

Since the last ASEAN Summit concluded on 1 March, the political, social, and economic crises attributable to the SPDC have worsened while other critical existing issues from the last Summit remained unresolved. Meanwhile, Burma's democracy movement proposed clear and reasonable solutions for the country that also meet the interests of Burma's neighbors.

DEMOCRACY

2010 elections: Democracy movement promotes solutions

As the SPDC's 2010 elections draw near, pro-democracy forces and ethnic groups inside and outside Burma not only voiced their opposition to the SPDC's planned 2010 elections but also laid out alternative solutions to Burma's political crisis.

- **29 April:** Following its first general meeting in more than a decade, the National League for Democracy (NLD) issued the "[Shwegondaing Declaration](#)", which outlined the party's conditions for participating in the 2010 polls. The NLD said it would take part in the elections only if the SPDC released all political prisoners, reviewed the Constitution, and held "inclusive free and fair" elections "under international supervision."¹
- **13 August:** the Burmese exiled pro-democracy coalition Movement for Democracy and Rights for Ethnic Nationalities (MDREN)² released their "[Proposal for National Reconciliation](#)" following a two-day meeting in Jakarta.³ The "Proposal for National Reconciliation" called for the unconditional and immediate release of all political prisoners including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, a declaration of a nationwide ceasefire, a review of the SPDC's 2008 constitution, and a new or reformed electoral law ahead of the 2010 elections.⁴

Elections fuel instability

In late April, the SPDC presented an ultimatum to the various ethnic ceasefire groups to incorporate their armed forces into a new Border Guard Force (BGF) prior to the 2010 elections.⁵ The plan is designed to implement Article 338 of the SPDC's 2008 constitution which requires that "all the armed forces in the Union shall be under the command of the Defense Services."⁶ The plan would essentially absorb the ethnic armies into the SPDC Army.⁷

Groups that oppose the 2010 elections
Committee Representing the People's Parliament (CRPP)
Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC)
Forum for Democracy in Burma (FDB)
Kachin Independence Organization (KIO)
Kachin National Organization (KNO)
Mon National Democratic Front (MNDF)
National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB)
National Council of the Union of Burma (NCUB)
Nationalities Youth Forum (NYF)
New Mon State Party (NMSP)
Palaung State Liberation Front (PSLF)
Palaung Women's Organization (PWO)
Shan State Army – South (SSA-S)
Student and Youth Congress of Burma (SYCB)
Ta'ang Student and Youth Organization (TSYO)
United Nationalities Alliance (UNA)
Women's League of Burma (WLB)

¹ NLD (29 Apr 09) Shwegondaing declaration; AP (29 Apr 09) Myanmar party sets terms for taking part in polls

² MDREN comprises the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma, the National Council of the Union of Burma, the Ethnic Nationalities Council, the Women's League of Burma, the Forum for Democracy in Burma, the Students and Youth Congress of Burma, and the Nationalities Youth Forum.

³ VOA (13 Aug 09) Exiled Dissidents Propose Democratic Transition for Burma

⁴ Movement for Democracy and Rights for Ethnic Nationalities (13 Aug 09) Proposal for National Reconciliation. http://www.mdren.org/resources/Proposal_for_National_Reconciliation.pdf

⁵ Mizzima News (28 Apr 09) Junta meets leaders of ethnic ceasefire groups; Irrawaddy (28 Apr 09) Junta Commanders Court Ceasefire Groups; Kachin News Group (04 May 09) KIA told to change to border force by junta; DVB (04 May 09) Intelligence chief meets with ceasefire groups; SHAN (04 May 09) Junta tells Wa ceasefire days are over

⁶ Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (2008), Chapter VII - Defence Services - Article 338

⁷ Irrawaddy (04 May 09) Armed Ceasefire Groups to be 'Border Guard Force';

Many ethnic ceasefire groups have rejected the SPDC's ultimatum. In response, the SPDC increased its military presence in Kachin, Shan, and Karen States.⁸ As a result, both the Kachin Independence Organizations and the United Wa State Army prepared for possible hostilities with the SPDC Army.⁹ During the SPDC offensive against the Myanmar National Democracy Alliance Army (MNDAA) in the Kokang Self-Administered Zone of Northern Shan State in August, about 37,000 ethnic Chinese from the Kokang territory fled into China.¹⁰

Name of ceasefire group	Response to BGF order	No. of soldiers	Notes
Kayan New Land Party (KNLP)	Rejected	N/A	
New Mon State Party (NMSP) ¹¹	Rejected	700	Warned other ceasefire groups against becoming BGF. ¹²
Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) [aka Kokang] ¹³	Rejected	600 - 1,000	MNDAA leadership fled Kokang region in late August after the SPDC offensive and is now hiding in Wa territory.
United Wa State Army (UWSA) ¹⁴	Rejected	20,000 – 25,000	Rejection of BGF has led to SPDC crackdown on Wa drug trade. ¹⁵
Shan State Army (SSA) "North" ¹⁶	Rejected	1,400	
National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA) [aka Mongla] ¹⁷	Rejected	1,200 - 5,000	Along with the Wa, are seen as potential next targets for the SPDC. ¹⁸
Kachin Independence Army ¹⁹	Rejected	4,000 - 5,000	It's proposal to create independent Border guard force roundly rejected by SPDC. ²⁰
Pa-O National Organization ²¹	Accepted	800	
Kayan National Guard (KNG)	Accepted	N/A	
Karenni Nationalities People's Liberation Front (KNPLF)	Accepted	N/A	
Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) ²²	Accepted	6,000	Has gone a recruiting drive, to expand from 6,000 to 9,000 troops. ²³ Recruitment has included the recruitment of child soldiers. ²⁴
Kachin Defense Army (KDA) ²⁵	Accepted	400 - 800	
New Democratic Army Kachin (NDAK)	Accepted	N/A	
Lasang Awng Wa Peace Group in Kachin State	Accepted	N/A	

⁸ Kachin News Group (11 Aug 09) Four ethnic ceasefire groups to take on junta in event of war; Mizzima News (14 Aug 09) KIO trains administrative staff; Irrawaddy (25 Aug 09) Tension Mounts between Junta and Kokang Ceasefire Group; SHAN (24 Aug 09) Tension sparks people to flee into China; SHAN (14 Aug 09) Junta's ploy is to push Kokang to shoot first; Irrawaddy (10 Aug 09) Kokang Thwart Burma Army Drug Raid; Irrawaddy (13 Aug 09) Tension Mounts at Three Pagodas Pas; Irrawaddy (31 Aug 09) Junta Sends Major Reinforcements to Shan State

⁹ SHAN (02 Jun 09) Tension grows between southern Wa, junta

¹⁰ The Straits Times (02 Sep 09) Border intrigue, or was it?

