

News Release

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State for
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MRS. McDOUGALL DEPLORES TREATMENT OF BURMESE OPPOSITION LEADER AND NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LAUREATE

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, said today that Canada has sent a strong message to Burmese authorities, deploring the continued detention of Aung San Suu Kyi, recently awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Aung San Suu Kyi is the leader of the National League for Democracy.

Prime Minister Mulroney wrote earlier to Aung San Suu Kyi to congratulate her on the award of the Nobel Peace Prize and to encourage her efforts to restore the democratic process in Burma. He assured her of the strong support of the Canadian government and the respect and admiration of all Canadians.

"I consider it a gross injustice and abuse of her civil and human rights that the opposition leader has been held in detention by the Burmese authorities for two years," Mrs. McDougall said. "In fact, it is an abuse of the democratic rights of all Burmese people that the military regime has refused to hand over power to the National League of Democracy, which won an overwhelming 80 per cent majority in the elections last year."

The Minister said that Canada made strong representations to the Burmese authorities in Rangoon on November 7, expressing concern over the welfare of Aung San Suu Kyi, deploring her continued detention and calling for her release and that of other political prisoners without delay. Canada has also condemned the abrogation of the civil and human rights of the Burmese people and has urged the military authorities to honour the results of the general election of May 1990.

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The Minister said that Canada fully supports the efforts of other Western and like-minded countries to bring their concerns directly to the attention of Burmese authorities.

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