

**“FREE BURMA’S POLITICAL PRISONERS”**

**A ONE-DAY EVENT AT GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 22, 2010**

**HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, in partnership with JWT**

## BACKGROUND

Burma remains one of the most repressive countries in the world. Activists and anyone outspoken against military rule have been routinely locked up in Burma's prisons for years. More than 2,100 political prisoners suffer in Burma's squalid prisons.

These prisoners include members of the political opposition, human rights defenders, artists, journalists, internet bloggers, labor activists, and Buddhist monks and nuns. They include courageous protesters who took to the streets in August and September 2007, and individuals who criticized the government for its poor response to Cyclone Nargis in May 2008.

Military abuses continue with the use of child soldiers, attacks on ethnic minorities, and forced labor. Each year, hundreds of thousands of Burmese become refugees.

Led by a shadowy clique of generals, Burma has been under military rule since 1962. The military government has announced that it will hold the first elections in 20 years in 2010. The generals hope that the rest of the world will accept a sham electoral process and treat the

government as a legitimate member of the international community. These elections will be meaningless as long as members of the political opposition and activists remain locked up.

In the lead-up to the 2010 elections, now is the time to call for the release of all political prisoners in Burma. As part of its "2100 in 2010" campaign to free Burma's estimated 2,100 political prisoners, Human Rights Watch has partnered with advertising agency JWT to organize a special one-day event in Grand Central Terminal on June 22.

The event's centerpiece will be an interactive installation which will enable visitors to sign a petition on behalf of Burma's political prisoners, to be sent to Burma's military leader as well as the United Nations and numerous governments with close ties to Burma. The media coverage around this event will help shine a spotlight on Burma prior to the election.

## CONCEPT

On June 22, commuters and tourists at Vanderbilt Hall in New York Grand Central Terminal will be invited to view a giant installation consisting of hundreds of prison cells.

In contrast with the busy surroundings, the emptiness in the massive space creates a sense of peace and tranquility. This reflects the peaceful acts that people are imprisoned for in Burma.

In solidarity, exiled Burmese monks from around the eastern United States will attend this event and express their support for the monks and other political prisoners currently languishing in Burma's jails.









A closer look at the display not only reveals photos of Burmese political prisoners inside the cells (e.g. U Ohn Than, Su Su Nway, Zargana and Nay Phone Latt), but also that the prison bars are actually thousands of pens. As the pens are removed, so are the bars of the cells.







The pens symbolize Human Rights Watch's methodology (Investigate – Expose – Change), while directly enabling visitors to signing the petition on behalf of Burma's political prisoners. Visitors are encouraged to keep the pens, which feature the address of Human Rights Watch's "2100 in 2010" campaign website: <http://www.hrw.org/free-burmas-prisoners>



The image shows the front cover of a dark, textured petition book. The title is printed in white, all-caps, sans-serif font, centered on the upper half of the cover. The text reads: "PETITION TO FREE BURMA'S POLITICAL PRISONERS". On the left edge, there are four visible metal rings for a binder. In the bottom right corner, there is a small blue square logo with the words "HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH" in white, all-caps, sans-serif font, arranged in three lines. The background of the cover is a dark, mottled grey or black.



