54-56 University Avenue Rangoon Burma

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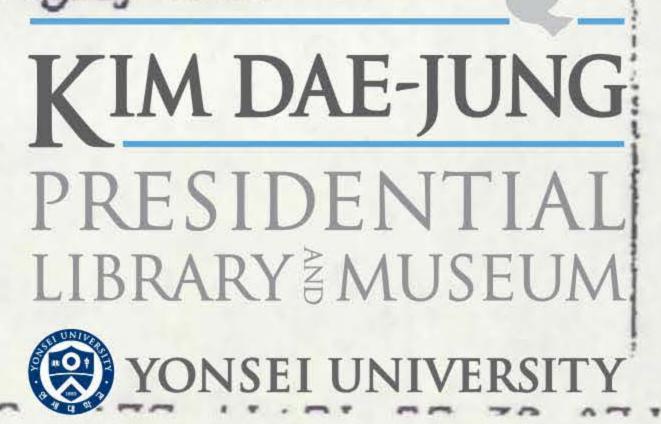
Dear Dr Kim Dae-jung

I have received your kind letter of 13th December 1994 in which you have invited me to serve as an Honorary Advisor to the Forum of Democratic Leaders in the Asia-Pacific. I am writing to say that I accept your invitation with the greatest of pleasure.

The accounts I have received of your wonderful initiative last December to convene a meeting in Seoul on the issue of democratization in Burma gave me very great satisfaction. It was surely the best demonstration of regional support for our long struggle that has so far been given. I thank you with all my heart.

It is very encouraging to learn that the Forum will continue to do all it can to assist our cause in the months and years ahead. For reasons of long isolation and many other factors the problems of Burma are uniquely difficult to understand and solve. The experience gained of struggles for democracy and human rights in other countries are sometimes only of peripheral relevance to our own situation. For that reason I do feel that in your most welcome efforts to assist our movement for democracy it will be very important to seek the knowledge and advice of those who are wholly familiar with the Burmese context. Might I therefore recommend to you Dr Sein Win, Prime Minister of our government-in-exile, who played a prominent role in your December meeting? You could do no better than to keep in close touch with him. Indeed I think it might be a very good if you were to consider inviting him also to serve as an Honorary Advisor to the Forum.

Having underlined Burma's unique difficulties there are of course many lessons to be learnt from other countries that have achieved a successful transition from military or one-party dictatorship to democratic rule. May I suggest that the Forum considers holding a conference on the theme of democratic transitions and the lessons to be learnt from these by Burma and other countries still struggling for democracy? The questions to be raised are those perennial ones which ask: Why are totalitarian regimes doomed to failure? Why is it in the military's best interest to hand over power to a fully accountable civilian government? How have such transitions been achieved elsewhere? What factors are there in any particular situation which promote or impede such a transition? What are the benefits to be derived from a wholly professionalized, apolitical military? These key issues have of course been raised in other contexts on numerous occasions, but it is essential to air them again thoroughly with



reference to those countries like Burma which are currently at a criticial stage in their political development. If the conclusions reached in such a conference could be disseminated as widely as possible, particularly through the region and within Burma too if that can be arranged, it would be of the greatest benefit to all of us.

I cannot possibly thank you sufficiently for all the interest and concern you have shown for our cause.

With best wishes, Yours sincerely,

Aung San Suu Kyi

