi is held. This extends her house arrest for up to five years without charge or trial.

October 14, 1991: Aung San Suu Kyi wins the Nobel Peace Prize. The Norwegian Nobel Committee states it "has decided to award the Nobel Peace Prize...to Aung San Suu Kyi...for her non-violent struggle for democracy and human rights...[exemplifying] one of the most extraordinary examples of civil courage in Asia in recent decades."

1992: General Than Shwe replaces General Saw Maung as the SLORC chairman, prime minister, and defense minister. The Nobel Committee reveals that Aung San Suu Kyi will use the \$1.3 million prize money to establish a health and education trust in support of the Burmese people.

March 1992: The United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) adopts a resolution on "the situation of Human Rights in Myanmar" by consensus. They appoint a UN Human Rights Special Rapporteur to submit a report to the UNGA and the UNCHR. The Special Rapporteur visits Burma annually before the UNGA convenes in October. The mandate of the Special Rapporteur gets a year extension at each session of the UNCGR since 1993.

September 1992: SLORC decrees Burma be renamed Myanmar. The capital, Rangoon, becomes Yangon.

January 1993: The first session of SLORC's National Convention is held. Elected representatives of the people constitute only 15.24 percent of the delegates. Other delegates are handpicked by SLORC. The Convention is the first step of a seven-point roadmap plan that the SLORC claims will lead to a democratic state. However, the convention is widely seen as a tool for legitimizing the military's hold on power.

December 1993: The United Nations General Assembly adopts a resolution by consensus requesting the UN Secretary-General assist in the implementation of the resolution and in the process of national reconciliation.

January 21, 1994: SLORC announces that Aung San Suu Kyi could be detained for up to six years under martial law. The regime says an extra year could be added if a three-member committee comprising the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Home Affairs, and Defense decided to do so.

February 14, 1994: For the first time, people from outside Aung San Suu Kyi's family are allowed to meet with her under her house arrest. UN Resident Representative Jehan Raheem, US Congressman Bill Richardson, and New York Times reporter Philip Shenon visit Aung San Suu Kyi in Rangoon.

September 20, 1994: SLORC General Than Shwe and Lt. Gen Khin Nyunt meet Aung San Suu Kyi for the first time since her house arrest.

October 28, 1994: A second meeting is held at the State Guest House between Lt. Gen Khin Nyunt and Aung San Suu Kyi.

July 10, 1995: Aung San Suu Kyi is released from house arrest after six years. She reaffirms her dedication to the restoration of democracy in Burma. She calls for a dialogue between SLORC, the democracy movement and non-Burman, ethnic nationality groups. She also urges foreign businessmen thinking of investing in Burma to wait until democracy is restored.

November 1995: The NLD walks out of the National Convention. The NLD issues a statement that in its present form, the National Convention is not acceptable to the majority of people in Burma and, because it is not acceptable to the majority of the people, it is not acceptable to the NLD.

March 1996: Aung San Suu Kyi boards a train bound for Mandalay in defiance of the travel ban SLORC imposes against her. Citing a "last minute problem," the coach she is in is left behind at the station.

1996-2000: Aung San Suu Kyi continues to defy the travel ban imposed against her and tries to leave for places outside Rangoon.

April 1996: A United Nations Commission on Human Rights report documents torture and forced labor in Burma.

May 26-28, 1996: The NLD calls for all representatives elected in the 1990 general elections to convene in Rangoon. Aung San Suu Kyi attends the first NLD congress since her release. SLORC arrests more than 200 NLD delegates on their way to party congress.

June 1996: SLORC issues "Law No 5/96," banning "all acts disturbing public order," making

“violators subject up to twenty years imprisonment.” The law also states that anyone who attempts the writing of a state constitution will be subject to the same punishment. Of the 262 detained representatives, 144 are released. Military police prevent 100 of Aung San Suu Kyi’s friends from visiting her at home on her 52nd birthday.

