

## National League for Democracy Statement 7/05/08

In statement No. 4/2008, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) declared a State of Emergency in Irrawaddy, Yangon, and Pegu Divisions and Karen and Mon States as a result of Cyclone Nargis's devastating destruction on the 2nd and 3rd of May 2008.

Because of the storm, hundreds of thousand of people have died and remain missing. The storm caused catastrophic and unprecedented damage of people's property in Burma. Victims and their relatives, including ethnic nationalities, are overwhelmed by their loss. Under these circumstances, people have no desire to vote in the upcoming referendum. However, in spite of the people's plight, authorities adamantly plan to hold the referendum.

As authorities neglect people's basic needs and struggles for food, shelter, and clothing, they continue to work with supporting organizations to coerce people to vote "yes" in the referendum in support of their constitution.

On 6 May 2008, the Referendum Convening Commission of the Union of Burma issued Statement 8/2008 confirming that the referendum will be held on 10 May 2008 in all states and divisions except 40 townships in Yangon division and 7 townships in Irrawaddy division. It further declared that the referendum for the remaining 47 townships will be held on 24 May 2008. Aid needs and reconstruction work in these States of Emergency will not be finished by 24 May 2008.

Authorities continue to exploit people's difficulties. The Referendum should be postponed in all parts of the country, not only in some parts. Convening the referendum under these dire conditions is deplorable. Therefore, the NLD demands that the referendum be held simultaneously in all parts of the country once the conditions in the country have improved.

NLD reprimands authorities for prioritizing approval of their constitution over people's lives and basic survival needs.

At the present time, victims of the storm need immediate international aid, including aid from the United Nations. On behalf of the people, the NLD denounces the authorities' attempt to hold a referendum instead of accepting disaster relief aid for the suffering victims of this disaster. As per the decision of Central Executive Committee held on 7 May 2008

Central Executive Committee

National League for Democracy, Yangon