



NEWS FROM IRELAND

In early February Dublin welcomed Dr THAUNG HTUN, the representative at the UN of the NCGUB (National Government of the Union of Burma). Invited to attend a conference organised by the human rights body, Front Line, he had detailed discussions with our Minister for Foreign Affairs, Micheál Martin, and with members of the Oireachtas Foreign Affairs Committee, and also spoke on TV and to a correspondent of *The Irish Times*. His main message was that without the fundamental changes demanded by the pro-democracy parties and world opinion 'the credibility of the elections is very questionable'.



Dr Thaug Htun.

DAW AUNG SAN SUU KYI 65th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION CONCERT

On 15 February, a meeting at Dublin's National Concert Hall launched publicity for an **IMPORTANT EVENT** in honour of **AUNG SAN SUU KYI** to be held in its main auditorium on **19 JUNE, her 65th birthday**. Participants will include prominent Irish musicians and personalities

who themselves are 65 this year, among them Christy Moore, Eamonn Dunphy and the organiser, Keith Donald. Tickets are obtainable now from the NCH Box Office (Tel. (01) 417 0000). WATCH OUT for further details in the media and the next issue of this Newsletter.

BAI SHOWS BURMA VJ

There have been several showings of the Oscar-nominated documentary about the Saffron Revolution (Sept 2007), *Burma VJ*, in Dublin and Dundalk, with more scheduled to take place in Limerick and Westport soon. The film is remarkable for its brilliant use of actual footage from the incredible scenes witnessed by the world when the Monks of Burma marched to demand that the military junta change its brutal ways. The narrative of events is cleverly carried by one of the Video Journalists ('VJs') in Thailand, who has been compromised in the early days of the demonstrations by being trapped by

the junta's military intelligence. This makes the story flow smoothly and gives the viewers a firm point of view from which to understand events.

Although many of the scenes will be familiar, it also contains much new evidence of the extraordinary nature of the uprising in its peacefulness, the absolute dignity of the monks and citizens in their protests (chanting a sutra for peace), and it throws into sharp relief the squalid, brutal and undignified assault on civil rights which is typical of the Burmese regime.

How you can help

Protest against the oppression of the Burmese people and the detention of Daw Suu Kyi

Write appeals to the Burmese military regime, calling for the safe release of Aung San Suu Kyi and all Burmese political prisoners including Buddhist monks. Please ask the SPDC to take action on the following:

- To end the continuing violations of the human rights of citizens, in particular forced labour; forced relocations, abuse, torture, sexual violence, exploitation and abuse in detention and summary executions, often committed by military personnel,
- To end the systematic forced displacements of persons and the flow of refugees to neighbouring countries and create adequate conditions for their safe and voluntary return and complete reintegration, and to allow humanitarian personnel safe access to assist their return and reintegration.

Please address your action letters to the following:

Senior General Thein Sein,
Prime Minister, State Peace and Development Council, Naypyitaw, Union of Myanmar.

BAI would appreciate it very much if you could send us a copy of your letter(s).

NOTICE

Forced to limit postage costs, BAI invites current recipients of the printed version of this Newsletter to receive it by e-mail (addresses, please, if we don't have them), and regret that in general printed copies can only be sent in future to members who have paid their subscriptions.

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Disclaimer: The views expressed herein are those of **Burma Action Ireland** and can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of **Irish Aid**.

Burma Action Ireland is a voluntary group established since May 1996 to raise awareness in Ireland of the current situation in Burma and the nature of the ruling regime.

Hon. President:
John Boorman

Chairperson:
Gearoid Kilgallen