July 31, 1996: The military regime implements “The Television and Video Act.” It is now obligatory for owners of televisions, videocassette recorders, and satellite television to obtain a government license. The Act bans all materials “considered offensive or detrimental to the state.” The Act has the authority to “carry out on-site inspections.” Violators face imprisonment for up to three years or fines equivalent to \$17,000 US dollars, or both. In 2000, “The Internet Law” passes with the same provisions and punishments.

1997: Burma is admitted to the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

1997: Aung San Suu Kyi’s husband Michael Aris is diagnosed with prostate cancer in Britain. The military regime denies him a visa to be with his wife in Burma. Aung San Suu Kyi never again sees Michael, who passes away in March 1999.

November 15, 1997: SLORC renames itself the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC).

1998: 300 NLD members are released from prison. The ruling council refuses to comply with an NLD deadline for the convening of parliament.

July-August 1998: Aung San Suu Kyi tries to meet NLD members outside Rangoon but police stop her car on both occasions, where she is forced to spend days on an isolated country road. After several days, SPDC officials seize her car and forcibly drive her home.

August 2000: Aung San Suu Kyi is again prevented from visiting youth members outside of Rangoon.

September 2, 2000: Approximately 200 SLORC riot police surround Aung San Suu Kyi’s motorcade near Dala, forcing them to return to Rangoon after a nine-day standoff.

September 21, 2000: Aung San Suu Kyi and NLD Vice Chairman U Tin Oo are arrested, together with their supporters, when they attempt to leave for Mandalay by train.

September 23, 2000: Aung San Suu Kyi and other NLD party leaders are reported to be confined to their homes on temporary detention.

October 2000: Aung San Suu Kyi begins secret, confidence-building negotiations with the ruling military council.

December 7, 2000: US President Bill Clinton confers the Presidential Medal of Freedom award—America’s highest civilian honor—on Aung San Suu Kyi. As she is unable to collect the award herself, her son Alexander Aris receives it on her behalf.

2001: The regime releases 200 or so pro-democracy activists, saying that the releases reflect progress in talks with opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

January 15, 2001: The military authorities reportedly order a halt to attacks on Aung San Suu Kyi in the state-run media.

January 24, 2001: Twenty pro-democracy activists are released from jail. NLD Vice Chairman U Tin Oo is also released from detention after four months. Aung San Suu Kyi, however, remains confined to her residence. All access to her is tightly controlled.

January 30, 2001: A European Union delegation meets with Aung San Suu Kyi, only her second reported diplomatic contact during more than four months of house detention. The EU delegation spends more than two hours with Aung San Suu Kyi at her residence, where she has been confined by the regime since September 21, 2000.

September 23, 2001. The EU delegation’s four-day visit aims to break the deadlock between the regime and the political opposition led by Aung San Suu Kyi. It is the first such EU mission to Burma since July 1999.

April 5, 2001: The first UN human rights inspector to visit Burma in five years, Paulo Sergio Pinheiro meets with Aung San Suu Kyi.

April 28, 2001: More than thirty United States senators warn President George W. Bush not to ease sanctions against Burma’s military dictatorship lest he send the wrong signal to the regime as it continues closed-door talks with Aung San Suu Kyi. The senators’ letter to the President says that any lifting of sanctions on investments could “remove the incentive for the regime to negotiate” with Aung San Suu Kyi.

September 2001: Burma pledges to eliminate the drug trade originating in its Golden Triangle by 2005.

November 2001: Chinese President Jiang Zemin visits Burma. He issues a statement supporting the military regime.

May 6, 2002: Aung San Suu Kyi is freed after nineteen months of house arrest. The military government says it is a breakthrough toward ending the country’s political deadlock. In a

written statement, a government spokesman says the day would mark “a new page for the people of Myanmar and the international community.” The statement does not mention Aung San Suu Kyi by name, but says, “we shall recommit ourselves to allowing all of our citizens to participate freely in the life of our political process, while giving priority to national unity, peace, and stability of the country as well as the region.”