¹¹ Irrawaddy (8 Sep 09) New Mon Party Forming for Election; Irrawaddy (Mar-Apr 09) To Fight or Not to Fight

¹² DVB (03 Sep 09) Mon party warn on border guard pressure

¹³ The Jamestown Foundation (10 Sep 09) Emerging Fault Lines in Sino-Burmese Relations: The Kokang Incident; Irrawaddy (Mar-Apr 09) To Fight or Not to Fight

¹⁴ Washington Post (29 Aug 09) China Urges Burma to Bridle Ethnic Militia Uprising at Border

¹⁵ SHAN (29 Sep 09) Boom days over for Wa

¹⁶ Irrawaddy (Mar-Apr 09) To Fight or Not to Fight

¹⁷ Irrawaddy (Mar-Apr 09) To Fight or Not to Fight; Mizzima News (09 Sep 09) Feuding militias come in the way of junta's plans

¹⁸ Washington Post (25 Sep 09) Burma's Junta Intensifies Bid For Unification Bringing Autonomous Ethnic Enclaves Back Into Fold Poses Major Challenges; SHAN (30 Sep 09) Wa and Mongla deny deal with junta

¹⁹ NYT (10 May 09) Ethnic Groups in Myanmar Hope for Peace, but Gird for Fight; Irrawaddy (8 Sep 09) Kachin's Hard and Soft Strategy; Irrawaddy (Mar-Apr 09) To Fight or Not to Fight

²⁰ Kachin News Group (08 Sep 09) KIO delegates arrive in Myitkyina for meeting with junta; Kachin News Group (10 Sep 09) Contentious KIO-junta meeting continues for second day

²¹ Irrawaddy (Mar-Apr 09) To Fight or Not to Fight

²² Irrawaddy (18 Jun 09) DKBA: Burma's Second Largest Non-state Armed Group?

²³ DVB (02 Sep 09) DKBA expands troops in eastern Burma

²⁴ IMNA (24 July 09) DKBA ramps up civilian abuses and set sights on Brigade 6; RFA (14 Sep 09) Conflict Children in Forced Labor

²⁵ Kachin News Group (14 Sep 09) Former KIA brigade warned not to help KIA in event of war on September 9; Irrawaddy (Mar-Apr 09) To Fight or Not to Fight

Most of the ethnic ceasefire groups have refused to comply with the SPDC's BGF order because the provisions of the 2008 Constitution do not secure the human rights of ethnic communities. According to the 2008 Constitution, the President appoints the Chief State Ministers as well as the Minister of Border Affairs from a list provided by the Military Commander in Chief, which violates federal principles and cedes de facto control of the ethnic nationality areas to the military.²⁶

HUMAN RIGHTS

Imprisonment on the rise

Arrest and imprisonment of pro-democracy activists has continued since the last ASEAN Summit. The ongoing jailing of pro-democracy activists is part of the SPDC's ploy to ensure that the most viable pro-democracy candidates, including ethnic nationality leaders, will be unable to run in the elections. The SPDC-drafted constitution prohibits individuals who are serving prison sentences for any offense from standing for election to Parliament.²⁷

- **Over the past six months:** The regime has arrested 196 dissidents, including 108 NLD members. The regime also sentenced 51 activists to lengthy prison terms.
- **11 August 2009:** Following an 86-day sham trial, the regime sentenced Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to three years in prison with hard labor for allegedly violating the conditions of her house arrest. SPDC Chairman Sr Gen Than Shwe commuted the sentence to 18 months to be served under house arrest.²⁸
- **4 September:** According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), the number of political prisoners in Burma reached a record-high of 2,211.²⁹ AAPP also said that at least 137 political prisoners were in poor health due to harsh prison conditions and the denial of adequate medical care.³⁰
- **17 September:** The SPDC announced the release of 7,114 prisoners from jails across Burma "for their good conduct and discipline."³¹ However, most of those released were common criminals. The SPDC released only 128 political prisoners.³²

Spotlight on SPDC's abuses

International monitoring bodies and rights groups continued to highlight the SPDC's ongoing and systematic human rights abuses.

- **12 March:** Reporters sans Frontiers (RSF) named Burma among the 12 countries that enforce heavy internet censorship.³³

²⁶ Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Article 232

²⁷ Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Articles 121

²⁸ NLM (12 Aug 09) Judgments pronounced for Criminal Regular Trials against US Citizen Mr John William Yettaw, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Daw Khin Khin Win and Ma Win Ma Ma; NLM (12 Aug 09) Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council issues directive dated 10 August 2009 for Ministry of Home Affairs stating upon Court pronouncing sentence to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, sentence to be served by her under Criminal Procedure Code be amended to be remitted and suspended if she displays good conduct and pardon be granted accordingly; AFP (11 Aug 09) Myanmar's Suu Kyi gets 18 months under house arrest; AFP (11 Aug 09) Myanmar's Suu Kyi gets 18 months house arrest: official; BBC (11 Aug 09) Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi 'guilty'; Reuters (11 Aug 09) Myanmar's Suu Kyi found guilty in security case; WSJ (11 Aug 09) Suu Kyi Sentenced to 18 Months House Arrest; Bloomberg (11 Aug 09) Suu Kyi House Arrest in Myanmar Extended by 18 Months; Bangkok Post (11 Aug 09) Junta returns Suu Kyi to house arrest; Irrawaddy (11 Aug 09) Suu Kyi Sentenced to 18 Months House Arrest; IANS (11 Aug 09) Myanmar junta chief commutes Aung San Suu Kyi's sentence

²⁹ Mizzima News (04 Sep 09) Political prisoners on the rise in Burma: AAPP; Mizzima News (04 Sep 09) Former air force officer sentenced to two years

³⁰ Mizzima News (04 Sep 09) Political prisoners on the rise in Burma: AAPP

³¹ NLM (18 Sep 09) 7,114 prisoners granted amnesty; AP (17 Sep 09) Myanmar announces amnesty for 7,114 prisoners; Reuters (17 Sep 09) Myanmar frees thousands; Xinhua (17 Sep 09) Myanmar gov't grants amnesty to over 7,000 prisoners; DVB (17 Sep 09) Burma releases 7000 prisoners; Mizzima News (17 Sep 09) Burma announces amnesty for 7114 prisoners; Mizzima News (17 Sep 09) Junta releases prisoners amidst condemnation by HRW

³² AAPP (22 Sep 09) At least 128 political prisoners released

³³ RSF (12 Mar 09) Internet Enemies - Burma

- **27 March:** The UN Human Rights Council (HRC) passed a resolution that condemned the SPDC for the “ongoing systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms” of the Burmese people.³⁴ It was the 19th resolution passed by the Geneva-based body against Burma’s military regime since 1992.
- **30 April:** The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) identified Burma as the worst place in the world to be a blogger due to the SPDC’s extensive restrictions on blogging and other internet activity.³⁵
- **11 May:** In its annual global survey on media freedom, Freedom House ranked Burma second to last among the 195 countries surveyed.³⁶ The US-based media watchdog has ranked Burma’s press as “not free” for the past 27 years.
- **6 June:** An International Labor Organization (ILO) Committee of Experts ruled that the practice of forced labor continues to prevail throughout the country.

