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Urging Action from the ILO on the Forced Labour Situation in Burma

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We, the members of the Burma Lawyers' Council, strongly urge the members of the International Labour Organization to support the proposition of forwarding a question to the International Court of Justice with respect to the Burmese regime, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC)'s continuing long standing and flagrant violations of the ILO Convention on Forced Labour.

Year after year, the regime's widespread use of forced labour and myriad other labour rights violations have been demonstrated in Burma.

Year after year, the regime both denies the reality of forced labour and promises to remedy the situation. Despite a few cosmetic changes to its laws, the practice is not ending or even declining.

Again, this year the regime has mouthed an agreement that it will not honor. This, by now annual, charade is no different from last year's assurances nor will it be different from next year's. It is an empty ritual to buy another year in which to use forced labour while purporting to demonstrate cooperation. As always, it is not an agreement in which the regime sincerely seeks to address the issue but rather it is an agreement designed to ensure inaction by the ILO.

In view of this long series of abuses, the Burma Lawyers' Council asserts that the principles of the rule of law and justice upon which the ILO is founded require that it forward a question to the International Court of Justice on the regime's use of forced labour, and that it do so this year.

Executive Board