

# WebMemo



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## The U.N. Must Stop Enabling the Burmese Regime

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The Southeast Asian country of Burma (renamed Myanmar by the country's ruling junta in 1989) attracted international criticism following a violent crackdown on peaceful pro-democracy demonstrations in September. This brutal response, resulting in the deaths of at least 15 protestors (most independent observers estimate the number killed to be much higher), is typical of the junta, which has long been accused of human rights violations, including mistreatment of ethnic minorities and forced labor. Despite its routine violation of the most fundamental rights of its citizens in contravention of the United Nations Charter, Burma is a U.N. member in good standing and regularly receives assistance from the U.N. and its affiliated funds and programs. Until the recent press attention, the U.N. Human Rights Council ignored the human rights abuses perpetrated by the government on its citizens. Even after the crackdown, the U.N. has not imposed sanctions on Burma or the junta due to opposition from veto-wielding permanent members China and Russia. The United States should take steps within the U.N. to prevent the oppressive regime in Burma from using the privileges of the organization, including access to its resources and assistance, to benefit itself and further repress its citizens.

**The U.N. and Burma.** The United Nations was founded in 1945 to maintain international peace and security and undertake collective measures to remove threats to peace; to promote equal rights and self-determination of peoples; to help solve problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character; and to encourage "social progress and better stan-

dards of life in larger freedom." In the Charter, member states pledge "to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women."<sup>1</sup> U.N. treaties and conventions, such as the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, which the General Assembly passed in 1948, form the core of international standards for human rights.

Few members of the United Nations violate the founding principles of the United Nations as regularly and profoundly as the junta in charge of Burma.

- **Political repression.** The people of Burma have been denied the right to self-determination, the most basic human right recognized by the United Nations. Military regimes have ruled Burma since 1962. The current regime, which seized power in 1988, permitted a national election in 1990, refused to recognize its loss, and has confined the leader of the opposition National League for Democracy, Aung San Suu Kyi, for 12 years since the election. Thousands of Buddhist monks and Burmese citizens staged a series of peaceful demonstrations in September 2007 to demand "freedom, democracy and respect for human rights." The ruling military

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junta responded to these demonstrations with a violent crackdown on the monks and unarmed civilian demonstrators that “resulted in ten deaths [the government now acknowledges 15] and the imprisonment of some 4,000, according to the regime. Diplomatic sources, however, state that the numbers of those killed, injured and imprisoned are much higher than those officially reported.”<sup>2</sup> Following the recent crackdown on demonstrators, the U.N. Human Rights Council passed a resolution strongly deploring “the continued violent repression of peaceful demonstrations in Myanmar.”<sup>3</sup>

- **Human rights violations.** The Burmese regime poses a serious danger to the Burmese people. Protesters and dissidents are routinely beaten, tortured, and killed. The U.S. Department of State reports:

The regime continued to abridge the right of citizens to change their government.... In addition, the government continued to commit other serious abuses, including extrajudicial killings, custodial deaths, disappearances, rape, and torture. The government abused prisoners and detainees, held persons in harsh and life threatening conditions, routinely used incommunicado detention, and imprisoned citizens arbitrarily for political motives.... The government restricted freedom of speech, press, assembly, association, religion, and movement. The government did not allow domestic human rights nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to function inde-

pendently, and international NGOs encountered a hostile environment. Violence and societal discrimination against women continued, as did forced recruitment of child soldiers, discrimination against ethnic minorities, and trafficking in persons, particularly of women and girls. Workers rights remained restricted, and forced labor, including that of children, also persisted.<sup>4</sup>

The United Nations has also condemned Burma for human rights violations. The Third Committee of the General Assembly passed a resolution expressing “grave concern at ongoing systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the people of Myanmar; the continuing use of torture; deaths in custody; political arrests and continuing imprisonment and other detentions, denial of freedom of assembly, association, expression and movement, and the prevailing culture of impunity”<sup>5</sup> and called on the government to end those practices.