Monks and nuns persecuted: jailed, not allowed to travel, not allowed to pray

The regime also stepped up arrest, harassment, and surveillance of Buddhist monks across Burma.³⁷ According to Human Rights Watch, 237 monks and 35 nuns remain detained across Burma’s prisons and at least seven of the detained monks are in poor health as a result of their ongoing detention.³⁸

- **Mid-June:** The SPDC Ministry of Religious Affairs stopped issuing letters of recommendation to monks. This measure effectively prevents monk from applying for visas to travel abroad.³⁹
- **19 June:** SPDC authorities prevented monks from the Rangoon’s Maha Si monastery from participating in religious ceremonies for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s birthday. SPDC authorities also harassed four monks who attended the celebrations of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s birthday.⁴⁰
- **Late July:** The regime collected personal information and photographs of monks from monasteries nationwide.⁴¹
- **Mid August:** Police in Myitkyina, Kachin State, escorted local monks during their morning alms procession.⁴²
- **5 August:** SPDC authorities in Yenanchaung, Magwe Division, barred monks at the Myat Saw Nyi Naung pagoda from reciting sutras during a full moon religious ceremony.⁴³
- **11 August:** Plain clothes policemen in Rangoon’s Bahan Township arrested and forcibly disrobed 36-year-old monk U Sanda Dika.⁴⁴
- **27 August:** SPDC authorities arrested an assistant chief monk from Shwe Zaydi Parli University monastery in Yenanchaung Township, Magwe Division.⁴⁵
- **28 August:** SPDC authorities arrested a young monk from Mandalay monastery in Pakokku, Magwe Division.⁴⁶
- **29 August:** SPDC authorities in Chauk Township, Magwe Division, arrested U Thumana, a monk from Pakokku.⁴⁷

³⁴ Reuters (27 Mar 09) U.N. rights body condemns systematic abuses in Myanmar; HRC, 10th session, Situation of human rights in Myanmar, 20 March 2009, UN Doc A/HRC/10/L.28

³⁵ CPJ (30 Apr 09) 10 Worst Countries to be a Blogger; Irrawaddy (30 Apr 09) Irrawaddy: Burma named worst online oppressor; Mizzima News (30 Apr 09) Burma worst internet oppressor: CPJ

³⁶ Freedom House (01 May 09) Freedom of the Press 2009

³⁷ IMNA (18 Aug 09) Monks searched as they travel through Mon state; Mizzima News (20 Aug 09) Junta alert about possible monk-led protests; Narinjara News (21 Aug 09) Sittwe Security Beefed up with Riot Police

³⁸ DVB (22 Sep 09) Rights group highlights persecution of Burma monks

³⁹ Irrawaddy (15 Jun 09) Junta Bars Monks from Traveling Abroad

⁴⁰ Irrawaddy (19 Jun 09) Suu Kyi’s 64th Birthday Celebrated amid Repression

⁴¹ Irrawaddy (05 Aug 09) Monks Question Gov’t Use of Personal Photographs; Irrawaddy (15 Aug 09) Are Monks Preparing to Return to the Streets?

⁴² Kachin News Group (17 Aug 09) Police escorts for monks accepting offerings

⁴³ Irrawaddy (06 Aug 09) Burmese Authorities Ban Chanting of Metta Sutta

⁴⁴ Mizzima News (04 Sep 09) Political prisoners on the rise in Burma: AAPP

⁴⁵ Mizzima News (01 Sep 09) Monks under close surveillance

⁴⁶ Mizzima News (01 Sep 09) Monks under close surveillance

- **29 August:** Special Branch police arrested abbot U Gaw Thita, as he landed at Rangoon International airport from Taiwan.⁴⁸
- **30 August:** SPDC authorities in Chauk Township, Magwe Division, raided the room of the head monk U Yaywada of Ngwe Taung monastery.⁴⁹
- **9 September:** police in Akyab briefly detained for questioning several monks who went to local pagodas to honor the 70th anniversary of the death of revered Rakhine monk U Ottama.⁵⁰

MILITARY AFFAIRS

The junta also continued military offensives in Eastern Burma as part of an intimidation campaign to ensure the ethnic nationalities' compliance with the SPDC's election plan.

- **Early June:** Joint forces from the SPDC Army and the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) launched a new offensive against Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) bases along the Thai-Burma border in Southern Karen State.⁵¹ On 18 June, SPDC Army forces captured three KNLA positions.⁵²
- **Late July:** The SPDC Army launched a military offensive against civilian populations in Shan State. The SPDC Army burned more than 500 homes and forced an estimated 10,000 people in Central Shan State out of their villages.⁵³
- **Late August:** SPDC offensive against the Myanmar National Democracy Alliance Army (MNDAA) in the Kokang region in Northern Shan State led to the break down of a 20-year ceasefire agreement and the resumption of hostilities between the Kokang and the SPDC Army.⁵⁴

DISPLACEMENT

Refugees and IDPs

SPDC military offensives in Eastern Burma led to a recent spike in refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). An estimated 43,800 have fled to neighboring countries from Karen and Shan States since June. In addition, the SPDC Army has internally displaced an estimated 10,000 people and burned more than 500 homes in Central Shan State.⁵⁵ Military observers and analysts predict that if war break out between the SPDC troops and the UWSA, an estimated 50,000 Shan and Wa refugees would flee to neighboring Thailand, and even more into China.⁵⁶

- **Early June:** SPDC Army and DKBA forces launched a joint operation in Hpa-an District, Karen State.⁵⁷ While hundreds remained trapped by the fighting, an estimated 6,800 Karen fled into Thailand.⁵⁸ Karen refugees reported that many fled fearing forced recruitment into the DKBA or forced labor to porter military supplies for the SPDC Army.⁵⁹

⁴⁷ DVB (03 Sep 09) Monks intimidated close to 2007 anniversary

⁴⁸ Mizzima News (08 Sep 09) Abbot returning from Taiwan arrested

⁴⁹ Mizzima News (01 Sep 09) Monks under close surveillance

⁵⁰ Narinjara News (10 Sep 09) Ottama Day Celebrated in Sittwe

⁵¹ Irrawaddy (06 Jun 09) Attacks on KNLA Continue

⁵² Reuters (18 Jun 09) Myanmar troops threaten Karen rebel bases

⁵³ Irrawaddy (13 Aug 09) 10,000 Villagers Forcibly Relocated in Shan State: Rights Groups; DVB (13 Aug 09) 500 Shan houses burned in scorched earth campaign

⁵⁴ SHAN (27 Aug 09) Rebels say junta shell kills Chinese soldiers

⁵⁵ Irrawaddy (13 Aug 09) 10,000 Villagers Forcibly Relocated in Shan State: Rights Groups; DVB (13 Aug 09) 500 Shan houses burned in scorched earth campaign

⁵⁶ Mizzima News (10 Sep 09) Civil war imminent in Burma: Observers

⁵⁷ Mizzima News (08 Jun 09) Thousands flee latest military offensive in Karen State; Irrawaddy (06 Jun 09) Attacks on KNLA Continue; Mizzima News (05 Jun 09) Karen villagers flee to escape battlefield; Mizzima News (09 Jun 09) Fresh clashes force many Karen to flee; Mizzima News (09 Jun 09) Fresh clashes force many Karen to flee; Irrawaddy (11 Jun 09) Joint Forces Concentrate on Mortar Attacks against KNU

⁵⁸ BBC (08 Jun 09) Burma's Karen flee army offensive; AP (07 Jun 09) Aid groups: 3,000 villagers flee Myanmar shelling; AP (07 Jun 09) Aid group says 4,000 refugees flee to Thailand from Myanmar; DVB (10 Jun 09) UN staff

- **Late July:** The SPDC Army launched a military offensive against civilian populations in Shan State. The SPDC Army forced an estimated 10,000 people in Central Shan State out of their villages.⁶⁰ It was the single largest forced displacement in Shan State since 1998, when the SPDC Army uprooted over 300,000 people.⁶¹
- **Late August:** SPDC baiting and aggression led to the break down of a 20-year ceasefire agreement and the resumption of hostilities between the Kokang and the SPDC Army.⁶² The regime attacks pushed nearly 37,000 refugees into China.⁶³

Rohingya: new name, same problem

ASEAN leaders acted on their promise to solve the plight of the Rohingya boat people during the 14th ASEAN Summit by deciding to simply re-name them “illegal migrants from the Indian Ocean.” ASEAN leaders deferred the Rohingya issue to the non-binding regional forum on illegal human trafficking, commonly referred to as the “Bali Process.”⁶⁴ The Bali Process failed to find any meaningful solutions.

