

05
Myanmar

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510



March 11, 2008

The Honorable Ibrahim Gambari
United Nations Special Envoy for Myanmar
United Nations
First Avenue at 46th Street
New York, New York 10017

Dear Mr. Gambari:

On March 8, 2008, millions of people from around the world gathered to honor and pay tribute to the lives and accomplishments of women and girls on International Women's Day.

As you continue your efforts to push Burma's ruling State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) for a credible and inclusive dialogue on national reconciliation and restoration of democracy, we encourage you to mark International Women's Day by highlighting the plight of women and girls in Burma.

We urge you to call for:

- The immediate and unconditional release of Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners, including the more than 130 women who were arrested during the Saffron Revolution;
- Greater participation by women in Burma's political process;
- The elimination of rape as an instrument of war and human trafficking and the arrest and prosecution of those who have condoned and committed such acts;
- Full access for the Red Cross to all Burmese prisons; and
- The removal of restrictions on international organizations who conduct health and other humanitarian assistance programs.

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As members of the United States Women's Caucus on Burma, we are saddened that our friend and sister, Aung San Suu Kyi, will spend the day under house arrest – and that the women of Burma will continue to face a sustained campaign of oppression and violence at the hands of the SPDC.

Indeed, the military junta's record of abuse against women and girls is extensive and deeply troubling:

- Aung San Suu Kyi, Nobel Peace Prize laureate and leader of the National League for Democracy, has spent most of the past 18 years in prison or under house arrest. In 2003, she survived an assassination attempt by pro-government thugs.
- More than 130 women were arrested by the regime during last fall's Saffron Revolution. The International Committee of the Red Cross continues to be barred from visiting these women and other political prisoners.
- Rape is commonly used as an instrument of war by the Burmese military;
- Human trafficking of women and girls is rampant;
- Severe restrictions on international humanitarian organizations have prevented them from providing much needed assistance, particularly to women and girls. Burmese women suffer from a maternal mortality rate of 230 per 100,000.

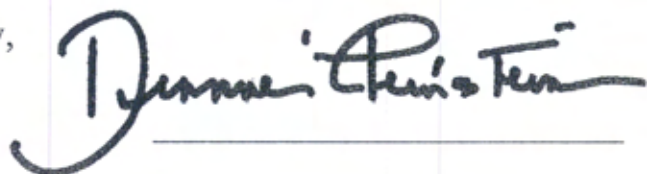
We must not remain silent in the face of such dire crimes and violent behavior. The people of Burma have suffered long enough.

We once again express our solidarity with Aung San Suu Kyi and the women and girls of Burma. We look forward to a future International Women's Day when we can join them in celebrating their new found freedom and equality.

We appreciate your attention to this request and we look forward to hearing from you.



Sincerely,



Hillary Rodham Clinton

Patty Murray

Olympia Snowe

Coincidentally McCasill

Blanche L. Lincoln

Maria Cantwell

Elizabeth Dole

Robert W. Mikulski

Amy Klobuchar

Debbie Stabenow

Barbara Boxer

Susan M. Collins

Mary G. Hahn

Joe Manchin

Cc: The Honorable Ban Ki-moon
Secretary-General of the United Nations

Cc: The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States

Cc: The Honorable Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State of the United States

