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To  
The Protection Officer  
UNHCR  
14, Jor Bagh  
New Delhi - 110 003  
India

Prague, March 30, 2010

### Case of harassment and attempted gang rape

Dear Madam/Sir,

In response to a recent incident that occurred in Delhi, we decided to write an open letter to you in which we request your attention and immediate support for the victim of this crime.

On March 29 around 7 pm, a Burmese asylum seeker named Ms. SUI TIN LEM, mother of two young children, nearly became a victim of gang rape by four local men at Chanakya Place (Sunday market) in Uttam Nagar, New Delhi. Although she managed to escape her attackers, she sustained serious injuries and in her desperate attempt to escape, became lost and disoriented.

She was found the next morning around 4 am by another refugee from Burma, who arranged her transfer to the government hospital Deen Dayal Apadhyay. There, however, the doctors reportedly refused to accept her for treatment. She therefore was taken back home and given treatment with the help of the New Delhi Young Men Christian Association. Presently, Ms. Sui Tin Lem is still in critical condition due to her injuries.

Ms. Sui Tin Lem and her two children just arrived in India in February 2010 from Burma's Chin State, fleeing their home as it had been under constant threats by Burmese soldiers. Their application for refugee status is presently pending, and they receive no assistance from the UNHCR.

We are aware that assaults in Delhi on refugees from Burma have happened repeatedly, and this points to an apparent lack of efficient protection.

Last month, a similar incident occurred at the same place and was reported to the Bindapur Police station by the Chin Refugee Committee. According to reports, the police have yet to react to these incidents with any kind of action.

Our organization attaches great importance to the safety and legal protection of Burmese refugees living in India. We feel particular sympathy for Ms. Sui Tin Lem and other women who have had to flee the Burmese regime and who lack any type of efficient protection or support by the host society in India.

We therefore appeal to you

- to dedicate special attention to Ms. Sui Tin Lem and to use your influence in order to provide her with urgently needed medical treatment;
- to take the necessary steps to prioritize her admission to the UNHCR refugee status and, if desired by her, to promote her resettlement;

- to improve the existing methods of protecting Burmese refugees living in Delhi, who constitute an exceptionally vulnerable group, placing a special priority on women; and
- to closely cooperate in your efforts with local self-help groups of refugees from Burma.

We will continue monitoring this and other similar cases and look forward to being able to inform the public about tangible improvements.

Yours sincerely,

Sabe A. Soe

Director of Burma Center Prague