- **1 March:** Singapore PM Lee Hsien Loong warned that ASEAN must seriously address the issue of stateless Rohingya refugees fleeing Burma or risk losing credibility.⁶⁵
- **14 April:** A two-day meeting of the “Bali Process” regional forum began in Indonesia. During the meeting, SPDC Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig Gen Khin Yi denied that Rohingya were from Burma or that they faced persecution in Burma.⁶⁶ The delegates at the meeting ultimately decided to form a team to establish whether Rohingya are economic migrants or refugees.⁶⁷
- **17 August:** Thai officials confirmed that two Rohingya teenagers died in a detention facility in Ranong while the health of 13 others was also at risk.⁶⁸

Meanwhile, the root causes pushing Rohingya out of Burma have not subsided. Rohingya are still at risk in Burma and more of them are likely to leave during the upcoming season when monsoon winds subside. Rohingya continued to suffer persecution at the hands of the military regime:

- **12 March:** Na Sa Ka forces prevented Rohingya farmers from selling seasonal farm produce in local markets in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State.⁶⁹
- **27 March:** The UN Human Rights Council’s resolution on Burma urged the SPDC to recognize the rights of Rohingya and to end the “unacceptable discrimination, human rights abuse and severe economic deprivation they face.”⁷⁰
- **7 April:** Na Sa Ka in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, detained a 30-year-old Rohingya religious leader on charges of theft.⁷¹

sent to assess Karen refugees; BBC (11 Jun 09) Burma’s Karen unable to return home; Irrawaddy (13 Jun 09) Burmese and DKBA Troops Block Civilians Fleeing Conflict

⁵⁹ Reuters (08 Jun 09) Nearly 1,800 Karen flee Myanmar fighting – Thailand; Irrawaddy (08 Jun 09) Clashes Force More Karens to Thailand; Free Burma Rangers (08 Jun 09) Thousands of Refugees Flee Ler Per Her Camp as Burma Army Attack Begins; DVB (10 Jun 09) UN staff sent to assess Karen refugees; IMNA (24 July 09) DKBA ramps up civilian abuses and set sights on Brigade 6; Irrawaddy (21 Aug 09) 30 More Karens Flee Hlinebwe; DVB (06 Aug 09) More Karen refugees flee to Thailand

⁶⁰ Irrawaddy (13 Aug 09) 10,000 Villagers Forcibly Relocated in Shan State: Rights Groups; DVB (13 Aug 09) 500 Shan houses burned in scorched earth campaign

⁶¹ DVB (13 Aug 09) 500 Shan houses burned in scorched earth campaign

⁶² SHAN (27 Aug 09) Rebels say junta shell kills Chinese soldiers

⁶³ Xinhua (31 Aug 09) China resolves issue with Sino-Myanmar border inhabitants; AP (30 Aug 09) Myanmar says 26 forces, 8 rebels killed at border; VOA (29 Aug 09) Fresh Fighting Erupts in Burma; SHAN (27 Aug 09) Rebels say junta shell kills Chinese soldiers

⁶⁴ IRIN (02 Mar 09) ASIA: Regional approach to Rohingya boat people

⁶⁵ Straits Times (02 Mar 09) Asean must address Rohingya

⁶⁶ Irrawaddy (16 Apr 09) Rohingya Issue Remains Unresolved

⁶⁷ Jakarta Post (15 Apr 09) RI expects Myanmar to speak up on Rohingya issue at Bali meeting

⁶⁸ Nation (18 Aug 09) Two migrants dead, 13 more “failing”

⁶⁹ Kaladan News (12 Mar 09) Authorities stop farmers from selling produce in local areas

⁷⁰ HRC, 10th session, Situation of human rights in Myanmar, 20 March 2009, UN Doc A/HRC/10/L.28

⁷¹ Kaladan News (11 Apr 09) Nasaka arrests religious leader

- **12 April:** A teenage Rohingya girl died of starvation at Teknaf after crossing the Burma-Bangladesh border. The victim fled Arakan State into Bangladesh on 10 April, after facing days of starvation in her native village in Maungdaw Township.⁷²
- **23 April:** Na Sa Ka personnel in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, detained about 200 Rohingya from Balukhali Village. Local Rohingya had clashed with SPDC Army personnel on 22 April, after soldiers had stolen fish from villagers.⁷³
- **23 September:** Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) went on red alert after pushing back five Rohingya families to Burma. The families fled to Bangladesh border after Na Sa Ka forcibly evicted them from their homes in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State.⁷⁴

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

ASEAN-SPDC relations

ASEAN leaders continue to deal with fact that the presence of the SPDC in the group stigmatizes the organization and hamstring ASEAN's effectiveness in international fora. Since the last ASEAN summit, Rohingya, SPDC human rights abuses, the SPDC's planned 2010 elections, and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's detention, trial, and convictions were focal points in ASEAN's deliberations.

- **1 March:** The 14th ASEAN summit concluded. Thai PM Abhisit Vejjajiva said that ASEAN heads of state called on the SPDC to release of political prisoners and to have an "all-inclusive process" when the SPDC holds elections in 2010.⁷⁵
- **16 March:** Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono urged the SPDC to prove to the world that its road map to democracy could work by holding "fair" and "inclusive" general elections in 2010.⁷⁶
- **17 March:** Singapore PM Lee Hsien Loong told SPDC PM Gen Thein Sein that the SPDC needed to take bolder steps towards national reconciliation and to engage the international community.⁷⁷
- **19 May:** Thailand, the current ASEAN Chair, issued a statement on the trial of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The statement expressed "grave concern" about to the situation of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and added that "the honor and the credibility" of Burma were at stake."⁷⁸
- **26 May:** Thai FM Kasit Piromya said, "It is worrisome that the trial to extend her detention would not be a good thing for the region."⁷⁹ "We are not interfering in domestic affairs, but showing our concern," Kasit added.⁸⁰
- **27 May:** ASEAN ministers confronted the SPDC on its treatment of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in an informal meeting. "The discussion in the room [...] was that it affects ASEAN's image and ASEAN's collective interests," ASEAN Sec-Gen Surin Pitsuwan said.⁸¹
- **28 May:** Thailand's FM Kasit Piromya noted that Burma, as a member of ASEAN, has an obligation to comply with ASEAN Charter which guides the regional grouping to a people caring community. "It is very rare the international community from the United Nations Security Council, the United States, the European Union, ASEAN and countries in East Asia took the same stance on the Burma," he said.⁸²

⁷² Kaladan News (14 Apr 09) Rohingya girl starves to death in Teknaf

⁷³ Kaladan News (25 Apr 09) Rohingya men still in custody of army authority in Northern Maungdaw; Kaladan News (27 Apr 09) Authority announces prize money for garnering information

