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for Peace and Human Rights

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The Honorable Kjell Magne  
Bondevik

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**LETTER FROM 112 FORMER PRESIDENTS AND PRIME  
MINISTERS SENT TO UN SECRETARY-GENERAL URGING  
HIM TO PRESS FOR RELEASE OF ALL POLITICAL  
PRISONERS IN BURMA BY THE END OF 2008**

New York and Washington, D.C. – Today, Freedom Now and the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights released a letter from 112 former Presidents and Prime Ministers from more than 50 nations to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urging him to personally travel to Burma before the end of the year to secure the release of the military junta's 2,100 political prisoners. Last month, more than 215 activists, National League for Democracy party members, Cylone Nargis relief workers, journalists, monks, and even some of their lawyers were each given draconian sentences of up to 68-years in prison.

This initiative has been led by the Honorable Kjell Magne Bondevik, former Prime Minister of Norway and President of the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights. "This is a historic outpouring of global support for the people of Burma, and I am pleased that so many have joined me in spotlighting this important issue," he said. "Today we unite to call on the United Nations to take action. The first step towards achieving national reconciliation in Burma is creating a firm deadline for the release of all political prisoners."

Joining Mr. Bondevik on the letter are such luminaries as Corazon Aquino, Tony Blair, George H.W. Bush, Jimmy Carter, Joaquim Chissano, Jacques Delors, Abdou Diouf, Elbegdorj Tsakhiagiin, Kim Dae-jung, Vicente Fox, Árpád Göncz, Mikhail Gorbachev, Václav Havel, John Howard, Lionel Jospin, Junichiro Koizumi, Chandrika Kumaratunga, John Major, Benjamin Mkapa, Brian Mulroney, Romano Prodi, José Ramos-Horta, Margaret Thatcher, Alejandro Toledo, Mary Robinson, and Lech Wałęsa.

The letter recalls that on October 11, 2007, the UN Security Council issued a presidential statement urging the early release of all political prisoners in Burma. Further, the UN set the release of all political prisoners as one of its benchmark goals for 2008. However, in direct defiance of these calls, the junta has instead increased the number of political prisoners from 1,200 in June 2007 to over 2,100 today.

"The Burmese people are counting on the United Nations to take the required action to achieve the breakthrough they desperately need to both restore democracy to their country and address the serious humanitarian and human rights challenges that they face," the letter reads. It further urges Ban Ki-moon to encourage the Security Council to take "concrete action" to implement its October 11, 2007 statement if these efforts are not successful by the end of December 2008.

**Interviews with Mr. Bondevik can be arranged through Hans Petter Bergli at  
+47-913-55-314 or [hans-petter.bergli@oslocenter.no](mailto:hans-petter.bergli@oslocenter.no)**

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December 3, 2008

Mr. Ban Ki-moon  
Secretary-General  
United Nations  
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Secretary-General:

We write this letter to applaud your public consideration of traveling to Burma, also known as Myanmar, before the end of the year. We encourage this trip because it would illustrate for the world whether or not the Burmese military regime is serious about making changes called for by the United Nations Security Council and your good offices.

As you are aware, on October 11, 2007, the United Nations Security Council issued a presidential statement calling on the Burmese military junta to release all political prisoners in Burma, including the world's only imprisoned Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Aung San Suu Kyi.

We are heartened that you have taken up this issue and reiterated in your budget request for your Special Envoy's office to the UN General Assembly that a key benchmark to measure progress in Burma is whether all political prisoners in Burma, including Aung San Suu Kyi, are released by December 31, 2008. To date, in direct defiance of the United Nations Security Council and your good offices, the Burmese military junta has instead continued a major crackdown, increasing the number of political prisoners from 1,200 to over 2,100 since June 2007.

We urge you to make it clear that all political prisoners in Burma must be released by the end of this year, regardless of whether you travel to Burma. If the Burmese junta continues to defy the United Nations by refusing to make these releases by the end of the year, we urge you to encourage the Security Council to take further concrete action to implement its call for the release of all political prisoners. The Burmese people are counting on the United Nations to take the required action to achieve the breakthrough they desperately need to both restore democracy to their country and address the serious humanitarian and human rights challenges that they face.

Sincerely,

1. The Honorable Giuliano Amato  
Former Prime Minister of Italy (1992–1993, 2000-2001)
2. The Honorable Halldór Ásgrímsson  
Former Prime Minister of Iceland (2004-2006)
3. The Honorable Corazon C. Aquino  
Former President of the Philippines (1986-1992)
4. The Honorable Patricio Aylwin Azócar  
Former President of Chile (1990-1994)
5. The Honorable Hrant Bagratyan  
Former Prime Minister of Armenia (1991, 1993-1996)

