



## Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma)

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### **AAPP endorses US President Obama's appointment of Derek Mitchell as Special Representative for Burma**

#### **Press release**

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The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners endorses US President Barack Obama's appointment of Derek Mitchell as the US Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Burma and urges the US Administration to remain steadfast in its commitment to work for the immediate release of all political prisoners in Burma.

*"This new appointment is a positive development and indicates the seriousness with which the current US administration is taking its Burma foreign policy. It also comes at a crucial time when the military regime is trying to convince the rest of the world that it is moving in a civilian direction and other countries are falling into the 'wait and see' trap",* Bo Kyi, Joint Secretary of AAPP says.

The reality on the ground paints a different picture. U Thein Sein Administration, which came into power through a fundamentally flawed election, has shown no signs of real change. The detention and torture of political prisoners continues unabated. More than 2,073 people remain behind bars for peacefully exercising their civil and political rights. AAPP is ready to support the new Special Representative in his efforts to negotiate the release of all of Burma's political prisoners.

The Special Representative, who will guide US policy on Burma, must engage in a principled way with the military government of Burma and key bilateral and multilateral actors.

*"It is crucial that the US Administration does not accept access or meetings with high level officials as a goal in itself or a sign of progress in Burma. Real benchmarks of progress, including the unconditional release of all political prisoners, genuine tripartite dialogue for national reconciliation, the cessation of hostilities and an immediate end to all crimes against civilians, must be set",* Bo Kyi says.

AAPP urges the US to step up its efforts to support a Commission of Inquiry into crimes against humanity and war crimes in Burma.

#### **Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma)**

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