



Norsk studentorganisasjon

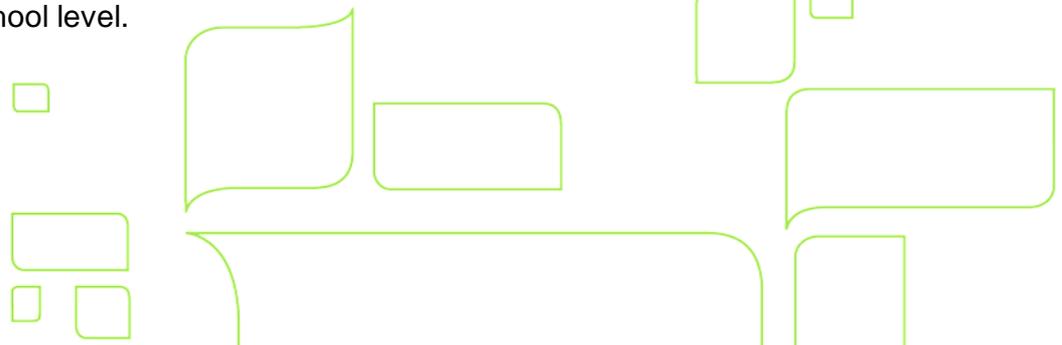
RESOLUTION: SUPPORT TO BURMESE STUDENTS

Resolution adopted at the NSO National Executive Committee 3 – 2014/15 (14. February 2015).

In November 2014 student activists from all over Burma started a 4 day long demonstration against a new law on higher education. The new law is believed to undermine academic freedom severely in Burma as it centralises authority, places restrictions on the formation of student and teacher unions and rigidifies curricula. The students organised marches between cities in Burma that was supported by teachers' unions, monks and other civil society organisations on its way. These marches were stopped several times by the police and declared illegal by the government of Burma. There have been several incidents where student activists have been met with violence by the authorities and arrested for protesting.

These protests led to the formation of the Democratic Education Movement Committee consisting of 15 student representatives from 3 different student unions. This committee formed a list of demands that has been handed over to the government. The demands are divided into 11 points:

1. To include student and teacher representatives in drafting policies, laws, and rules related to education.
2. To permit officially and recognise the legal existence of student and teacher unions.
3. To discuss critically the current compositions of the National Education Commission and Universities Coordination Committee in the current National Education Law.
4. To allow independent administration of schools in all regions.
5. To overhaul the existing systems of university admissions and examinations.
6. To adopt teaching methods which encourage independent and critical thinking of students.
7. To adopt a mother-tongue based multilingual education system.
8. To adopt a clearly inclusive education system.
9. To reinstate the students who have been expelled for their political activism.
10. To allocate 20% of government spending (National Budget) to the education sector.
11. To raise the level of free compulsory education from current primary school level to the middle school level.



The government of Burma, Parliament, the National Network for Educational Reform (NNER) and the student protesters gathered in four-party discussions on the 11th of February. Here they reached an agreement to add an amendment to the law that meets these demands. In this meeting the government also gave its promises to allow further protests until the bill has passed through Parliament. Prior experience has shown that this is not to be taken for granted.

On the 14th of February a meeting will be held to draft the amendment law and the ministry of education has promised to send the bill to parliament on the 16th of February. The National Union of Students – Norway (NSO) shows its solidarity with the students of Burma and their fight for student participation, equitable access to education and academic freedom. We hope the meetings and dialogues will lead to a constructive bill on higher education in which students' rights and academic freedom are thoroughly embedded. We also urge the government of Burma to live up to the new standards, if adopted.

About NSO

The National Union of Students in Norway (NUS Norway) represents almost 220 000 students and more than 40 student democracies from universities and university colleges. We believe in publicly financed higher education, free from any discrimination with equal access for all parts of society. More information about the organization can be found at www.student.no