6. The Honorable Jan Krzysztof Bielecki  
Former Prime Minister of Poland (1991)
7. The Honorable Valdis Birkavs  
Former Prime Minister of Latvia (1993-1994)
8. The Right Honourable Tony Blair  
Former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland  
(1997-2007)
9. The Honorable Kjell Magne Bondevik  
Former Prime Minister of Norway (1997-2000, 2001-2005)
10. The Honorable George H.W. Bush  
Former President of the United States of America (1989-1993)
11. The Right Honourable Kim Campbell  
Former Prime Minister of Canada (1993)
12. The Honorable Ján Čarnogurský  
Former Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic (1991-1992)
13. The Honorable Fernando Henrique Cardoso  
Former President of Brazil (1995-2003)
14. The Honorable Ingvar Carlsson  
Former Prime Minister of Sweden (1986-1991, 1994-1996)
15. The Honorable Jimmy Carter  
Former President of the United States of America (1977-1981)
16. The Honorable Joaquim Chissano (1986-2005)  
Former President of Mozambique
17. The Honorable Carlo Azelio Ciampi  
Former President of Italy (1999-2006)  
Former Prime Minister of Italy (1993-1994)  
Senator for Life (2006-Present)
18. The Honorable Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz  
Former Prime Minister of Poland (1996-1997)
19. The Honorable Emil Constantinescu  
Former President of Romania (1996-2000)

20. The Honorable Roberto Dañino  
Former Prime Minister of Peru (2001-2002)
21. The Honorable Joseph Deiss  
Former President of Switzerland (1994)
22. The Honorable Philip Dimitrov  
Former Prime Minister of Bulgaria (1991-1992)
23. The Honorable Abdou Diouf  
Former President of Senegal (1981-2000)
24. The Honorable Jacques Delors  
Former President of the European Commission (1985-1995)
25. The Honorable Mikuláš Dzurinda  
Former Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic (1998-2006)
26. The Honorable Elbegdorj Tsakhiagiin  
Former Prime Minister of Mongolia (1998, 2004-2006)
27. The Honorable José María Figueres  
Former President of Costa Rica (1994-1998)
28. The Honorable Vigdís Finnbogadóttir  
Former President of Iceland (1980-1996)
29. The Honorable Vicente Fox  
Former President of Mexico (2000-2006)
30. The Honorable César Gaviria  
Former President of Colombia (1990-1994)
31. The Honorable Eugenijus Gentvilas  
Former Prime Minister of Lithuania (2001)
32. The Honorable Árpád Göncz  
Former President of Hungary (1990-2000)
33. The Honorable Mikhail Gorbachev  
Former President of the Soviet Union (1990-1991)
34. The Honorable Inder Kumar Gujral  
Former Prime Minister of India (1997-1998)

35. The Honorable Václav Havel  
Former President of the Czech Republic (1990-2003)
36. The Right Honourable John Howard AC  
Former Prime Minister of Australia (1996-2007)
37. The Honorable Anneli Jäätteenmäki  
Former Prime Minister of Finland (2003)
38. The Honorable Thorbjørn Jagland  
Former Prime Minister of Norway (1996-1997)
39. The Honorable Lionel Jospin  
Former Prime Minister of France (1997-2002)
40. The Honorable Kim Dae-jung  
Former President of South Korea (1998-2003)
41. The Honorable Ricardo Froilán Lagos Escobar  
Former President of Chile (2000-2006)
42. The Right Honourable Malcolm Fraser AC CH  
Former Prime Minister of Australia (1975-1983)
43. The Honorable Osvaldo Hurtado  
Former President of Ecuador (1981-1984)
44. The Honorable Jarosław Kaczyński  
Former Prime Minister of Poland (2006-2007)
45. The Honorable Girija Prasad Koirala  
Former Prime Minister of Nepal (1991-1994, 1998-1999, 2000-2001, 2006-2008)
46. The Honorable Junichiro Koizumi  
Former Prime Minister of Japan (2001-2006)
47. The Honorable Wim Kok  
Prime Minister of the Netherlands (1994-2002)
48. The Honorable Ivan Kostov  
Former Prime Minister of Bulgaria (1997-2001)
49. The Honorable Milan Kucan  
Former President of Slovenia (1990-2002)

50. The Honorable Vytautas Landsbergis  
Former President of Lithuania (1990-1992)
51. The Honorable Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga  
Former President of Sri Lanka (1994-2005)  
Former Prime Minister of Sri Lanka (1994)
52. The Honorable Aleksander Kwaśniewski  
Former President of Poland (1995-2005)
53. The Honorable Mart Laar  
Former Prime Minister of Estonia (1992-1994, 1999-2002)
54. The Honorable Zlatko Lagumdžija  
Former Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2001-2002)
55. The Honorable Lee Hae Chan  
Former Prime Minister of South Korea (2004-2006)
56. The Honorable Lee Hong-Koo  
Former Prime Minister of South Korea (1994-1995)
57. The Honorable Ruud Lubbers  
Former Prime Minister of The Netherlands (1982-1994)
58. The Honorable Ferenc Mádl  
Former President of Hungary (2000-2005)
59. The Right Honourable Paul Martin  
Former Prime Minister of Canada (2003-2006)
60. The Honorable Pandeli Majko  
Former Prime Minister of Albania (1998-1999, 2002)
61. The Right Honourable Sir John Major, KG CH PC  
Former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland  
(1990-1997)
62. The Honorable Tadeusz Mazowiecki  
Former Prime Minister of Poland (1989-1991)
63. The Honorable Péter Medgyessy  
Former Prime Minister of Hungary (2002-2004)
64. The Honorable Rexhep Meidani  
Former President of Albania (1997-2002)

