

107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 211

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Commending Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on the 10th anniversary of her receiving the Nobel Peace Prize and expressing the sense of the Congress with respect to the Government of Burma.

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Whereas since 1962, the people of Burma have lived under a repressive military regime;

Whereas in 1988, the people of Burma rose up in massive prodemocracy demonstrations;

Whereas in response to this call for change, the Burmese military brutally suppressed these demonstrations;

Whereas opposition leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was placed under house arrest after these demonstrations;

Whereas in the 1990 Burmese elections, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi led the National League for Democracy and affiliated parties to a landslide victory, winning 80 percent of the parliamentary seats;

Whereas the ruling military regime rejected this election and proceeded to arrest hundreds of members of the National League for Democracy;

Whereas Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's freedom of speech was restricted by the military regime;

Whereas in recognition of her efforts to bring democracy to Burma, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on October 14, 1991;

Whereas Daw Aung San Suu Kyi remained under unlawful house arrest until 1995;

Whereas even after her release, the Burmese military regime, known as the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), has continued to ignore the basic human rights of 48,000,000 Burmese citizens and has brutally suppressed any opposition to its authority;

Whereas according to the State Department, the SPDC has made no significant progress toward stopping the practice of human trafficking, whereby thousands of people have been sent to Thailand for the purpose of factory and household work and for sexual exploitation;

Whereas the SPDC has forced civilians to work in industrial, military, and infrastructure construction operations throughout Burma, and on a large-scale basis has targeted ethnic and religious minorities for this work;

Whereas a Department of Labor report in 2000 described the human rights abuses of forced laborers, including beating, torture, starvation, and summary executions;

Whereas the worldwide scourge of heroin and methamphetamines is significantly aggravated by large-scale cultivation and production of these drugs in Burma;

Whereas the Drug Enforcement Agency has reported that Burma is the world's second largest producer of opium and opiate-based drugs;

Whereas officials in Thailand have estimated that as many as 800 million tablets of methamphetamine will be smuggled into their country this year, contributing to the growing methamphetamine problem in Thailand;

Whereas there are as many as a million internally displaced persons in Burma;

Whereas the SPDC has severely restricted Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's political activities;

Whereas in September 2000, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was placed under house arrest when she attempted to visit a National League for Democracy party office on the outskirts of Rangoon, and again when she attempted to travel by train to Mandalay;

Whereas Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has recently begun talks with the SPDC which are welcomed by the international community, although the slow pace of the talks reflects on the SPDC's sincerity to move toward national reconciliation;

Whereas the SPDC has recently allowed the National League for Democracy to open some political offices, and has released some political prisoners, although over 1,800 such prisoners are believed to remain imprisoned;

Whereas with the exception of these positive developments the SPDC has made little progress in improving human rights conditions and restoring democracy to the country;

Whereas the SPDC has continued to restrict the political power of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy;

Whereas Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's struggle to assert the rights of her people has spread beyond politics and into popular culture, as evidenced by others championing her cause, most notably the rock group U2 in their song "Walk On", which is banned in Burma; and

Whereas, in the face of oppression, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has remained an outspoken champion of democracy and freedom: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That—*

3 (1) the Congress commends and congratulates
4 Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on the 10th anniversary of
5 her receiving the Nobel Peace Prize, and recognizes
6 her remarkable contributions and tireless work to-
7 ward bringing peace and democracy to Burma;

8 (2) it is the sense of the Congress that the
9 President and Secretary of State should continue to
10 encourage the Government of Burma to restore basic
11 human rights to the Burmese people, to eliminate
12 the practice of human trafficking, to address the
13 manufacture of heroin and methamphetamines, to
14 continue the process of releasing political prisoners,

1 to recognize the results of the 1990 democratic elec-
2 tions, and to allow Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the
3 National League for Democracy to enjoy unfettered
4 freedom of speech and freedom of movement; and

5 (3) it is the sense of the Congress that Daw
6 Aung San Suu Kyi should be invited to address a
7 joint meeting of the Congress at such time and
8 under such circumstances as will, in the judgment of
9 Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, advance rather than en-
10 danger her continued ability to work within Burma
11 for the rights of the Burmese people.

Passed the House of Representatives November 14,
2001.

Attest:

Clerk.