

Statement on the 4th Anniversary of Nai Yekha's and Nai Cheem Gakao's Imprisonments

(July 17, 2007)

Today, July 17, marks the fourth anniversary of imprisonments of the two Mon activists, Nai Yekha and Nai Cheem Gakao. Nai Yekha and Nai Cheem Gakao were sentenced to life in prison because of their activities in organization and educating people about democracy and human rights in Burma. On this anniversary, Mon communities around the world join Nai Yekha's and Nai Cheem Gakao's families in saying prayers for their releases of Nai Yekha and Nai Cheem Gakao.

The current Burmese military regime accused them of conspiracy for attempting to overthrow the regime and unjustly sentenced them to death on July 17, 2003. The sentences were later reduced to the life imprisonments. Nai Yekha and Nai Cheem Gakao were denied for a fair trial as there has been no rule of law and independent judicial system in Burma under the military government. Both of them were inhumanly tortured during interrogation by the interrogators and were forced to confess for a crime that they have never committed. They have been subjected to harsh prison conditions and treated inhumanely in notorious Innsein Jail.

Nai Yekha and Nai Cheem Gako are among more than 1,100 political prisoners who were imprisoned for their oppositions to the illegal rule of the Burmese military and for fighting to gain social justice and human rights in Burma. Recently, the regime extended the house arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi, Nobel Peace Prize winner, for another year and arrested more than 60 activists who protested the extension of Suu Kyi's house arrest. These developments demonstrate that the Burmese military regime has continued to suppress those who have peacefully sought to bring justice and human rights in Burma.

On this anniversary, we reiterate our demand for the immediate and unconditional releases of Nai Yekha and Nai Cheem Gakao as well as all other 1,100 political prisoners including Aung San Suu Kyi and Khun Tun Oo.

This statement is joined by:

1. The Australia Mon Association (AMA)
2. Euro-Mon Community
3. Mon Canadian Society of Alberta
4. Monland Restoration Council (USA)
5. Mon National League for Consolidating and Aiding (Thailand)
6. Mon Women's Association of America
7. Mon Youth Progressive Organization
8. Mon Unity League (Thailand)
9. Mon Youth Association (Liberated Area)
10. Overseas Mon Women Organization (Mae Sot, Thailand)

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