⁷⁴ Kaladan News (25 Sep 09) BDR on red alert on Burma-Bangladesh border

⁷⁵ Irrawaddy (02 Mar 09) Asean Leaders Call for Political Reform in Burma

⁷⁶ Jakarta Post (17 Mar 09) RI, Myanmar discuss democracy, refugees

⁷⁷ Reuters (18 Mar 09) Singapore urges Myanmar to reconcile with opponents

⁷⁸ DVB (19 May 09) Thailand 'concerned' but will not pressure Burma junta

⁷⁹ Nation (27 May 09) Jailing Suu Kyi again 'not good for region': Thai FM

⁸⁰ Mizzima News (26 May 09) E.U. backs Thailand over Suu Kyi's trial

⁸¹ AFP (28 May 09) ASEAN press Myanmar on Suu Kyi

⁸² Nation (29 May 09) Burma should listen to the world: FM

- **28 May:** A meeting of ASEAN and EU FMs issued a statement calling on the SPDC to release all political prisoners and lift restrictions on political parties.⁸³
- **8 June:** Indonesia's FM Hassan Wirajuda expressed frustration with the SPDC's lack of human rights. Wirajuda also called on the SPDC to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi immediately.⁸⁴
- **19 July:** Thai FM Kasit admitted that compromises were made to ensure that Burma endorsed the bloc's new right body, the ASEAN Inter-governmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR).⁸⁵ The new body cannot investigate alleged human rights violations or punish offending member states such as Burma, a weakness that prompted sharp criticism from activists and disappointment from Indonesia.⁸⁶
- **20 July:**
 - The ASEAN Ministerial Meeting issued a 12-page Joint Communiqué. The document urged the SPDC to hold "free, fair and inclusive elections in 2010" and reiterated ASEAN's calls on SPDC "to immediately release all those under detention, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi."⁸⁷
 - Thai FM Kasit Piromya said that ASEAN cannot move forward until changes occur in Burma.⁸⁸
 - ASEAN Sec-Gen Surin Pitsuwan said that as long as Burma's political problems are not resolved, ASEAN will continue to have a burden on its lap to explain to the world.⁸⁹
- **21 July:** Indonesia's FM Hassan Wirayuda said that the SPDC must release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi if its 2010 elections are to be credible.⁹⁰

Following Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's conviction and sentence, ASEAN failed to agree on a common position other than a timid note of its disappointment. ASEAN FMs never acted on plans to adopt a call for amnesty for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

- **12 August:** ASEAN expressed its "disappointment" over the SPDC's ruling on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. A statement from the Thai Foreign Ministry, representing the ASEAN Chair, reiterated the organization's calls for the immediate release of all political prisoners, including Aung San Suu Kyi.⁹¹
- **14 August:** Thai FM Kasit Piromya sought a consensus from the other nine ASEAN members to urge the SPDC to grant Daw Aung San Suu Kyi a pardon. Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia supported Thailand's initiative, while Laos and Vietnam opposed the move.⁹²
- **21 August:** Senior ASEAN officials meeting in Jakarta recommended that their respective Foreign Ministers issue a joint appeal to the SPDC for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.⁹³
- **27 September:** Thai FM Kasit Piromya said that ASEAN had scrapped a plan to appeal to the SPDC for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.⁹⁴

ASEAN MPs slam SPDC

ASEAN MPs confronted the SPDC over Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's trial and continued detention. Regional legislators also acted to show solidarity with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

⁸³ AFP (28 May 09) ASEAN press Myanmar on Suu Kyi

⁸⁴ AP (08 Jun 09) Indonesian FM: US sanctions hurt Myanmar's people

⁸⁵ AFP (20 Jul 09) SE Asia defends 'toothless' rights watchdog

⁸⁶ Jakarta Post (21 Jul 09) Indonesia criticizes military-ruled Myanmar; AFP (20 Jul 09) SE Asia defends 'toothless' rights watchdog

⁸⁷ Mizzima News (21 Jul 09) ASEAN Foreign Ministers expect Burma to act responsively

⁸⁸ Bangkok Post (21 July 09) FM:Burma key to fate of Asean

⁸⁹ VOA (21 Jul 09) Indonesia says Burma must release democracy leader for elections to be credible

⁹⁰ VOA (21 Jul 09) Indonesia says Burma must release democracy leader for elections to be credible

⁹¹ Nation (12 Aug 09) Asean calls for release of Aung San Suu Kyi

⁹² Kyodo News (16 Aug 09) Thai call for ASEAN appeal to Myanmar to pardon Suu Kyi gets backing; Mizzima News (15 Aug 09) Thailand urges Asean for a consensus on Burma

⁹³ DPA (21 Aug 09) ASEAN officials agree on joint appeal for Suu Kyi's release

⁹⁴ Bangkok Post (28 Sep 09) Asean scraps plan to appeal over Suu Kyi

- **15 May:** The President of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Myanmar Caucus (AIPMC) Kraisak Choonhavan said that the charges faced by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi were “just ridiculous” and urged fellow ASEAN governments not to fall for the “fallacy” of the SPDC’s elections next year.⁹⁵
- **20 May:** Female Democrat Party MPs in Thailand called for the SPDC to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.⁹⁶
- **21 May:** Thirty-two Philippines MPs called for a Philippines’ government resolution denouncing the trial of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and demanding her release.⁹⁷
- **25 May:** Anwar Ibrahim, leader of the Malaysian opposition, said that there had been an “utter abdication of responsibility in the region [regarding Burma],” and added that the policy of constructive engagement in Asia had become a mockery.⁹⁸
- **26 May:** Thirty Malaysian MPs joined half a million other signatories on a petition organized by an umbrella group called “Free Burma’s Political Prisoners Now!”⁹⁹
- **26 May:** AIPMC called on ASEAN to suspend Burma’s membership from the regional bloc as long the SPDC continued to detain Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.¹⁰⁰ Singaporean MPs Charles Chong and Inderjit Singh called for the suspension of Burma from ASEAN because of the SPDC’s disregard for ASEAN’s concerns over Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.¹⁰¹
- **27 May:** Twenty-nine Cambodian MPs voiced their concern over the situation of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi by sending a letter of protest to the ASEAN-EU meeting which was held in Phnom Penh.¹⁰²
- **28 May:** Thirty Thai senators submitted a petition that urged the SPDC to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and to create political stability in Burma. The senators submitted the petition to the SPDC Prime Minister through the Burmese Embassy in Bangkok.¹⁰³
- **29 May:** One-hundred MPs from Southeast Asian countries added their voices to the growing international calls for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.¹⁰⁴
- **19 June:** MPs from ASEAN Parliaments urged ASEAN to reconsider Burma’s membership in the bloc. AIPMC President Kraisak Choonhavan said that it was time for ASEAN to revise the status of Burma in the group because the SPDC had failed to respond to repeated calls by the international community to improve the human right situation in the country.¹⁰⁵

China-SPDC relations

China failed to criticize the SPDC over the arrest, detention and, conviction of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. However, the situation was very different when the SPDC Army’s launched its offensive in the Kokang region of Shan State along the Sino-Burma border. China expressed its serious concern with regard to the SPDC Army’s treatment of ethnic Chinese and the exodus of 37,000 refugees into its territory.

