



Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma)

နိုင်ငံရေးအကျဉ်းသားများ ကူညီစောင့်ရှောက်ရေးအသင်း (မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ)

E-mail: info@aappb.org, info.aappburma@gmail.com Website: www.aappb.org

June 26, 2018

United Nations International Day in Support of Torture Victims

Today, on the United Nations International Day in Support of Torture Victims, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) stands in solidarity with those in Burma and worldwide who have withstood torture. We also commemorate those who have sadly fallen in the fight for democracy.

AAPP has long been campaigning to end torture in Burma, which continues to be prevalent, particularly in prisons and conflict areas. AAPP calls once again for the immediate and absolute eradication of torture across Burma, and for adequate service provision for torture survivors in order to support them with the resulting physical and mental trauma. There are several steps the Burmese Government should take to ensure that torture is eliminated.

Firstly, AAPP has long considered overcrowding as a form of torture and Burma's prisons well exceed their capacity. Further, Win Mra, the head of MNHRC has stated that "current levels of overcrowding are a violation of human rights". Overcrowding impacts provisions of sanitation, food, water and healthcare. The Government should release prisoners detained whilst awaiting sentencing. This would free up space in prisons and be the easiest and simplest way to improve conditions of prisons and consequently reduce levels of torture.

Secondly, another major step is to sign the "Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment" (UNCAT). This is one of the most comprehensive legal instruments to prevent and outlaw all forms of torture. Yet the Government has yet to sign or ratify the convention.

Finally, there are 122 former political prisoners who are now MPs. They should know all too well the effects of torture and its continued existence within prisons and other sectors of society. AAPP calls upon them to show their political will and take concrete steps in eradicating torture.

Torture in all its forms is a grave human rights violation. No democratic society practices torture. There is no space for torture in a democratic Burma.

In solidarity.