May 30, 2003: A government-sponsored mob in Burma kills at least seventy people associated with the NLD in what is called the Depayin Massacre. Aung San Suu Kyi’s motorcade is attacked by the mob wielding wooden bats, iron bars, and pointed iron rods. She is brought back to Rangoon, where she is placed in Insein Prison. Several weeks later Aung San Suu Kyi is moved from Insein prison to house arrest, where she remains as of the time of this writing in 2007.

August 2003: Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt becomes Prime Minister. He proposes to hold a National Convention in 2004 on drafting a new constitution as part of a “road map” to democracy.

November 2003: Five senior NLD leaders are released from house arrest after a visit of UN human rights envoy.

May-July 2004: The Constitutional convention meets, despite a boycott by the National League for Democracy.

October 2004: Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt is replaced as Prime Minister amid reports of a power struggle. He and his family are placed under house arrest.

November 19, 2004: A number of leading pro-democracy activists are freed from prison. Among them is Min Ko Naing who led the 1988 pro-democracy, student-led demonstrations, and endured torture and fifteen years in prison.

February 2005: The National Convention resumes, but without the participation of Aung San Suu Kyi’s opposition party—the NLD—and without ethnic groups. The Convention, attended by over 1,000 handpicked delegates, is boycotted by the main opposition the National League for Democracy citing undemocratic proceedings at the Convention.

June 17, 2005: Worldwide protests are staged outside Burmese embassies in recognition of Aung San Suu Kyi’s sixtieth birthday.

November 2005: Burma’s military regime announces that its seat of government is moving to a new site near the town of Pyinmana in central Burma, 200 miles north of Rangoon.

November 2005: “Equality Now”—a non-governmental organization that works to protect the

human rights of women around the world—proposes that Aung San Suu Kyi be a potential candidate for the position of U.N. Secretary-General, referring to her as the Prime Minister-Elect of Burma.

2006: The UN General Assembly and the former Commission on Human Rights adopt the 29th consecutive resolution on Burma. Yet the regime in Burma consistently defies the United Nations, ignoring over a dozen calls for Aung San Suu Kyi's release by the Secretary General. The regime also defies repeated calls by the International Labor Organization to end forced labor.

May 20, 2006: Ibrahim Gambari, UN Undersecretary-General of Department of Political Affairs, meets with Aung San Suu Kyi, who is still under house arrest. This marks her first visit with a foreign official since 2004.

May 27, 2006: Flouting a direct appeal from the U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Burma's dictator, General Than Shwe extends Aung San Suu Kyi's house arrest by another year. Burma's new national capital—Naypyidaw—hosts its first official event: the Armed Forces Day parade.

September 2006: Nearly two years after his 2004 release, Min Ko Naing, along with four Burmese student leaders Ko Ko Gyi, Htay Kywe, Min Zeya and Pyone Cho are rearrested in September 2006.

October 10, 2006: The military regime resumes the National Convention which is tasked to draft a new constitution for the country. This is the 10th time the Convention has resumed since it first started in 1993.

January, 4, 2007: Min Ko Naing and his "88 Generation Students Group" organize a nationwide imitative called the "Open Heart Campaign." Launched on Burma's Independence Day, the campaign encourages everyone to exercise their freedom of expression and write General Than Shwe explaining what it is like to live under his military government. The "88 Generation Students Group" also start the "White Sunday" campaign: they visit the families of political prisoners every Sunday to express their support.

January 2007: China and Russia use their veto to block a US and British-sponsored resolution in the UN Security Council to bring the Burma situation before the chamber. China claims that the Security Council was not the right forum to discuss Burma since the regime did not represent a threat to international peace.

May 2007: Burma's dictator general Than Shwe, extends Aung San Suu Kyi's house arrest for another year.

May 16, 2007: Former Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik of Norway and 58 other former presidents and prime ministers including Bill Clinton, George H. W. Bush, Jimmy Carter, Vaclav Havel, Lech Walesa, Kim Dae Jung, Corazon Aquino, Megawati Sukarnoputri, and Margaret Thatcher release a letter demanding Burma's military regime unconditionally free Aung San Suu Kyi and all other prisoners of conscience.

