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P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Burmese Junta fails again to cooperate with UN Human Rights Special Rapporteur

The Burma Action Group in South Australia deplores the Burmese military junta's refusing Professor Paulo S Pinheiro, the United Nations Human Rights Special Rapporteur, an entry visa to Burma. The Special Rapporteur Pinheiro has been charged by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights with investigating the situation of human rights in Burma and reporting back to the Commission at its annual meeting to be held in March–April. The Special Rapporteur is in the process of updating his preliminary report that was submitted to the Commission earlier this month.

The junta has failed before to cooperate with the UN Human Rights mechanism: the Special Rapporteur cut short his trip to Burma in March 2003 after he discovered that the confidential conversation with political prisoners were secretly taped by the Burmese junta.

The junta has disregarded the resolutions of Commission on Human Rights as well as UN General Assembly requesting the junta to start political dialogue and national reconciliation. The junta is alleged to have orchestrated the attack on the National League for Democracy members on 30 May 2003, in which, reliable sources state, 70 person died and the leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was detained.

The Burma Action Group points out that such repeated failure to cooperate with United Nations Human Rights mechanism is unacceptable to the international community and it calls on the military regime to allow immediate entry to Special Rapporteur Pinheiro to Myanmar/Burma so that he can complete his work for the United Nations.

BURMA ACTION GROUP (SOUTH AUSTRALIA)