- **Government-caused poverty and underdevelopment.** When Burma won independence from Britain in 1948, the country was one of Asia’s brightest economic prospects. Burma possessed rich natural resources and a well-developed agricultural sector that earned the country the title of “the rice bowl of Asia.” Nearly 60 years later, and despite receiving nearly \$14 billion in total official development assistance between 1960 and 2006, Burma is one of the world’s most impoverished, undeveloped, and isolated countries.<sup>6</sup> According to the *Index of Economic Freedom*, Burma is a “repressed” economy, ranking 153rd out of 157

1. United Nations, “Charter of the United Nations,” preamble, at [www.un.org/aboutun/charter/index.html](http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/index.html).
2. Bureau of Public Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Burma: Democratic Aspirations,” October 16, 2007, at [www.state.gov/documents/organization/93816.pdf](http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/93816.pdf).
3. Human Rights Council, “Situation of human rights in Myanmar,” Resolution S-5/1, October 2, 2007, at [www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/specialsession/A.HRC.RES.S.5-1.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/specialsession/A.HRC.RES.S.5-1.pdf).
4. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, “Burma,” *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2006*, March 6, 2007, at [www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78768.htm](http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78768.htm).
5. United Nations Department of Public Information, “Third Committee Approves Draft Resolutions on Human Rights in Myanmar, Belarus; Rejects Texts on Canada, United States: Other Drafts Approved on Action against Racism, Israeli Military Operations, Violence against Women, Unilateral Coercive Measures, Children’s Rights,” General Assembly Document GA/SHC/3877, November 22, 2006, at [www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/gashc3877.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/gashc3877.doc.htm).
6. Figures are in constant 2005 U.S. dollars. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, International Development Statistics, at [www.oecd.org/dac/stats/idsonline](http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/idsonline).

countries in terms of economic freedom.<sup>7</sup> Burma is ranked 29th out of 30 countries in the Asia-Pacific region, besting only North Korea. Repressive economic policies imposed by the military junta, such as forcing farmers to sell rice to the government at below market prices and restricting movement and trade, have directly contributed to an estimated 5 million people lacking sufficient food, according to the World Food Program. According to U.N. estimates, a third of all Burmese children under five years of age are underweight, and 10 percent are considered “wasted” or acutely malnourished. Burma’s child mortality rates are among the worst in Asia.<sup>8</sup>

The repressive policies of the Burmese government have led the United States and other Western nations to suspend foreign assistance to Burma and apply economic sanctions to the regime.<sup>9</sup> These nations have used their influence to constrain Burma’s access to assistance from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which have not made new loans to Burma since the 1980s.

Few other nations have taken similar actions. The member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), of which Burma is a member, have been unwilling to act against Burma, aside from harshly criticizing the recent political crackdown.<sup>10</sup> China has focused on securing access to Burma’s resources and refuses to take steps that would undermine that goal; worse, it has increased its ties to Burma, as has India.<sup>11</sup>

Most disappointing is the lack of action by the United Nations. Many of Burma’s actions are in contravention of multilateral agreements, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the founding principles of the U.N. Yet Burma is treated no differently than any other nation within the U.N. organization. Burma is permitted to participate in all U.N. activities without restriction or consequence for its repudiation of fundamental U.N. principles. Indeed, Burma’s junta has not only gone unreprimed but also has reaped the fruits of U.N. programs and assistance:

- *Burma has evaded sanction by the U.N. Security Council.* The evidence of human rights violations by the Burmese junta is extensive and well documented. In violation of its obligations under the U.N. Charter, the country has denied its citizens the right to self-determination in addition to undermining other basic human rights and fundamental freedoms espoused in the Charter. The government has conducted a vicious campaign against ethnic minorities that has caused an estimated 540,000 people to be internally displaced and hundreds of thousands of others to flee to neighboring countries.<sup>12</sup> The Security Council, however, has failed to sanction Burma for flagrantly violating central provisions of the Charter or for its actions that have created a refugee crisis. After years of ignoring the situation in Burma, the Security Council voted to place the situation in Burma on its formal agenda in Sep-