65. The Honorable Aleksandër Gabriel Meksi  
Former Prime Minister of Albania (1992-1997)
66. The Honorable Ilir Meta  
Former Prime Minister of Albania (1999-2002)
67. The Honorable Konstantinos Mitsotakis  
Former Prime Minister of Greece (1990-1993)
68. The Honorable Benjamin Mkapa  
Former President of Tanzania (1995-2005)
69. The Honorable Alfred Spiro Moisiu  
Former President of Albania (2002-2007)
70. The Honorable António Manuel Mascarenhas Monteiro  
Former President of Cape Verde (1991-2001)
71. The Honorable Mike Moore  
Former Prime Minister of New Zealand (1990)
72. The Right Honourable Brian Mulroney  
Former Prime Minister of Canada (1984-1993)
73. The Honorable Fatos Thanas Nano  
Former Prime Minister of Albania (1991, 1997-1998, 2002-2005)
74. The Honorable Odvar Nordli  
Former Prime Minister of Norway (1976-1981)
75. The Honorable Davíð Oddsson  
Former Prime Minister of Iceland (1991-2004)
76. The Honorable Karl Auguste Offmann  
Former President of Mauritius (2002-2003)
77. The Honorable Viktor Orbán  
Former Prime Minister of Hungary (1998-2002)
78. The Honorable Andres Pastrana  
Former President of Colombia (1998-2002)
79. The Honorable Göran Persson  
Former Prime Minister of Sweden (1996-2006)

80. The Honorable Lojze Peterle  
Former Prime Minister of Slovenia (1990-1992)
81. The Honorable Petr Pithart  
Former Prime Minister of the Czech Republic (1990-1992)
82. The Honorable Romano Prodi  
Former Prime Minister of Italy (1996-1998, 2006-2008)  
Former President of the European Commission (1999-2004)
83. The Honorable Fidel V. Ramos  
Former President of the Philippines (1992-1998)
84. The Honorable Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle  
Former President of Chile (1994-2000)  
Senator for Life (2000-Present)
85. The Honorable Konstantinos Simitis  
Former Prime Minister of Greece (1996-2004)
86. The Honorable Konstantinos Stephanopoulos  
Former President of Greece (1995-2005)
87. The Honorable José Ramos-Horta  
Former Prime Minister of Timor-Leste (2006-2007)  
President of Timor-Leste (2008-Present)
88. The Honorable Poul Nyrup Rasmussen  
Former Prime Minister of Denmark (1993-2001)
89. The Honorable Mary Robinson  
Former President of Ireland (1990-1997)
90. The Honorable Roh Moo-Hyun  
Former President of South Korea (2003-2008)
91. The Honorable Arnold Rüütel  
Former President of Estonia (2001-2006)
92. The Honorable Michel Rocard  
Former Prime Minister of France (1988-1991)
93. The Honorable Eduardo Rodríguez Veltzé  
Former President of the Republic of Bolivia (2005-2006)



94. The Honorable Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada  
Former President of Bolivia (1993-1997, 2002-2003)
95. The Honorable Amos Claudius Sawyer  
Former President of Liberia (1990-1994)
96. The Honorable Jennifer Shipley  
Former Prime Minister of New Zealand (1997-1999)
97. The Honorable Vladimír Špidla  
Former Prime Minister of the Czech Republic (2002-2004)
98. The Honorable Levon Ter-Petrossian  
Former President of Armenia (1991-1998)
99. The Honorable Malam Bacai Sanhá  
Former President of Guinea-Bissau (1999-2000)
100. The Honorable Petar Stoyanov  
Former President of Bulgaria (1997-2002)
101. The Honorable Andres Tarand  
Former Prime Minister of Estonia (1994-1995)
102. The Right Honourable Baroness Thatcher of Kesteven  
Former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland  
(1979-1990)
103. The Honorable Alejandro Toledo  
Former President of Peru (2001-2006)
104. The Honorable Ung Huot  
Former Prime Minister of Cambodia (1997-1998)
105. The Honorable Cassam Uteem  
Former President of Mauritius (1992-2002)
106. The Honorable Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga  
Former President of Latvia (1999-2007)
107. The Honorable Richard von Weizsäcker  
Former President of the Federal Republic of Germany (1984-1990)  
Former President of Germany (1990-1994)
108. The Honorable Abdurrahman Wahid  
Former President of Indonesia (1991-2001)

109. The Honorable Lech Wałęsa  
Former President of Poland (1990-1995)
110. The Honorable Kåre Willoch  
Former Prime Minister of Norway (1981-1986)
111. The Honorable Albert Zafy  
Former President of Madagascar (1993-1996)
112. The Honorable Ernesto Zedillo  
Former President of Mexico (1994-2000)