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PARLIAMENTARIANS ACT ON BURMA

- ❖ **1 December, 2004: The ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Caucus on Myanmar condemns the extension of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's house arrest**
- ❖ **5 December, 2004: Former Czech President Vaclav Havel commends solidarity of ASEAN Parliamentarian towards their Burmese colleagues**
- ❖ **6 December, 2004: Philippines Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. urges the Philippine government to block Burma's chairmanship of ASEAN in 2006.**
- ❖ **10 December, 2004: EU condemns the extension of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's house arrest and welcomes the formulation of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Caucus on Burma**
- ❖ **13 January 2005: Philippines Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago, Chairman of the Senate's foreign relations committee, urges her government to oppose Burma's chairmanship of ASEAN in 2006**

1 December, 2004: The ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Caucus on Myanmar condemns the extension of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's house arrest

On the sidelines of the ASEAN Summit in Vientiane Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong expressed his concerns to the junta's Prime Minister Soe Win, and urged Burma to speed-up its democratization process.ⁱ

ASEAN Parliamentarians have been at the forefront of the criticism against the regime, as well as ASEAN's position on the issue of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's prolonged detention. On 1 December ASEAN Parliamentary Caucus on Myanmar interim president Zaid Ibrahim said the Nobel Laureate's continued detention was "cruel and totally unjustified", and said ASEAN had been "too soft for too long" on Burma. "Unless there is pressure from the international community and in particular ASEAN, she is doomed to be detained for a long time," the Malaysian Parliamentarian added.ⁱⁱ

5 December, 2004: Former Czech President Vaclav Havel commends solidarity of ASEAN Parliamentarian towards their Burmese colleagues

A long-time supporter of Burma's democracy movement, Vaclav Havel praised ASEAN parliamentarians for the formulation of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Caucus on Myanmar during an interview with the Bangkok Post. When speaking on ways the international community could contribute to the democratic process, he said: "The Asian neighbours should have the biggest influence on Burma, while the United States and European Union are more limited in this respect. I was extremely happy and upbeat when Asean Parliamentarians of all political parties met recently in Kuala Lumpur and expressed solidarity with their colleagues in Burma."ⁱⁱⁱ

6 December, 2004: Philippines Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. urges the Philippine government to block Burma's chairmanship of ASEAN in 2006.

On returning from the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Caucus in November 2004, Senator Pimentel issued a statement in response to the SPDC's continued detention of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The statement called for the "government, as well as the other members of ASEAN, to pressure Burma's military junta to free Nobel Laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other opposition political leaders from detention, as well as to institute democratic reforms in that country."^{iv}

10 December, 2004: EU condemns the extension of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's house arrest and welcomes the formulation of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Caucus on Burma

The Presidency of the European Union releases a declaration condemning the continued detention of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners. As part of the declaration, the EU reiterates its earlier position, which called for the SPDC to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners and to allow open political participation in the National Convention before Burma-EU relations would improve. The EU welcomes the findings of the ASEAN Parliamentarians on Burma/Myanmar in Kuala Lumpur on 28 November 2004 and encourages the governments and Parliamentarians in the ASEAN countries to keep monitoring the situation in Burma and to continue to work with the regime to promote democracy.^v

13 January 2005: Philippines Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago, Chairman of the Senate's foreign relations committee, urges her government to oppose Burma's chairmanship of ASEAN in 2006

Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago, chairman of the Senate's foreign relations committee, said Myanmar must first improve its human rights record before being allowed to chair ASEAN. "We must insist that Myanmar first stop its human rights violations," she said. "The Philippines should take steps to impress on the government of Myanmar to stop the oppression of human rights." She said the first step for the SPDC would be to release

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners from jail. She said ASEAN's policy of non-intervention was not a barrier to action, as "human rights laws have ammended that principle." "We now have the right, not only to speak against the error of one government, but also to take collective action," she said.^{vi}

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ⁱ Channel News Asia, *Singapore Urges Myanmar To Push Forward On Democracy Roadmap*, 29 Nov 2004

ⁱⁱ AFP, *ASEAN lawmakers condemn extension of Suu Kyi's house arrest*, 1 Dec 2004

ⁱⁱⁱ Bangkok Post, *Ties of Friendship*, 5 Dec 2004

^{iv} Philippine Daily Inquirer, *Block Burma's Leadership of ASEAN, urges Pimentel*, 6 Dec 2004

^v Council of the European Union, *Declaration by the Presidency on Behalf of the European Union on the extension of detention of Aung San Suu Kyi*, 10 Dec 2004

^{vi} Deutsche Presse-Agentur, *Legislator urges Philippines to oppose Myanmar's ASEAN chairmanship*, 18 Jan 2005