

## **Junta reveals its true colors in sentencing activists : AI**

jeudi 13 novembre 2008, par [Mungpi](#) (Date de rédaction antérieure : 12 novembre 2008).

The sentencing on Tuesday of dissidents to up to 65 years imprisonment reveals Burma's ruling generals' true intention to continue suppressing anyone that would raise a voice against their rule, according to Amnesty International.

Benjamin Zawacki, the Amnesty International Burma researcher, said by sentencing students and political activists to long prison terms on Tuesday, Burma's military rulers revealed their « true nature » and that its claims of implementing democratic reforms are false.

*« What happened yesterday shows that the direction of the government is to continue with repression, »* Zawacki told Mizzima.

Zawacki said the junta is also sending a message that it will not tolerate any campaign against its planned 2010 election, which critics say will cement military rule.

Zawacki, in a statement remarked, *« Even as the government continues to claim that its new constitution and plans for elections in 2010 are genuine efforts toward increasing political participation, this sentencing sends a clear signal that it will not tolerate views contrary to its own by handing down such severe sentences. »*

He said the sentences and the ongoing trials should relieve anyone of the notion that the Burmese junta has any intention of honoring its assurances to the United Nations that it will improve its human rights record and increase political participation.

*« It knows only repression, »* he added.

Similarly, New York-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) condemned the junta for the assigning of long jail terms to activists, saying it only proves the junta's intention of intimidating all opposition as they prepare for elections in 2010.

Elaine Pearson, HRW's deputy Asia director in a statement said, *« Burma's leaders are clearing the decks of political activists before they announce the next round of sham political reforms. »*

The junta, in addition to sentencing over 30 political activists including students to long prison terms on Tuesday, also jailed three lawyers who defended the cases of political activists.

*« Prosecuting lawyers who defend activists shows that the generals don't want to leave anything at these trials to chance, »* Pearson added.

Meanwhile, Tate Naing, joint secretary of the Thailand-based Assistant Association for Political Prisoners, said the junta is particularly targeting the activists sentenced on Tuesday, as they played important roles in the September 2007 protests.

*« The junta knows that these are the people who dare represent the voices of the people on the*

*street, » Tate Naing added.*

He said by harshly punishing the activists, the junta reveals it's true colors and their intent on maintaining a policy of no tolerance of any kind against their rule.

With the junta rampantly suppressing students, activists and all opposition, Tate Naing said the international community should act in support of the Burmese people and hold the junta accountable for their actions.

*« The international community should not keep silent at this time over the junta's rampant actions, otherwise it will only encourage them and worsen the situation in Burma, » Tate Naing said.*

*« The international community must act to stop the junta's crimes, » he stressed.*

---

**P.-S.**

From Mizzima.

Reporting by Salai Pi Pi, writing by Mungpi.

<http://www.mizzima.com/news/world/1289-junta-reveals-its-true-colors-in-sentencing-activists-ai.html>  
[1](#)