



AMNESTY UK – CHILDREN’S HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK LETTER-WRITING ACTION – AUGUST 2018

MYANMAR: FORMER CHILD SOLDIER JAILED AFTER GIVING INTERVIEW

In August 2017 a Radio Free Asia interview with Aung Ko Htwe was broadcast. In the interview he described how he was abducted from a railway station in Yangon, Myanmar’s main city, in October 2005 and forcibly conscripted into the Myanmar military. He was just 13 years old at the time.

Following the broadcast of his interview, on 18 August 2017, Aung Ko Htwe was arrested. He was charged under section 505(b) of Myanmar’s Penal Code, which criminalises any person who publishes or circulates information which may cause ‘fear or alarm to the public or to any section of the public, whereby any person may be induced to commit an offence against the State or against the public tranquillity.’ This vaguely worded provision has often been used to restrict the right to freedom of expression in Myanmar.

On 28 March he was convicted and sentenced to the maximum for the offence – two years imprisonment.

During his trial he criticised the presiding judge, announced that he did not have faith in the judicial system and refused to participate further in court proceedings. For this he was charged with ‘intentional insult of a public servant sitting at any stage of a judicial proceeding’ and sentenced to six months imprisonment.

In protest against his sentence, Ko Aung Htwe reportedly stepped on a printed copy of Myanmar’s 2008 Constitution. He was charged with ‘causing destruction of the whole or any part of the Union Seal’ and faces up to 3 years in prison if found guilty.

TAKE ACTION

Please write to the Myanmar Minister of Home Affairs and Attorney General calling for Ko Aung Htwe’s release. Template letters are attached.

Please also send copies of your letters to:
Aung San Suu Kyi
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Office No. 9
Nay Pyi Taw
Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Fax: +95 67 412 396

For further information regarding this case see: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/2018-07/UA13218.pdf?fsAjLtvborgNZ0Vpy4SAwgUw.ozIQzWj>

Please let us know about any actions taken on this case by contacting:
childrensnetwork@amnesty.org.uk. Thank you.