



**Europe - Burma Network (EBN)  
2010 2<sup>nd</sup> semestrial meeting**

***25-26 September 2010, Athens***

**MFHR Statement**

The *Marangopoulos Foundation for Human Rights (MFHR)* expresses its deep concern about the situation in Burma, as in any other country marked by violations of human rights and absence of democratic institutions. The *MFHR* wishes to stress that the forthcoming national elections of November 7<sup>th</sup> cannot be considered as free, fair, transparent and inclusive, since more than 2000 political opponents are still held in the Burmese prisons and the leader of the most important opposition political party and *Nobel Peace Prize Aung San Suu Kyi*, is still under house arrest and hence, prevented from being a candidate<sup>i</sup>.

The *MFHR* believes that the international community, including NGOs, should be extremely cautious on their activities and the measures they propose or/and undertake within the framework of their efforts to fight against unquestionably serious and systematic violations of human rights in countries such as Burma. More concretely, the international community should avoid encouraging disruptive tendencies and being manipulated by interests that could instigate armed conflicts by taking advantage of the alarming situation of human rights in this country. We should all bear in mind – and our efforts should be oriented accordingly – that any initiative for change and reform should belong to the sovereign people of each country.

Therefore, we all share the duty to do whatever possible so as to avoid war. The recent experience of the so-called “wars against terrorism” and wars aiming at regime change is very bitter. In fact, these wars have proved to be endless and their victims, mainly among the civil population, have been numerous. Moreover, they used to be and still remain the cause of unimaginable catastrophes, and, as a result, it would be difficult to support the idea that they have contributed to the restoration of democracy and peace.

Nevertheless, a promising means of reaction against human rights violations against a people would be, among others, the recourse to international judicial and quasi judicial means. But such a recourse should be really impartial, that is, all those responsible for human rights violations should be prosecuted on an equal basis and not only, as it has unfortunately been observed – even recently within some commissions of international composition –, the suspects of one side, who, in most cases happen to belong to the side whose the interests do not coincide with those of the powerful of the world.

---

<sup>i</sup> Cf. A/RES/64/238, Situation of human rights in Myanmar, 24 December 2009, and A/HRC/13/48, Progress report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Tomás Ojea Quintana, 10 March 2010.