7. Tim Kane, Kim R. Holmes, and Mary Anastasia O’Grady, *2007 Index of Economic Freedom* (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation and Dow Jones & Company, Inc., 2007), at [www.heritage.org/index](http://www.heritage.org/index).
8. Ed Cropley, “Five million people going hungry in Myanmar—WFP,” Reuters, October 18, 2007, at [www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSBK340630](http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSBK340630).
9. According to the Government Accountability Office, “The United States has banned the importation of Burmese goods, the export of financial services and arms by U.S. persons to Burma, and new U.S. investment in Burma. It has barred high-ranking Burmese officials from visiting the United States.” Australia, Canada, and the EU have joined the U.S. in adopting sanctions. See United States Government Accountability Office, “International Organizations: Assistance Programs Constrained in Burma,” Report No. GAO-07-457, p. 8, at [www.gao.gov/new.items/d07457.pdf](http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d07457.pdf).
10. Luis Ramirez, “ASEAN Leaders Say They Do Not Support Sanctions Against Burma,” Voice of America, November 18, 2007, at [www.voanews.com/english/2007-11-18-voa6.cfm](http://www.voanews.com/english/2007-11-18-voa6.cfm).
11. According to the Government Accountability Office, “China has increased its commercial presence in Burma, emerged as Burma’s largest single source of imports (about 30 percent in 2005), and become a strong market for Burmese exports. In addition, the current Burmese Prime Minister visited Beijing in February 2006 and signed agreements with Chinese officials that will provide Burma with grants and concessionary loans.” See GAO, “International Organizations: Assistance Programs Constrained in Burma,” p. 8.
12. Refugees International, “Burma,” at [www.refugeesinternational.org/content/country/detail/2922](http://www.refugeesinternational.org/content/country/detail/2922).

tember 2006, which allows any member of the Council to raise the item for discussion.<sup>13</sup> This has not spurred action by the Council, however. A U.S.- and U.K.-sponsored resolution calling on the Burmese government to cease attacks on civilians in ethnic minority areas and lift restrictions on political freedoms and human rights failed to pass in January 2007 due to vetoes from Russia and China.<sup>14</sup> An October 11, 2007, statement by the president of the Security Council strongly deplored the political crackdown and called on the government to release political prisoners.<sup>15</sup> A November 15 Security Council press release reiterated these concerns and stated that the “members of the Security Council confirm their intention to keep developments in Myanmar under close review.”<sup>16</sup> The U.N. Human Rights Council<sup>17</sup> and the Third Committee of the General Assembly,<sup>18</sup> to their credit, have both passed resolutions condemning the situation in Burma. However, these resolutions are non-binding and affect the Burmese junta minimally, if at all.

- ***Burma serves in high-level positions in the U.N. and its affiliated funds and programs.*** Burma currently serves as a vice president on the Executive Board of the United Nations Children’s Fund

(UNICEF) despite its dismal record of mistreatment of children, and serves as a member of the Commission on Social Development, a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), despite its well documented repression of civil society and minority ethnic groups. Burma served as Chairman of the Fourth Committee (Special and Political and Decolonization Committee), one of the Main Committees of the General Assembly, in 2004. Myanmar was on the Governing Body of the United Nations Environment Program as recently as 2005.

- ***Burma benefits from U.N. assistance.*** As Western nations have applied sanctions and reduced foreign assistance, the Burmese government has increasingly relied on the U.N. for assistance. The U.N. and its affiliated organizations spent \$218 million in Burma from 2002 through 2005. In 2005, more than 70 percent of these funds were spent by the U.N. Development Program (UNDP), UNICEF, and the World Food Program. Other U.N.-affiliated organizations active in Burma include the World Health Organization, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, the U.N. Population Fund, the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Labor Organization,

13. United Nations Department of Public Information, “Security Council, in procedural action, votes to include human rights situation in Myanmar on its agenda,” Security Council Document SC/8832, September 15, 2006, at [www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/sc8832.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/sc8832.doc.htm).

14. United Nations Department of Public Information, “Security Council fails to adopt draft resolution on Myanmar, owing to negative votes by China, Russian Federation,” Security Council Document SC/8939, January 12, 2007, at [www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/sc8939.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/sc8939.doc.htm).

