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Mr Kofi Annan
Secretary-General of United Nations
United Nations Headquarters
New York, N.Y. 10017, U.S.A.

Dear Secretary-General:

Re: The visit of U.N. Envoys to Burma on 7-10 May 1997.

I am encouraged to learn that you will be sending a Special Envoys to Burma, at the recommendation of recent Commission on Human Rights, to initiate a dialogue between the Military Government of Burma, National League for Democracy and the representatives of ethnic nationalities. I believe that the continuing attentions to Burma situation by the United Nations and international community are very important to bring a democratic change to Burma and also to solve the human rights and humanitarian problems in Burma. Therefore, I respectfully urge the United Nations and international community to continue putting forward their best efforts to implement the Commission Resolution and, particularly, to initiate a dialogue in Burma. Following is the submission to you of my personal views on current situation in Burma that might help to solve the problems.

1. Division within the SLORC: There has been recent reports of internal division within the SLORC-leadership regarding with the issue of engaging in a dialogue with the National League for Democracy. Some political division within SLORC, reportedly, has also been in existence with regards to ceasefires and ethnic nationality's issues since late 1994 (A copy of letter attached for information). Although there appeared to have been such a division within Burma military regarding with federal solution for Burma in the past, I believe that people inside Burma now are more informed and having enough exposure about a future federal Burma. The members of elected National League for Democracy and, especially Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, have supported in principle about the federal solution to the ethnic nationality problems. It is evident that the elected representatives and ethnic resistance groups are now politically united on the issue of future federal union for Burma.

I believe that the SLORC-leadership currently are politically isolated not only from the international community but also from the Burmese military rank-and-files. The existing division in SLORC is confined to few top leaders of SLORC and it is much more of personal in nature. Thus, a dialogue can be achieved by putting substantive pressure on SLORC - collectively or individually - as the situation required.

2. Representatives of Ethnic Nationalities: I believe that the National Democratic Front (NDF), an umbrella group of ethnic freedom fighters, is most appropriate body to enter into dialogue with the Burmese military. Out of the listed 15 rebel groups in the attached statement, those mainly are the members of National Democratic Front, only one prominent group - the Karen National Union - has not yet signed ceasefire agreement with the SLORC. However, according to the statement made by the Ethnic Nationalities Seminar on 15-January-1997, all existing groups wanted to participate in a tripartite dialogue and in drawing up of the Federal Constitution.

3. The National Convention: The SLORC has stated on occasion that the existing National Convention as appropriate forum for dialogue. On November-1995, the National League for Democracy withdrew its participation from the SLORC-sponsored National Convention because of the undemocratic work procedures in that Convention. The U.N. Envoys should bring back the NLD into the National Convention in exchange for SLORC allowing the full participation of National Democratic Front in the Convention and

also of making appropriate changes to the Convention's work procedures. It should also be noted that the participation of NDF in such dialogue may automatically lead to a conclusion of ceasefire between the Karen National Union and Burmese army. Please also note that the ethnic nationalities organizations participation in the Convention and dialogue will certainly pave the way for solving Burma's refugee problem.

4. The role of military in politics: The SLORC insists that the military must have a leading role in future politics. While such proposition for military to have a leading role is totally unacceptable, as a measure of political necessity the participation of military in politics could be arranged. The SLORC leadership sometime have suggested that 25 percent of military personnel to be allocated in the Parliament. Arrangements can be made, for example, one military personal assigned to every four electorate and give an equal voting power in the Parliament as one elected representative. The proposition must also be made to phased-out such participation of military personnel over a certain period - say, for example, within 4-terms (16-years). It should be noted that the younger military officers in Burma, in contrast to current SLORC-leadership, are more educated and therefore their contribution to the administration of Burma can be quite valuable.

5. The transfer of power: The United Nations and international community should push for certain deadline - say, two years period - for the completion of the Constitution. The U.N. should offer to supervise in writing the federal Constitution.

In order to discharge their mandated duties, the members of parliament elected in 27-May-1990 election must be able to serve in the first term of government after the new Constitution is completed. Local by-elections may be held for the MPs who were deceased in the period leading to the forming of the government.

6. Federal structure of government: The ethnic nationality groups have the desire to work with the federal system of government. True, it is quite complex, historically, to examine the nature of ethnic rebellion in Burma. I however believe that the existing rebellion can be interpreted as of arising from the long term neglect to the minority areas by Burman dominated central governments and political inequality suffered by the minority people. Appropriate measures should be made in new constitution to redress this problem: such as a seperation of power be made between Federal and State governments; the State governments are to be given, for example, the responsibility for health, education, development and local economy; the Federal government is to be taken charge of defence, foreign affairs, etc. This will help to solve the ethnic nationality's problems in the long term.

Currently, the ethnic nationality groups are mostly in the form of armed resistance groups. They will certainly need to develop themselves to become political parties that are fit to form a local government. After a nationwide ceasefire is implemented and the dialogue has started, the ethnic nationality groups should take certain steps to disarm and demobilize their troops. These tasks must be done with the assistance of the United Nations and international community. It is quite possible that such transformation for ethnic resistance groups may take a little longer than writing constitution.

7. Alternative programme: Given the SLORC's record of breaking its promises made at the U.N. forums, there are doubts about the SLORC netotiating with the oppositions. There is a possibility that the SLORC delegation had made the invitation for U.N. Envoys simply to reduce the mounting pressure at the Commission. Therefore, an alternative programme need to be carried-out in case of the dialogue do not occur as planned.

Clearly, the SLORC nowadays do not have the support of people of Burma and majority of military rank-and-file. To my assessment, the SLORC can exist as a government simply because of there is no alternative political entity. In other words, the legitimacy of SLORC can be removed by promoting an alternative government. To this effect, certain efforts can be made to raise the profile of National League for Democracy. The National League for Democracy should be encouraged to officially assign, as a first step in that effort, its representatives to the United Nations and various countries. There have already been the

members of parliament elects residing at the various parts of the globe and they can therefore be assigned to such duty.

The other alternative is to make a forceful removal of the SLORC leadership. Though that option seems to be a rather small possibility, the United Nations and international community can certainly direct their efforts to such a resolve. I will continue to appeal to the United Nations Security Council and especially to the Government of the United States to give such pressure on SLORC should this current initiative for dialogue fails.

In closing, I thank the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Commission on Human Rights for your kind attention to Burma matters. We are interested to know the outcomes of current U.N. efforts and therefore we'll appreciate the U.N. Envoys informing about their visit to Burma to the public media.

Yours respectfully and sincerely

Mr. 29/4/97
(U Ne Oo)

Copy to:

1. Hon. Madeleine Albright, U.S. Secretary of State, United States Department of State, Washington D.C. 20520, U.S.A.
2. Mr Alvaro de Soto, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, United Nations New York, N.Y. 10017, U.S.A.
3. Ms Sadako Ogata, U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, Palias des Nations, Case Postale 2500, CH - 1211 Geneva 2 Depot, Switzerland.
4. Hon. Rajsoomer Lallah, Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Myanmar, c/- Centre for Human Rights, Palias des Nations, CH - 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland.
5. Hon. Alexander Downer, Minister for Foreign Affairs, The Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600 for information.