

South Africa's New Democracy Has Not Supported Burma's Democrats in Their Own Struggle to Be Free From the Military Junta

Not only has South Africa adopted the same arguments of the then-apartheid government in opposing the Security Council resolution back in 1960 to oppose Burma being on the Security Council agenda in 2007, but it has also argued Burma should be discussed in the Human Rights Council, while simultaneously opposing action on Burma in that body and privately advocating for the abolition of the country rapporteur that investigates human rights abuses in Burma.

Although most of these 29 resolutions were adopted without a vote, at every opportunity South Africa has had to vote on the situation in Burma, it has either (1) voted to kill (table) a resolution or (2) abstained from voting. Most recently, in regards to the 2006 General Assembly resolution on Burma, South Africa first voted to kill the resolution in the Third Committee, and then abstained from the resolution when a recorded vote was taken in the full General Assembly (See A/RES/61/232, December 22, 2006). In 2005, South Africa also voted to kill the resolution in the Third Committee, but that year the resolution was adopted in the General Assembly without a vote (See A/RES/60/233, December 23, 2005).

SA Ambassador Dumisani Kumalo
UN Security Council Debate on Burma
January 12, 2007

“The . . . most fundamental reason for us is that this draft resolution does not fit within the Charter mandate conferred upon the Security Council, which is to deal with matters that are a threat to international peace and security.”

“It is worth recalling that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has stated that Myanmar is not a threat to its neighbours.”

SA Ambassador Dumisani Kumalo

UN Security Council Debate on Burma

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“We believe that this draft resolution would compromise the good offices of the Secretary-General in dealing with the sensitive matters of peace, security, and human rights . . . This draft resolution, should it be adopted, may close forever the window of hope and communication opened by Mr. Gambari.”

Burma's junta has, of course, taken, interpreted, and repeated that South Africa's vote is a public endorsement of their ongoing policies. The state-run newspaper *New Light of Myanmar* said the following on its editorial page: "South Africa's UN Ambassador Mr. Dumisani S. Kumalo said ASEAN countries expressed their voices that Myanmar was not a threat to its neighbours . . . For those reasons, South Africa could not support the resolution . . . Myanmar people show their sincere thanks to the Republic of South Africa . . . for her casting a vote against the resolution." ("Myanmar's Affairs Are Internal Affairs and Do Not Pose a Threat to Regional Peace and Security," January 13, 2007).

"Therefore, the attempt of the US and Britain to interfere in the internal affairs of Myanmar was abortive . . . it can be deduced that it was the victory of the people of the international community and the people of Myanmar who love truthfulness. All the people of Myanmar are intolerant of the US and British governments which are using the UNSC to meddle in the Myanmar's internal affairs by levelling lopsided accusations." When read by Burmese people inside the country, these kinds of articles show South Africa standing in support of the military junta.

The situation in Burma today is much more severe than the situation of *apartheid* in South Africa as presented to the Security Council in 1960. Burma's democrats strongly supported UN action on *apartheid* from 1948-1962. South Africa's democracy has returned the favour by opposing UN action on Burma in the Security Council, General Assembly, and Human Rights Council.

- African National Congress government is the enemy of Burmese democrats.
- The ANC is also the enemy of democrats in **Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Turkey, Colombia, Iraq** and **South Africa**, too.
- The ANC leadership betrayed its people on socio-economic promises in the *Reconstruction and Development Programme*.

LESSONS FROM SOUTH AFRICA, FOR BURMESE LIBERATION?



**Free
Burma Campaign
(South Africa)**



"I make a direct call here, to the friends who fought apartheid South Africa, to help support the people of Burma"

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Nobel Laureate

"Please use your liberty to promote ours"

Aung San Suu Kyi, Nobel Laureate

Free Burma Campaign, South Africa

It is totally unacceptable that Aung San Suu Kyi is being held under house arrest without any charges being put to her.

FBCSA also calls for the immediate release of all ethnic leaders and all political prisoners in Burma. (Over 1000 political prisoners currently).

FBCSA strongly urges the South African Government, the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs, South Africa's other political parties, civil society and grassroots organisations to join with the AIPMC and support the release of Aung San Suu Kyi.

The following organizations support release Aung San Suu Kyi:

Anti-Privatization Forum
Congress of South African Trade Union [COSATU]
Congress of South African Students [COSAS]
Centre for Civil Society Economic Justice project
Campaigns & Education section of the Social Movements Indaba
(W.Cape)
Earthlife Africa Johannesburg
Gandhi Development Trust
Khulumani Support Group
Palestine Solidarity Committee
South African History Archive
South African Communist Party
Social Movement Indaba [Western Cape]
South African Students Congress [SASCO]
South African Council of Churches [SACC]
South African Ngo's Coalition (SANGOCO)
The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), Swaziland
Young Communist League

Date 25 May 2007

‘ANOTHER DEVELOPMENT FOR BURMA’

Mae Sod, 8-12 January 2003

‘International Institutions, Transnational Corporations and Globalisation – Future Challenges and Alternative Perspectives’

Walden Bello

Focus on the Global South

What could be an alternative path for Burma? What are crucial choices to make?

Burma has ‘the advantage of being late’. It is important to examine the development model that has been pushed on the countries in the South for the last 25 years:

- Globalised production: Our economies are being integrated into global systems of integrated production and integrated markets.
- Neo-liberal policies: Liberalisation of trade, de-regulation and privatisation.
- Export orientation: Export markets are seen as engines of production, not domestic demand.

- Foreign capital dependent: Foreign capital is seen as the strategic factor in development.
- Debt-driven: The dynamics of export oriented neo-liberal growth have made our economies become heavily indebted to IMF, the World Bank and commercial banks and private speculative funds.
- Natural resource intensive: Forces us to become competitive and focus on the extraction of natural resources since this is an area where we are supposed to have comparative advantage.
- Labour-intensive: Industrialisation is focused on labour-intensive areas like manufacturing. We have also become labour-exporting economies to regions lacking people, but the capital-rich.
- The subordination of agriculture to industry, and of countryside to urban areas. The idea is 'industry first', leading to stagnated agriculture.

The question to pose is: Do we want to recreate this structure in the future Burma? Planning must be the central activity of the authorities of a developing country, deciding what the objectives of the economic policies should be. Equity? The preservation of community? To have a pattern of development that is not disruptive? Balanced development? Planning means using the market as a tool, controlled and subordinated to basic values and our objectives. Economics is an intensely political process: Who gets what, how, and why? Economics used to be called political economy. Economics today has moved into a highly mathematic, theoretical practice. Economic collapse occurs because we have put economists in charge of the economy, not realising that economics is a highly political issue!

There are some key issues the political leadership must arrive at some sort of decisions on:

- Balance between market and state.
- Balance between agriculture and industry. Should agriculture be the lead industry?
- Asset and income redistribution.
- Trade policy for development and industrialisation. Should you use tariffs and quotas to promote your industry? Remember: If you do you will be in conflict with the WTO.
- Subsidiarity: Making production stay at the local level when this is possible, realising the continuing importance of de-centralised production.
- Ecology and community: Putting development ahead of ecological equilibrium is short term, if you do it will destroy your development.

For Burma in particular:

- How should production take place in a federal union? What sorts of economic co-operation, technical co-operation, trade relations should be in place to avoid that some parts of the union develops at the expense of others?
- How will a democratic Burma relate to the multilateral agencies like WTO, IMF, the World Bank?

Opportunities and Pitfalls

Preparing for Burma's Economic Transition

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