15. United Nations Department of Public Information, “Statement by the President of the Security Council,” Security Council Document S/PRST/2007/37, October 11, 2007, at <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/538/30/PDF/N0753830.pdf>.

16. United Nations Department of Public Information, “Security Council Press Statement on Myanmar,” Security Council Document SC/9171, November 15, 2007, at [www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/sc9171.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/sc9171.doc.htm).

17. Human Rights Council, “Human Rights Council Strongly Deplores Continued Violent Repression of Peaceful Demonstrators in Myanmar,” United Nations Press Release, October 2, 2007, at [www.unhcr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/view01/6F686D230293EC91C12573680072F75A](http://www.unhcr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/view01/6F686D230293EC91C12573680072F75A).

18. The Third Committee has passed resolutions condemning human rights violations in Burma many times. The most recent resolution calls on Burma to “desist from further arrests and violence against peaceful protesters, and to release all political prisoners without conditions [and] to lift all restraints on peaceful political activity, to cooperate fully with the Special Rapporteur, and to immediately ensure safe and unhindered access to all parts of Myanmar for the United Nations and international humanitarian organizations.” See United Nations Department of Public Information, “Third Committee Approves Three Country-Specific Texts on Human Rights Despite Opposition Led by Developing Countries,” General Assembly Document GA/SHC/3909, November 20, 2007, at [www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/gashc3909.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/gashc3909.doc.htm).

and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).<sup>19</sup> Though the governing board of the UNDP has directed the UNDP to “work directly with the Burmese people at the grass roots level and not through the regime,” other U.N. entities have not adopted similar restrictions.<sup>20</sup> In addition, it is difficult to see how the UNDP board’s direction could possibly be implemented. According to the GAO, Burma’s regime:

[H]as blocked international efforts to monitor prison conditions, and, until recently, forced labor cases. The regime has also significantly restricted international assistance to populations living in conflict areas, and, to a lesser degree, impeded food, development, and health programs....

The regime formalized its restrictions on the international organizations in 2006 by publishing guidelines to govern their activities in Burma. The guidelines, if fully implemented, would further tighten regime controls over these activities and contain provisions that UN officials consider to be unacceptable.

International organization officials informed us that the regime had become more restrictive of their activities since 2004.... The regime has also begun pressuring some international organizations to work more closely with regime-sponsored political mobilization groups, such as the Union Solidarity Development Association. A senior UN official in Burma told us that since 2004 the regime has made the operating environment for UN organizations far more difficult than before.<sup>21</sup>

Moreover, the Burmese government has increasingly clamped down on independent non-gov-

ernmental organizations, limiting the ability of U.N. programs to skirt government restrictions. The Burmese junta has exploited the eagerness of the UNDP and other U.N.-affiliated organizations to operate in the country to support the agenda of the government. For instance, according to a Thailand-based human rights organization, the military junta has used large internationally funded projects to further its political agenda and undermine the rights of its citizens.<sup>22</sup> The Karen Human Rights Group released a 121-page report in April 2007 that asserts that UNDP, which funds educational programs such as teacher training and informal education, is

restricted from accessing and thus implementing and monitoring their programmes in most areas of Karen State. In [Burmese government] regulations released in December 2006 covering the work of UN agencies, such restrictions were deemed necessary in order to restrict movement and prevent ‘unpleasant incidents’. In this manner the [military government of Burma] is able to utilise access to UN educational programmes as yet another means of asserting military control over the civilian population.<sup>23</sup>

The report further asserts that forced labor may be being used for U.N. projects and that U.N. funding, including UNDP funding, supports programs, such as the state-controlled Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, that employ extortion and forced recruitment to “expand military control over the population while divesting itself of the cost of operating programmes and simultaneously legitimising its policies in the name of development.”<sup>24</sup> The same report indicates that FAO, UNAIDS,

19. Government Accountability Office, “International Organizations: Assistance Programs Constrained in Burma,” pp. 8–11.

20. Government Accountability Office, “International Organizations: Assistance Programs Constrained in Burma,” pp. 8–11.

21. Government Accountability Office, “International Organizations: Assistance Programs Constrained in Burma,” pp. 16–19.

