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Burma - After sham elections – imminent Release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

The ITUC welcomes the reports of the imminent release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Her house arrest term expires tomorrow, and it would appear that the military regime has now signed papers authorising her release.

The Nobel Peace prize winner has been detained for 15 of the past 21 years and her release has been long overdue. Originally due to be released last year, her detention was prolonged for 18 months when an American swam across Inya Lake to her home.

The ITUC believes that an unconditional release that will allow for her to recreate and lead the dissolved National League for Democracy (NLD) is in the best interest of the Burmese people.

One of her first tasks must be to fight for new and fair elections, where her own party will be allowed to participate fully.

"Aung San Suu Kyi is an icon for democracy fighters everywhere, and we would welcome her release", said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow. "We will continue to support her in the struggle for democracy and respect for fundamental rights in Burma directly as well as through our Burmese affiliate, the FTUB " she added.

The sham elections on 7 November or her potential release cannot cover up the fact that Burma remains a military-run country without democracy and respect for fundamental human rights.

Widespread use of forced labour, and other egregious human rights abuses continue, and the ITUC supports the demand for a UN Commission of Inquiry into crimes against humanity as well as an ILO Commission of Inquiry into abuses of fundamental workers' rights.

The ITUC represents 176 million workers in 151 countries and territories and has 301 national affiliates. <http://www.ituc-csi.org> and <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

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