



Paris, September 9th 2011

To: His Excellency Mr Kyaw Zwar Minn,
Ambassador of Myanmar in France

Your Excellency,

The government of Myanmar arrested Hla Hla Win, a young Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) video-journalist and sentenced her to 27 years on the 21 December 2009.

Hla Hla Win is a talented young video journalist as well as a volunteer teacher working in monastic education centres. Hla Hla Win's work has been much commended.

Hla Hla Win was first arrested in September 2009, close to the anniversary of the 2007 monk-led uprising, and sentenced to seven years imprisonment. She had been detained under the Import/Export Act for using an unregistered motorbike. The arrest took place as she was returning from a DVB reporting assignment in Pakokku Township, Magwe division, where she had conducted interviews with Buddhist monks in a local monastery.

After she was interrogated and eventually admitted to being a DVB reporter, her jail term was extended by twenty years for violating the Electronics Act, which prohibits downloading or uploading data from the Internet that is considered damaging to the security of the military regime. The judge sentenced Hla Hla Win, without a fair trial. She was sentenced because she interviewed a monk and worked for DVB. Her jailing is thus contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Hla Hla Win must recover her complete freedom.

On 3 May 2011, the DVB launched the "Free Burma VJ" campaign, calling for the release of seventeen video journalists, imprisoned in Myanmar/Burma. This campaign began less than two months after Myanmar/Burma's new government was sworn in, supposedly hailing the beginning of Myanmar/Burma's transition to civilian rule. The DVB is not alone in thinking that the ongoing incarceration of journalists, who are among the 1995 political prisoners in Myanmar/Burma, is a sign that little has changed since the ostensible end to military rule.

Here in France, a number of organizations are very concerned about the fate of Hla Hla Win and all the political prisoners and prisoners of conscience that remain in jail. Therefore, Amnesty International, the International Federation for Human Rights, Info Birmanie and Reporters Without Borders (RSF/RWB), urge your government to release her along with the 1995 political prisoners and prisoners of conscience.

Truthfully yours,

Frédéric Debomy
Info Birmanie President

Souhayr Belhassen
FIDH President

Stephan Oberreit
Amnesty International France Director

Aye Chan Naing
DVB Director

Benjamin Ismail
RSF Head of Asia-Pacific Desk