22. Claudia Rosett, “In the UN Dollars-for-Dictators Series, Next Up: Burma,” April 24, 2007, at [http://claudiarosett.pajamasmedia.com/2007/04/24/in\\_the\\_un\\_dollarsfordictators.php](http://claudiarosett.pajamasmedia.com/2007/04/24/in_the_un_dollarsfordictators.php).

23. Karen Human Rights Group, “Development by Decree: The politics of poverty and control in Karen State,” April 2007, pp. 86–87, at [www.khrg.org/khrg2007/khrg0701.pdf](http://www.khrg.org/khrg2007/khrg0701.pdf).

UNICEF, and some notable NGOs have similarly supported government programs.

**The False Hope of Engagement.** The U.N. organizations have defended their activities by arguing that “their organizations are still able to achieve meaningful results in their efforts to address Burma’s development, humanitarian, and health problems, despite the regime’s post-2004 restrictions.”<sup>25</sup> Similarly, the U.N. uses its presence to provide incentives for the Burmese government to cooperate with U.N. experts and envoys seeking to nudge the regime toward a more open political system.

There is little evidence that U.N. assistance, incentives, or other engagement efforts are leading the junta to change its ways. Despite hundreds of millions of dollars in U.N. assistance, the Burmese government has only tightened its grip on the country and further restricted the ability of U.N. organizations and NGOs to operate in the country. The government impeded efforts by the U.N. envoy to Burma, Ibrahim Gambari, and the U.N. human rights envoy to Burma, Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, to visit the country. When peaceful protests erupted in September 2007, the Burmese government reacted with brutal rapidity, killing protesters, arresting thousands, and cutting off media and Internet access to conceal their actions.

Only when international outrage over the recent crackdown precipitated increased sanctions from Western countries and harsh condemnations from ASEAN, the Security Council, and the U.N. Human Rights Council did the Burmese government react. The government agreed to let Gambari visit the country and meet with opposition leaders. It also allowed Pinheiro back in the country after his four-

year hiatus to evaluate the human rights situation, as is his mission.<sup>26</sup> It released many of the political prisoners arrested in the recent protests and did not dismiss entirely a proposal to negotiate with Aung San Suu Kyi.

There is every indication, however, that these gestures were calculated to buy time. Crises in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and elsewhere have shifted focus away from Burma, and the conclusion of the annual ASEAN leaders meeting has eased the pressure from its immediate neighbors.<sup>27</sup> The Burmese government continues to imprison Aung San Suu Kyi and hundreds of other political prisoners, attack and repress minorities, and constrain the ability of U.N. and NGO representatives to provide assistance without interference from the government. The Burmese junta expelled the head of the U.N. office in Burma for making “inappropriate” comments on the “deteriorating humanitarian condition” in Burma.<sup>28</sup> The leader of the junta, Senior General Than Shwe, refused to meet with Gambari during his visit. The junta also refused to enter into a three-way meeting between the government, Aung San Suu Kyi, and Gambari. It refused to release Aung San Suu Kyi and continues to deny the severity of its actions in the crackdown.

The reaction by ASEAN and the U.N. to the Burmese government’s refusal to change tack is muted and focused on engaging the Burmese government by providing “incentives to encourage the authorities [in Burma] to go along the path to making a stable, democratic Myanmar with full respect for human rights” and “strong encouragement of the authorities in Myanmar to do the right thing.”<sup>29</sup> This is the same failed strategy that preceded the recent crackdown. In short, it is busi-

24. *Ibid.*

25. Government Accountability Office, “International Organizations: Assistance Programs Constrained in Burma,” p. 25.

26. Paul Tighe, “UN Envoy Tells Myanmar Leaders to Talk to Opposition Parties,” Bloomberg, November 5, 2007, at [www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601087&sid=au0Bl6D5ad7c](http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601087&sid=au0Bl6D5ad7c).

27. Luis Ramirez, “ASEAN Leaders Say They Do Not Support Sanctions Against Burma,” Voice of America, November 18, 2007, at [www.voanews.com/english/2007-11-18-voa6.cfm](http://www.voanews.com/english/2007-11-18-voa6.cfm), and Benny Avni, “Asian Nations Deal Blow To U.N. Efforts on Burma,” *New York Sun*, November 20, 2007, at [www.nysun.com/article/66767](http://www.nysun.com/article/66767).