- **10 August** Chinese officials from Yunnan Province warned SPDC Northeastern Military Command Commander Maj Gen Aung Than Htut not to fuel instability on the Sino-Burma border.¹⁰⁶ The Chinese Army moved over 700 troops to the Sino-Burma border.¹⁰⁷
- **28 August:** China issued a rare warning to the SPDC to “maintain stability” along the Sino-Burma border. The Chinese Foreign Ministry issued a statement that called on the SPDC to “properly handle domestic problems and maintain stability in the China-Burma border

⁹⁵ DVB (15 May 09) ASEAN member urges governments not to fall for Burma ‘fallacy’

⁹⁶ NNT (21 May 09) Democrat female MPs demand Myanmar Govt to release Suu Kyi

⁹⁷ Irrawaddy (29 May 09) More Asean MPs Call for Suu Kyi’s Release

⁹⁸ Telegraph (25 May 09) Asia has abdicated responsibility over Burma, says Anwar Ibrahim

⁹⁹ Irrawaddy (29 May 09) More Asean MPs Call for Suu Kyi’s Release

¹⁰⁰ AIPMC Statement (26 May 09) ASEAN MPs call on tougher ASEAN actions on Myanmar including Suspension

¹⁰¹ Irrawaddy (29 May 09) More Asean MPs Call for Suu Kyi’s Release

¹⁰² Irrawaddy (29 May 09) More Asean MPs Call for Suu Kyi’s Release

¹⁰³ Mizzima News (29 May 09) Thai senators call for Suu Kyi’s release

¹⁰⁴ Irrawaddy (29 May 09) More Asean MPs Call for Suu Kyi’s Release

¹⁰⁵ Mizzima News (20 Jun 09) Parliamentarians seek expulsion of Burma from ASEAN

¹⁰⁶ Irrawaddy (14 Aug 09) China Warns Commander to Avoid Instability in Shan State

¹⁰⁷ SHAN (25 Aug 09) PLA moves to the Kokang border

region.” The statement also urged the SPDC “to protect the security and legal rights of Chinese citizens in Burma.”¹⁰⁸

- **21 September:** China’s Consular Affairs Department Chief Wei Wei urged the SPDC to investigate reports that military conflicts in Northern Burma in August had harmed the rights and interests of Chinese citizens living there.¹⁰⁹
- **25 September:** The SPDC ordered the 10,000 Chinese nationals living in the Kokang region to return to China.¹¹⁰

US-SPDC relations

The US kept existing sanctions against the SPDC in place. However, on 23 September, the US announced a major shift in its Burma policy and said that it would pursue direct high-level engagement with the SPDC but keep sanctions in place.

- **15 May:** US President Barack Obama formally extended sanctions against the SPDC for another year, saying the actions and policies of the junta have not changed and continue to be hostile towards the US and its foreign policy.¹¹¹
- **28 July:** US President Barack Obama extended the 2003 Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act for one more year.¹¹²
- **23 September:** Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said that the US plans to change its approach to Burma by enlisting a combination of sanctions and direct high-level engagement.¹¹³

EU-SPDC relations

The EU kept in place or strengthened sanctions against the regime as result of the SPDC’s unjust detention, trial, and conviction of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

- **27 April:** The EU extended its sanctions on the SPDC for another year. Along with the extension of sanctions,¹¹⁴
- **11 August:** The EU imposed new targeted financial sanctions on the four judges who presided at Daw Suu’s trial.¹¹⁵ New sanctions also subjected state-owned media associated with the junta to an asset freeze along with 58 other enterprises, 48 of which were already affected by an investment ban.¹¹⁶

North Korea-SPDC relations

Recent developments gave substance to reports of increasing military cooperation between the SPDC and the North Korean regime.

- **Early June:** Various new outlets published photos of tunnel construction near Naypyidaw.¹¹⁷ The photos, taken between 2003 and 2006, show that North Korean technicians helped the SPDC in the construction of an extensive network of some 800 underground tunnels near the SPDC’s new administrative capital.¹¹⁸
- **21 June:** A report by South Korean television YTN said that the 2,000-ton North Korean cargo ship Kang Nam I was heading towards Burma and was suspected of carrying missiles

¹⁰⁸ FT (30 Aug 09) China rebukes Burma after border fighting

¹⁰⁹ VOA (26 Sep 09) China Urges Burma to Protect Rights of Chinese Nationals

¹¹⁰ DVB (25 Sep 09) Burma orders 10,000 Chinese to leave; Kachin News Group (25 Sep 09) Chinese citizens from eastern Burma asked to return;

¹¹¹ Mizzima News (16 May 09) US renews Burma sanctions for another year

¹¹² AP (23 Jul 09) US Senate approves Myanmar resolution; AFP (29 Jul 09) US extends Myanmar sanctions

¹¹³ WSJ (24 Sep 09) U.S. to engage Myanmar’s junta

¹¹⁴ DVB (27 Apr 09) Burma suspends border fence construction

¹¹⁵ EU (13 Aug 09) The Council adopts additional restrictive measures against Burma/Myanmar

¹¹⁶ NYT (14 Aug 09) U.S. Senator in Myanmar to Meet Leader

¹¹⁷ Irrawaddy (26 Jun 09) Tunnel Construction Pictures Spark Questions

¹¹⁸ DVB (24 Jun 09) Burma’s military regime: Digging the tunnels

or related parts for the SPDC.¹¹⁹ The SPDC, possibly as a result of diplomatic pressure by India, China, and ASEAN countries, allegedly asked the ship to turn around.¹²⁰ The Kang Nam I returned to its point of origin, Nampo, on 6 July.¹²¹

- **29 June:** Japanese police arrested three men, including a North Korean national, Lee Kyoung Ho, for allegedly attempting to export to Burma in January a magnetic measuring device that can be used for long-range ballistic missiles.¹²²
- **24 July:** Japanese authorities served a second arrest warrant on Lee Kyoung Ho Go on suspicion of illegally exporting to Burma in November 2008 a machine that can be used to develop missile control systems and centrifuge machines for uranium enrichment.¹²³

UN-SPDC relations

UN-SPDC relations remained rocky because of the SPDC's refusal to allow UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon to meet with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi during his July visit. In addition, there was a chorus of criticism over the trial and conviction of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The UN Security Council, the UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon, the UN Special Rapporteur of human rights in Burma Tomás Ojea Quintana, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay, the UN Special Advisor on Burma Ibrahim Gambari, and the ILO, all called for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's immediate and unconditional release.¹²⁴

- **22 May:** The UN Security Council issued a press statement that expressed concern over the political impact in Burma of the detention and trial of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The Council reiterated "the importance of the release of all political prisoners," and repeated the need for the SPDC to "create the necessary conditions for a genuine dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all concerned parties and ethnic groups in order to achieve an inclusive national reconciliation."¹²⁵
- **3-4 July:** In a highly scripted¹²⁶ two-day visit to Burma, UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-Moon met twice with SPDC Chairman Sr Gen Than Shwe.¹²⁷ During the two meetings, Ban requested that he be allowed to meet with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Than Shwe refused both requests.¹²⁸
- **4 July:** In a speech delivered in Rangoon, Ban urged the SPDC to release all political prisoners including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The UN Sec-Gen also demanded the SPDC allow Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to participate in genuine dialogue.¹²⁹
- **13 July:** Ban told UN Security Council members that the 2010 elections may not be regarded as legitimate or credible if Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is not released and the NLD is not allowed to campaign freely.¹³⁰
- **13 August:** The UN Security Council issued a press statement that expressed "serious concern" at the conviction and sentencing of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The Council also reiterated the importance of the release of all political prisoners and urged the SPDC "to create the necessary conditions for a genuine dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all concerned parties."¹³¹

¹¹⁹ AP (22 Jun 09) Official: N. Korean ship carries weapons to Myanmar; AFP (24 Jun 09) Myanmar says no information on tracked NKorean ship; Irrawaddy (25 Jun 09) Burma Denies Knowledge of North Korean Vessel's Destination

¹²⁰ VOA (01 Jul 09) Shadowed North Korean Freighter Reverses Course; Irrawaddy (09 Jul 09) Did Foreign Pressure Make Ship Turn Back?; Irrawaddy (06 Jul 09) N Korea using Malaysian bank for Burmese weapons deals: Yonhap

¹²¹ Irrawaddy (09 Jul 09) Did Foreign Pressure Make Ship Turn Back?

