

# Malaysian socialists call for communist veteran Chin Peng to be allowed home

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May 31, 2009 — *Malaysiakini* — The Socialist Party of Malaysia (PSM, Parti Sosialis Malaysia) became the latest party to urge the government to allow former Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) chief Chin Peng to return home for good. The PSM said the government must honour the peace accord that it signed with the Communist Party of Malaya in 1989 and allow former CPM leader Chin Peng to return.

“The government should not backtrack on the peace accord and deny the rights promised to the former communist leader”, said PSM secretary-general S. Arutchelvan.

The peace accord was signed between the Malaysian government, the CPM and the Thailand government in Haadyai, Thailand, on December 2, 1989. Chin Peng, 85, whose real name is Ong Boon Hua, has been living in exile in Bangkok and has sought permission from the government to be allowed to return home. However, his request has been rejected and a court case to compel the government to allow his return has also failed. The court rejected the application when he could not produce his birth certificate and Malaysian citizenship documents.

Since then various quarters have asked the government to allow the former communist leader to be allowed to return based on his old age and his plea to visit his family members... The government has clearly stated that it would not entertain any request for Chin Peng to be allowed back.

However, the ban seems to be applicable only to Chin Peng as previously the government has allowed Communist Party members Rashid Maidin, Abdullah CD, Shamsiah Fakeh, Zainon Ah Yan, Suraiani Abdullah and Abu Samah Mohamad Kassim to return.

“According to the deal, they [former communists] will be allowed to come back into the country and reside if they follow the Malaysian laws”, explained Arutchelvan. He also said that those who objected to Chin Peng’s return home should not be pointing to the cruelty of the communists as a reason. “The Japanese army during their occupation of Malaya had also tortured and murdered thousands of Malaysians. However, now they are welcomed with open arms to invest in our country. Why the double standards? Let us forget the past and move ahead through reconciliation — that should be the Malaysian spirit,” he said.

The PSM, with its national congress underway in Ipoh until June 1, will table a resolution to urge the government to allow Chin Peng to return to the country.

## PSM congress

This year’s PSM congress will also see party polls taking place. However, there will be no contest for the four top party posts. Incumbent party president Nasir Hashim, 64, deputy president M. Saraswathy, 56, secretary-general Arutchelvan, 42, and treasurer A Sivarajan, 39, all retained their posts without contest.

However, there will be a keen contest for the election of five central committee members. A total of

14 members are contesting in the election which will be held on May 31.