June 2007: Reporters Without Borders—a Paris-based media watchdog—places Burma among the bottom ten countries in its world press freedom ranking, stating the press is subject to “relentless advance censorship.”

August 19, 2007: In the largest show of peaceful protest against the dictatorship since 1988, Burma's Buddhist monks react to the regime's 500% fuel price increase, demanded in order to cover a budget deficit that resulted from a salary hike for civil servants. The demonstrations grow daily, despite continued threats of a crackdown by dictator Than Shwe.

September 3, 2007: Demonstrations gather momentum. Numerous videos of the monks marching are uploaded to the popular website Youtube. The world witnesses for itself the “saffron revolution.” The regime bans access to the video-uploading site.

September 5, 2007: In the town of Pakokku, 370 miles northwest of Rangoon, witnesses hear 500 monks reciting Buddhist scriptures as the army fires shots over their heads. The Norway-based Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB), a news service run by exiled dissidents, relays information that some of the thousands of onlookers cheering the monks are beaten by the regime's security forces.

September 6-18, 2007: Protests continue daily. They spread to nearly all major cities in the nation. Reports state that thousands of monks march peacefully in rows of two or three, chanting prayers of loving-kindness and protection to all living beings. The demonstrations are the first of this size by Burma's monks since the 1988 nationwide pro-democracy uprising. The monk-led marches signify the beginning of their alms boycott, known as “patam nikkuijana kamma” in Pali, the ancient language of the Theravada Buddhist priesthood. Translated, this means “turning over of the alms bowl.” For the first time in eighteen years, the monks have withheld their recognition of members of the ruling military regime and their families. Over-turned alms bowls give their demonstrations greater urgency.

September 10, 2007: Military authorities disconnect the telephones of about fifty pro-democracy activists to prevent them from talking to Burmese and foreign journalists.

September 19, 2007: Sources report that General Than Shwe authorizes regional and local authorities to control the pro-democracy demonstrations. He maintains his order to open fire

on the protesters if necessary. Meanwhile, the dictator declares fourteen years of constitutional talks complete and closes the National Convention having produced a set of charter guidelines that guarantee the military's continued dominance. Under the guidelines, the military will continue to control major ministries, hold large blocks of unelected seats in all legislative bodies and have the right to declare a state of emergency and seize power at any time.

September 21, 2007: Still under house arrest, Aung San Suu Kyi manages a brief appearance, the first since 2003, at the gate of her residence in Rangoon. Hands in prayer, she pays her respects to the procession of 500 monks as they march for freedom and human rights.

September 23, 2007: The Dalai Lama issues a statement appealing "to freedom-loving people all over the world to support [Burma's]...nonviolent movement," and calling for the release of fellow Nobel Peace Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi.

September 25, 2007: US President George W. Bush addresses The United Nations General Assembly stating "Americans are outraged by the situation in Burma, where a military junta has imposed a nineteen-year reign of fear. Basic freedoms of speech, assembly, and worship are severely restricted. Ethnic minorities are persecuted. Forced child labor, human trafficking and rape are common. The regime is holding more than 1,000 political prisoners including Aung San Suu Kyi, whose party was elected overwhelmingly by the Burmese people in 1990..."

September 26-30, 2007: Despite the military regime firing into protesting crowds, demonstrators brave the overpowering force of military and security forces, continuing to peacefully protest. The killing continues. Thousands more are arrested, interrogated, and tortured. Numerous monasteries are stormed under gunfire by troops and riot police. Shira Villarosa, the chief diplomat at the United States Embassy in Burma, describes "pictures where whole monasteries have been trashed" and "at least fifteen monasteries in Rangoon alone have been totally emptied." Over the coming days, other reports emerge stating that over fifty monasteries were raided and ransacked. A few thousand monks (and many nuns) are arrested, defrocked, interrogated, and jailed.