28. Bill Varner, “Myanmar’s Junta Orders Expulsion of Top UN Official,” Bloomberg, November 2, 2007, at [www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601086&sid=a.7r9UzzS8hE](http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601086&sid=a.7r9UzzS8hE).

29. U.N. News Centre, “Incentives might lead Myanmar to ‘do the right thing’—UN envoy,” October 18, 2007, at [www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=24334&Cr=myanmar&Cr1](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=24334&Cr=myanmar&Cr1).

ness as usual in Burma now that the attention of the international community and the media has shifted elsewhere.

**Recommendations for the United States.** The lesson of recent history should be clear: The Burmese government's record of responding to incentives is poor. Movement has come only after strong condemnation by ASEAN, the U.N., and other nations. The Burmese government made cosmetic concessions out of marginal consideration for ASEAN on the eve of its annual summit and a calculation that it could stem calls for wider, rigorous application of sanctions at virtually no political cost. With the spotlight now elsewhere, the recent minimal progress has already begun to unwind. Therefore, the U.S. should use its influence to:

- **Broaden sanctions on Burma through the U.N. Security Council to include all U.N. member states.** The international community must take a much harder line on Burma if it hopes to change the junta's behavior. Thus far, only a few countries have applied sanctions to accompany their condemnation. For the most part, these countries merely strengthened existing sanctions.<sup>30</sup> If Burma is to feel the pinch, sanctions must be applied by its neighbors and primary trade partners: China, India, Singapore, Thailand, and the other ASEAN nations. An arms embargo and a freeze on the junta's assets—and those of its associates and supporters—through a binding U.N. Security Council resolution could bring real pressure to bear on a regime that cares about little else. Until this happens, Burma will feel little consequence. The U.S. should again seek sanctions in the Security Council as the most appropriate means for broadening sanctions on Burma. Even though such efforts will likely be blocked by China, they will keep attention on the situation in Burma and the junta's intransigence, as well as Chinese efforts to support their client.

- **Tighten rules governing U.N. activities in Burma.** While the governing board of the UNDP has officially adopted a policy of not working through the regime, other U.N. entities lack these restrictions and regularly work with the junta on joint projects or fund programs of the government. Moreover, even though the UNDP has these restrictions in place, there are indications that UNDP funds are, likely inadvertently, supporting government projects and reprehensible policies like forced labor. The U.S. should seek to extend the UNDP's prohibitions on working with the Burmese government to all activities by U.N.-affiliated organizations in the country. It should further insist on tightening existing rules to prevent assistance from inadvertently supporting government programs, priorities, and activities. The U.S. should support a freeze on all U.N. assistance and activities in Burma not effectively governed by these tighter rules. The few benefits gained for the general Burmese public through ongoing efforts are more than offset by U.N. activities that benefit the junta and aid its repression.

**Conclusion.** Burma is a prominent example of how a nation can routinely violate the principles of the U.N. with little penalty or consequence to its standing in the organization. The concern for the people of Burma on the part of U.N. organizations is sincere and warranted, but their eagerness to assist the people of Burma against the predations of the ruling junta is being exploited by the regime to strengthen its own grip on the country. The U.N. must send a clear message to the leaders of Burma that their repression and abuse will not be tolerated or subsidized by the U.N. or its affiliated organizations.

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30. The U.S. expanded sanctions on Burma in October 2007, and the European Union tightened sanctions in November 2007. See Neil Chatterjee, "U.S. criticises ASEAN as Myanmar overshadows new charter," Reuters, November 20, 2007, at <http://in.reuters.com/article/businessNews/idINIndia-30578820071119>, and En-Lai Yeoh and James G. Neuger, "EU Tightens Sanctions as Myanmar Set to Sign Charter," Bloomberg, November 19, 2007, at [www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601080&sid=aZC4reb\\_fXyU](http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601080&sid=aZC4reb_fXyU).