¹²² Bloomberg (30 Jun 09) Japan Police Arrest Three for Illegal Exports, Yomiuri Says

¹²³ Zee News (24 Jul 09) Tokyo trader charged with selling sensitive machine to Myanmar

¹²⁴ AP (12 Aug 09) Suu Kyi Begins House Arrest amid Outrage; UN News Center (12 Aug 09) UN human rights chief joins call for release of Myanmar opposition figure: AFP (11 Aug 09) UN Head demands release of Myanmar activist Aung San Suu Kyi; VOA (11 Aug 09) UN Envoy to Burma Calls for 'Immediate Release' of Aung San Suu Kyi

¹²⁵ UN News Center (22 May 09) Myanmar: Security Council voices concern over detention of pro-democracy leader

¹²⁶ DVB (07 Jul 09) DKBA meeting with UN chief 'scripted' by junta

¹²⁷ SHAN (04 Jul 09) Shan party meets UN chief, non-party activists might be released

¹²⁸ NLM (07 Jul 09) Senior General Than Shwe receives UNSG for two times

¹²⁹ Mizzima News (05 Jul 09) Ban Ki-Moon's remarks on Burma

¹³⁰ UN News Center (13 Jul 09) Ban calls on Myanmar's authorities to engage more closely with the UN

¹³¹ UN News Center (13 Aug 09) Security Council voices 'serious concern' at Aung San Suu Kyi verdict

- **22 September:** UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon said he would continue to seek Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's release and the release of all political prisoners in Burma "so that this election can be credible and fair and transparent".¹³²
- **23 September:** UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon urged the SPDC to create conditions for credible elections in 2010 and to allow the UN a role in the process of national reconciliation.¹³³
- **26 September:** UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon urged ASEAN FMs to take a tougher line with the SPDC in hopes the junta will free political prisoners and hold fair elections. Ban said it was in ASEAN's best interest to press the SPDC to free political prisoners, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.¹³⁴

AID

The SPDC's ongoing restrictions on aid and the failure to provide adequate relief to its own people continued to have a negative impact in the Irrawaddy delta and beyond.

- **3 March:** Relief workers with Thai-based Emergency Assistance Team-Burma (EAT-Burma) said that 35 villages in Labutta Township, Irrawaddy Division, faced a water crisis.¹³⁵ SPDC red tape requiring aid workers to obtain prior permission for water distribution had frustrated the delivery of sufficient water supplies.¹³⁶
- **20 March:** The SPDC ended a program to fast-track visa applications for foreign aid workers, despite the continued humanitarian crisis in the Irrawaddy delta.¹³⁷ By July, over 200 visa applications remained pending with the SPDC's Foreign Affairs Policy Committee.¹³⁸
- **10 June:** international donors and UN agencies met with ASEAN Sec-Gen Surin Pitsuwan in Bangkok, Thailand, and explained that SPDC actions and policies adversely affected international efforts to help the country's recovery.¹³⁹
- **4 July:** Heavy monsoon rains triggered landslides that swept away a jade miners' settlement in Phakant, Kachin State, killing over 30 people and leaving over 1,300 left homeless.¹⁴⁰ SPDC authorities failed to provide any immediate relief to affected communities.¹⁴¹
- **Early July:** The Chin State Peace and Development Council Chairman Col Hung Ngai banned all local SPDC officials from receiving foreign assistance, despite the continued famine.¹⁴²

ECONOMY

Gas exports enrich the SPDC while the regime bankrupts the country

The SPDC continues to enrich itself through trade deals with major international extraction firms.

- **June:** Daewoo International signed an MoU with China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) for the sale of natural gas from the offshore Shwe gas field.¹⁴³ CNPC announced

¹³² DVB (23 Sep 09) UN chief takes credit for prisoner amnesty

¹³³ Mizzima News (24 Sep 09) Ban urges junta to create conditions for credible election

¹³⁴ Daily Star (28 Sep 09) UN urges Asian nations to get tough on Myanmar

¹³⁵ Mizzima (03 Mar 09) Cyclone Nargis victims badly need potable water

¹³⁶ Irrawaddy (19 Mar 09) Drinking water crisis in Delta

¹³⁷ Irrawaddy (20 Mar 09) Regime stops fast-tracking visas for relief workers

¹³⁸ Irrawaddy (03 Jul 09) INGOs Kept Waiting for Visas; Irrawaddy (21 Jul 09) Visa Backlog Holds Up Irrawaddy Delta Relief Work Irrawaddy (22 Jul 09) As Foreign Aid Workers Leave, Food Security Concerns Grow

¹³⁹ Reuters (10 Jun 09) Suu Kyi trial clouds Myanmar cyclone aid effort; Washington Post (11 Jun 09) Burma's Trial of Suu Kyi Hinders Cyclone Relief

¹⁴⁰ Reuters (08 Jul 09) Landslide caused by rain kills 30 in Myanmar; Reuters (14 Jul 09) Myanmar "Jade Land" mudslide uproots 1300; Kachin News Group (06 Jul 09) Floods in Hpakant jade land, hundreds suffer, Kachin News Group (09 Jul 09) Jade tycoons distribute food, water to flood victims. NOTE: wires services reported a death toll of 30, while the Kachin News Group quoted local officials' figures of "over 100" on Jul 9.

¹⁴¹ AP (10 Jul 09) 24 miners killed in Myanmar by landslide; Kachin News Group (06 Jul 09) Floods in Hpakant jade land, hundreds suffer

¹⁴² Khonumthung News (30 Jul 09) Chairman of Chin State bars foreign aid

construction plans for new oil and gas pipelines through Burma to begin in September 2009. The 2,800km pipeline will deliver oil and gas from the Middle East and Africa into Southwestern China's Yunnan Province by 2012.¹⁴⁴

- **July:** Indian ONGC Videsh announced plans to take a stake in the nearly US\$2 billion CNPC gas pipeline project to transport natural gas from the field.¹⁴⁵
- **2 September:** Daewoo International said it will invest US\$1.7 billion in expanding gas exploration and production of A-1 and A-3 offshore blocks in the Andaman Sea.¹⁴⁶

Rising gas prices and increasing demand caused the value of Burma's gas exports to soar.¹⁴⁷ The IMF confirmed in an unpublished report that strong natural gas exports had swollen the SPDC's foreign exchange reserves to a record high US\$3.6 billion.¹⁴⁸ While the SPDC added to their coffers, families in Burma suffered from the SPDC's economic mismanagement.

