

Doc. 11378
17 September 2007

The situation of Aung San Suu Kyi

Motion for a resolution
presented by Mrs Ojuland and others

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only the members who have signed it

Democracy and human rights are the Council of Europe's key values. It has a duty to promote them wherever they are flouted. Today, the Council of Europe must confirm its attachment to democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Burma by deciding to look into the situation of Aung San Suu Kyi.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) decides to investigate the current circumstances of the Nobel Peace Prize winner, Aung San Suu Kyi.

As a symbol of Burmese opposition to the military dictatorship, an advocate of non-violent action and the Secretary General of the National League for Democracy (NLD), Aung San Suu Kyi is currently one of the most famous political prisoners in the world.

She has been either in prison or under house arrest since 1989 and was awarded the Sakharov Prize and the Rafto Prize in 1990, the Olof Palme Prize in 2005 and the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991 for her political work in Burma.

After her party won the 1990 general elections and she was preparing to take over as prime minister, the military junta cancelled the election results. Since then, she has become the main opponent of the Burmese government.

Aung San Suu Kyi has suffered considerable physical and psychological duress. She has been hospitalised on several occasions as a result of insanitary conditions of detention and she and her supporters have been attacked by paramilitary groups linked with the authorities during their rare moments of freedom.

She was granted limited freedom between 1995 and 2000, but in 1997 she was prevented from seeing her husband, who was refused an entry visa although he had cancer (from which he died in 1999). She herself has refused to leave Burma for fear of not being allowed to return and so remains separated from her children, who live in the United Kingdom.

Aung San Suu Kyi is almost completely cut off from the outside world. Apart from the fact that her telephone line has been cut and her mail is filtered, she has had practically no contact with leading international officials. The only exception is Ibrahim Gambari, the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, who was able to talk to her in November 2006, two years after the United Nations' special envoy, Razali Ismail, was refused entry to Burma.

At the age of 62, Aung San Suu Kyi has been under house arrest for eleven years. Every day, she becomes a little weaker and more isolated. On 14 May 2007, a letter signed by 57 world leaders including the former United States Presidents, Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, the former Czech President, Vaclav Havel, and the former President of the European Commission, Jacques Delors, called on the Burmese government to release her. On 15 September 2007, the United Nations Security Council decided to place Burma on its discussion agenda.

The Council of Europe and its Parliamentary Assembly cannot be unmoved by the situation of Aung San Suu Kyi and must be involved in the fight to gain her release.

The Assembly has a duty therefore to look into the matter in detail and work for Aung San Suu Kyi to be set free.

*Signed*¹:

OJULAND Kristiina, Estonia, ALDE
AZZOLINI Claudio, Italy, EPP/CD
BERCEANU Radu Mircea, Romania, EPP/CD
BJARNADÓTTIR Guðfinna S., Iceland, EDG
Van den BRANDE Luc, Belgium, EPP/CD
ČURDOVÁ Anna, Czech Republic, SOC
FOSS Per-Kristian, Norway, EPP/CD
HAJIYEVA Gultakin, Azerbaijan, EPP/CD
HÖRSTER Joachim, Germany, EPP/CD
HURSKAINEN Sinikka, Finland, SOC
LINDBLAD Göran, Sweden, EPP/CD
LUNDGREN Kerstin, Sweden, ALDE
MERCAN Murat, Turkey, EPP/CD
NĚMCOVÁ Miroslava, Czech Republic, EDG
de PUIG Lluís Maria, Spain, SOC
TEKELİOĞLU Mehmet, Turkey, EPP/CD
TOMLINSON, United Kingdom, SOC

¹ SOC: Socialist Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democratic Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: not registered in a group