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FREEDOM NOW

MEDIA RELEASE

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AUNG SAN SUU KYI RELEASED FROM HOUSE ARREST

Washington, D.C.: Today, the Burmese junta released Daw Aung San Suu Kyi from her illegal house arrest. The junta has detained Suu Kyi for 15 of the last 21 years, and continuously since May 30, 2003.

“We are pleased the junta has finally released Aung San Suu Kyi from her house arrest,” said Freedom Now President Jared Genser. “Unfortunately, her release alone is virtually meaningless until the junta enters into an irreversible process of dialogue resulting in national reconciliation between the junta, the National League for Democracy, and ethnic groups and a restoration of democracy to Burma. For anyone who might mistakenly view this release as a sign of change, the international community should recall that Ms. Suu Kyi was released from house arrest three times previously – in the mid-1990s and early 2000s – and nothing fundamentally changed in the country.”

Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi is the general secretary of Burma’s National League for Democracy and the face of the pro-democracy movement in Burma. In 1990, the National League for Democracy and its allies won more than 80 percent of the seats in parliament in what was Burma’s last and only democratic election. The military junta, however, never recognized the results and recently held patently fraudulent elections designed to supplant those prior results.

Ms. Suu Kyi’s latest series of illegal detentions by the Burmese junta began in May 2003. On August 11, 2009, three months after she was due to be freed from her illegal house arrest of six years, Suu Kyi was sentenced to 18 additional months of house arrest. The junta justified this extension by claiming that Ms. Suu Kyi violated the terms of her house arrest when American John Yettaw swam to her property uninvited.

Freedom Now, a legal advocacy organization based in Washington, D.C., represents Aung San Suu Kyi as her international counsel as retained by a member of her family. Freedom Now has represented Suu Kyi since 2006 and has won her case before the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention regarding various terms of her house arrest on three occasions and engaged in substantial advocacy on her behalf.

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Our mission is to free prisoners of conscience through focused legal, political and public relations advocacy efforts.