September 26, 2007: Authorities close all Internet cafés in Rangoon. Most of the country's mobile phone lines are disconnected.

September 28, 2007: The regime shuts off the country's two internet service providers.

September 30, 2007: Major cities are emptied of visible crowds. Security forces barricade off the major pagodas and troops poise on nearly every street corner of Rangoon, a city of five million people. State media reports that ten protesters were killed. Witnesses and dissident groups believe the death toll to be closer to 200.

October 2, 2007: UN special envoy Ibrahim Gambari is allowed to meet with Aung San Suu Kyi, while hundreds of riot police remain stationed around the clock outside her home. The road is closed to traffic. Two navy boats patrol the lake. Access to the compound is limited to her two aides and a doctor who makes monthly stops. Food supplies are dropped off with security guards. She has no phone or Internet access.

October 2-6, 2007: The Asian Human Rights Commission reports “hundreds have been rounded up from in and around protest sites, and in virtually every township of Rangoon there are reports of persons having left their homes in the morning who have not come back at night. But many more have been taken directly from their houses and offices around the country, especially members of the National League for Democracy, lawyers, and human rights defenders. There are already reports emerging of torture and inhuman treatment of these detainees.”

October 6, 2007: Secretary General Ban Ki-moon states that the use of force to put down peaceful protests in Burma is “abhorrent and unacceptable,” and calls upon the country’s government to release those it had arrested.

October 11, 2007: After some delay, the 15-member UN Security Council issues its first statement deploring the military crackdown on Burma’s peaceful protestors in an attempt to pressure the military junta to negotiate with the pro-democracy opposition party and release all political prisoners. The junta rejects the UN statement on state-run TV and radio, insisting that “Myanmar’s current situation does not affect regional and international stability,” and that it would follow its own plan to bring democracy to the country. The junta’s statement concludes with the remark, “However, we deeply regret that the UN Security Council has issued a statement contrary to the people’s desires.”

October, 17, 2007: In an official statement on the front-page of the military regime’s state-controlled newspaper, *The New Light of Myanmar*, they admit that “authorities were still hunting for demonstrators who took part in the uprising.” The statement also said “2,927 people had been arrested since the crackdown started and nearly 500 were still in custody.”

October 23, 2007: In a letter to the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, Burmese Foreign Minister Nyan Win, formally invites the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, to visit Burma as requested earlier by the Human Rights Council, and also requests that Pinheiro’s visit be made prior to November 17, the date of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit.

October 24, 2007: The regime’s major arms supplier and chief trading partner, China is one of the few countries thought to have any sway over Than Shwe. Thus, protests demanding democracy in Burma are held outside Chinese embassies worldwide to mark the twelfth year that Aung San Suu Kyi has spent in house arrest.

November 1, 2007: More than 100 monks in Pakokku Township in Burma's Magwe Division—a major center for Buddhist learning in the country, with more than eighty monasteries—march in a peaceful demonstration chanting the “Metta Sutta,” the Buddha's words on loving kindness. It is the first public demonstration since the regime's deadly crackdown in September. Burmese monks call for the release of political prisoners, including Aung San Suu Kyi. A monk interviewed by Oslo-based opposition radio station Democratic Voice of Burma is quoted as saying that the monks call for “lower commodity prices, national reconciliation, [as well as] the immediate release of Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners.”

“We are not afraid of getting arrested or being tortured,” the unnamed monk says, adding that they plan more demonstrations in the future.

This chronology was produced from numerous sources. I am indebted to everyone who helped in its creation, but all errors or inconsistencies that appear are my own. Although I have tried to remain as faithful to historical truth as possible, since this chronology was compiled from so many different sources and gathered over a very short period of time, it is bound by the limits of historical record. Special gratitude goes to the BBC, Channel Four UK, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Burma Net News, the *New York Times*, and a number of Burma activist groups and research organizations, including the Burma Action Group UK, the US Campaign for Burma, the Irrawaddy, and Burma's government in exile, the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB).



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