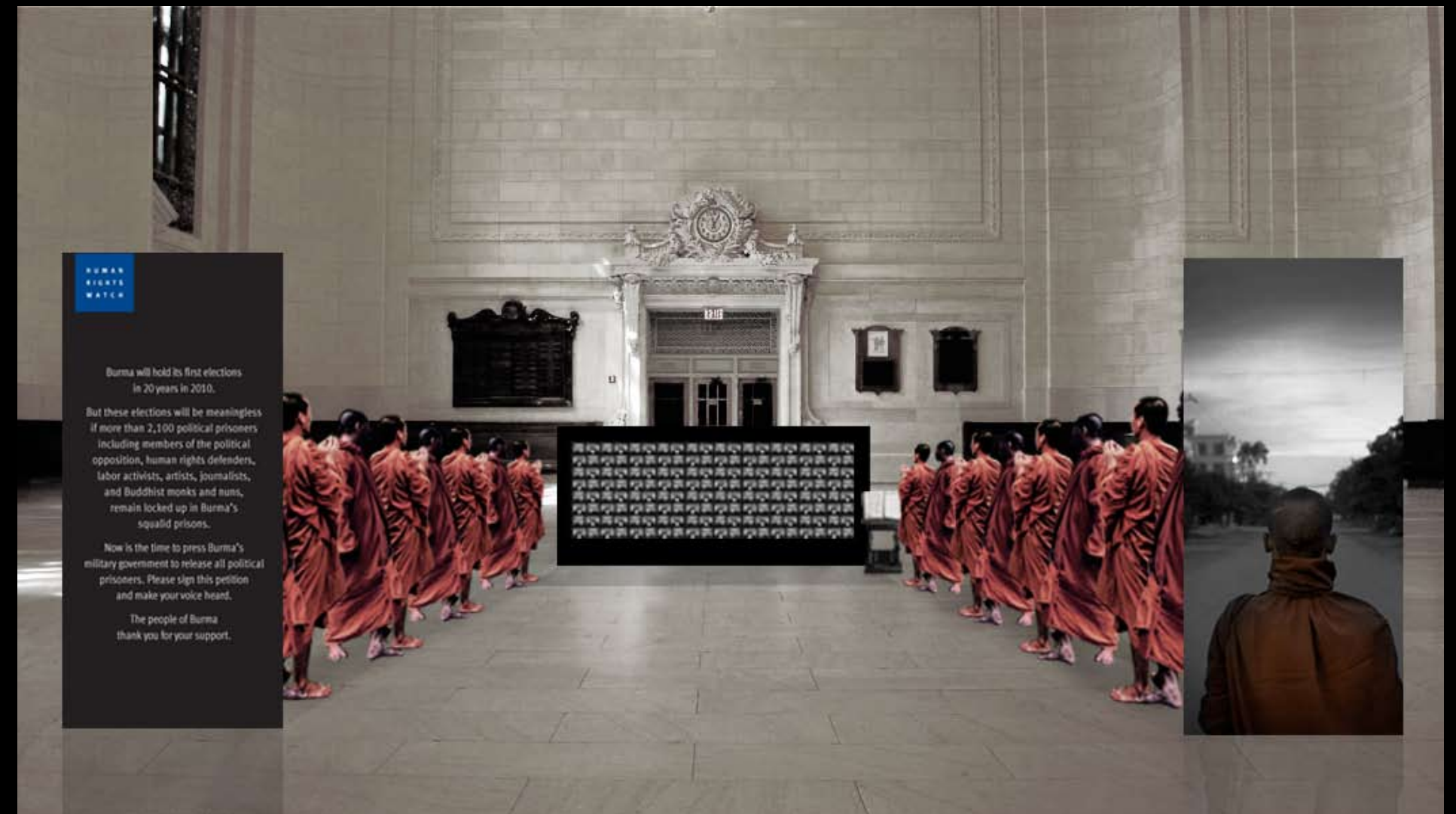


Burma will hold its first elections  
in 20 years in 2010.

But these elections will be meaningless  
if more than 2,100 political prisoners  
including members of the political  
opposition, human rights defenders,  
labor activists, artists, journalists,  
and Buddhist monks and nuns,  
remain locked up in Burma's squalid  
prisons. Now is the time to press  
Burma's military government to  
release all political prisoners.

Please sign this petition  
and make your voice heard.

Your support can help the people  
of Burma.



MESSAGE BOARD

## PLATON

Top photographer Platon accompanied Human Rights Watch on a trip to the Thai-Burma border in May 2010. He photographed members of Burma's exile community, including three monks who helped lead the peaceful "Saffron Revolution" in 2007. The portrait of these three monks will be prominently displayed in Vanderbilt Hall on June 22.

