

FIDH-Altsean Burma oral intervention at adoption of WG Report on UPR of Burma

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FIDH and the Alternative ASEAN Network on Burma, share the concerns raised by a large number of States during the Universal Periodic Review of Burma, on a wide range of gross human rights abuses that had taken place and continue to take place in the country.

We strongly disagree with the assertions made by the State delegation and a number of States that sanctions are responsible for the extreme poverty affecting the population; these assertions gloss over the fact that it is the military junta's gross mismanagement of the economy, endemic corruption, lack of an independent judiciary, and misuse of revenue from sales of natural resources that are directly responsible for the suffering of the people.

We deeply regret that a number of States intentionally ignored the undemocratic provisions within the 2008 Constitution as well as the un-free, unfair and non-inclusive manner in which the November 2010 general elections were conducted, which merely perpetuated military dominance in government. As did many states during the UPR, we once again call on the government to enter into an inclusive dialogue with all key stakeholders and initiate a comprehensive review of the Constitution

There are currently over 2,000 political prisoners in Burma, jailed for merely exercising their right to freedoms of expression, association and assembly. We support the recommendation repeatedly made to the Government to immediately and unconditionally release all political prisoners and fully restore their civil and political rights.

Ethnic nationalities continue to be subjected to armed attacks by the State military against their communities, resulting in large-scale forced displacement internally and externally, and some ethnic minorities, especially the Rohingyas, are victims of widespread state discrimination. Therefore, we welcome the many recommendations made to the Government to end all forms of discriminations and remove all restrictions imposed on people belonging to ethnic minority groups.

Impunity continues for serious crimes perpetrated by State actors such as attacks on civilians, forced labour, rape, internal displacement, extrajudicial executions, and enforced disappearance, some of which could amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. In the total absence of any genuine domestic redress and accountability mechanisms, we strongly support the recommendations to establish a UN Commission of Inquiry to investigate these crimes and for Burma to immediately cease all violations of international human rights and humanitarian law by the security forces.