- Extravagant spending by the SPDC was paid for by printing money, which led to inflation rates of 30% in 2008.¹⁴⁹
- Social spending by the SPDC remains the lowest in Asia, according to the IMF.¹⁵⁰
- The IMF report concluded that Burma's economic prospects "look bleak" unless it abandons failed policies - including the multiple exchange rate system and stifling economic controls.¹⁵¹

DRUGS

Burma remained the world's second top producer of heroin and Asia's largest producer of amphetamines. Amphetamine use in the regions continued to have a devastating impact.

- **24 June:** The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released its annual drug report that stated Burma remained the world's second largest source of opium behind Afghanistan.¹⁵²

WOMEN & CHILDREN

SPDC Army soldiers continued to terrorize ethnic women through violence and rape as part of their military campaign in ethnic nationality areas.¹⁵³

- **10 June:** SPDC Army Lt Col Kyaw Thura raped a 24-year-old Rohingya woman in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State.¹⁵⁴
- **12 June:** SPDC soldiers from Light Infantry Battalion 205 raped and murdered two teenage Karen girls from Hpa-an District, Karen State.¹⁵⁵

¹⁴³ Mizzima News (16 Jun 09) Daewoo signs MoU to sell gas to China; Irrawaddy (19 Jun 09) Daewoo Forecasts US \$10 billion Profit in Gas Deal with China

¹⁴⁴ Reuters (15 Jun 09) China to build Myanmar oil, gas lines from Sept -media; Xinhua (16 Jun 09) Construction of Sino-Myanmar oil-and-gas pipelines to begin in Sept; Irrawaddy (16 Jun 09) Burma-China Pipeline Work to Start in September; Bloomberg News (16 Jun 09) China to Start Work on Myanmar Pipes, Securities Journal Says; DVB (16 Jun 09) China to begin Burma pipeline construction; Dow Jones (19 Jun 09) China, Myanmar Ink Trans-Border Oil Pipeline Agreement -CNPC

¹⁴⁵ PTI (14 Jul 09) ONGC Videsh to join Chinese gas pipeline from Myanmar

¹⁴⁶ Xinhua (02 Sep 09) S. Korean Company to Invest 1.7 Bln USD in Myanmar Gas Project

¹⁴⁷ WSJ (06 Aug 09) Burma Isn't Broke

¹⁴⁸ FT (10 May 09) Burma's economic prospects 'bleak'

¹⁴⁹ FT (5 Aug 09) Burma starts to acquire veneer of wealth as elite enjoy times of plenty; Asia Times (17 Aug 09) Regime rides above sanctions

¹⁵⁰ FT (10 May 09) Burma's economic prospects 'bleak'

¹⁵¹ FT (11 May 09) Burma gas sales surge but little cash leaks out

¹⁵² DVB (25 Jun 09) Opium poppy cultivation in Burma rises

¹⁵³ SHAN (06 Aug 09) Burmese Army troops behead woman; Kaladan News (11 Aug 09) Refugee woman gang-raped by local youths; Kaladan News (10 Aug 09) Burmese woman gang raped by Bangladeshi youths; SHAN (11 Aug 09) Teenage girl gang raped by Burmese Army personnel; SHAN (07 Aug 09) Burmese Army personnel gang-rape Shan woman; Mizzima News (07 Aug 09) Women's groups urge Security Council to act on Burma; Irrawaddy (07 Aug 09) Women's Groups Want to See Than Shwe before the ICC

¹⁵⁴ Kaladan News (12 Jun 09) Army Commander rapes girl in Maungdaw

¹⁵⁵ Irrawaddy (15 Jun 09) KNU Rejects Regime Version of Fighting

- **2 August:** SPDC Army forces gang-raped a woman in front of her husband in Laikha Township, Shan State.¹⁵⁶
- **3 August:** SPDC soldiers from LIB 514 attacked and beheaded a 29-year old woman in Mongkeung Township, Shan State.¹⁵⁷
- **5 August:** An SPDC Army Captain and other soldiers from IB 132 gang-raped a 15-year-old girl in Kehsi Township, Southern Shan State.¹⁵⁸

Despite SPDC's attempts to hide its enlistment of child soldiers, the practice continues.

- **6 May:** The Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, a global coalition of human rights advocacy groups, released a 60-page study, "No More Denial: Children Affected by Armed Conflict in Myanmar (Burma)." The report documents killing and maiming of children, use of child soldiers, rape, abduction, forced displacement, attacks on schools, denial of humanitarian access, and other violations against children in Eastern Burma.¹⁵⁹
- **3 June:** Reports surfaced that the SPDC Army forcibly recruited children aged 12 to 15 from 27 villages around Mongpiang Township in Shan State.¹⁶⁰
- **2 June:** A 16-year-old boy who went missing after being arrested in 2008 by SPDC police in Pegu Division contacted his parents and informed them that he had been recruited into the SPDC Army.¹⁶¹
- **7 June:** SPDC Army Sgt Win Myint abducted two 14-year-old boys and took them to the Danyingone SPDC Army recruitment center in Rangoon's Insein Township.¹⁶²
- **9 June:** UN Sec-Gen Ban Ki-moon reported to the UN Security Council on the recruitment of children by the SPDC Army.¹⁶³
- **18 June:** It was reported that SPDC Army apprehended and conscripted three youths from Arakan State at the border town of Myawaddy in Karen State.¹⁶⁴
- **24 June:** It was reported that the SPDC Army abducted and recruited a 16-year-old youth in Pegu Division.¹⁶⁵
- **1 Aug:** SPDC Army recruits six Rakhine youth from the Indo-Burma border area in Chin State.¹⁶⁶

¹⁵⁶ SHAN (07 Aug 09) Burmese Army personnel gang-rape Shan woman

¹⁵⁷ SHAN (11 Aug 09) Teenage girl gang raped by Burmese Army personnel; SHAN (06 Aug 09) Burmese Army troops behead woman

¹⁵⁸ SHAN (11 Aug 09) Teenage girl gang raped by Burmese Army personnel

¹⁵⁹ Irrawaddy (06 May 09) Rights groups focus on Burmese children; Mizzima News (06 May 09) Child soldiers a reality in Burma: Rights Group; VOA (07 May 09) Human rights groups urge UN Security Council to protect Burmese children; Irish Sun (07 May 09) Children being abducted and raped in military Myanmar

¹⁶⁰ SHAN (03 Jun 09) Children forcibly recruited as Burmese Army cadets

¹⁶¹ DVB (04 Jun 09) Teenager recruited by Burmese army

¹⁶² DVB (24 Jun 09) Two children abducted into Burmese army

¹⁶³ Irrawaddy (10 Jun 09) Serious violations against children in Burma: Ban; Mizzima News (10 Jun 09) Child soldiers still a fact of life in Burma: Ban

¹⁶⁴ Narinjara News (18 Jun 09) Arakanese youth arrested and conscripted by Burmese Army

¹⁶⁵ Irrawaddy (24 Jun 09) Burmese army still recruiting under-age soldiers

¹⁶⁶ Narinjara News (04 Aug 09) Six Youths Conscripted into Burmese Army