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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NDI CHAIRMAN MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT ISSUES STATEMENT OF CONCERN FOR AUNG SAN SUU KYI

Washington DC --- Following is a statement issued by the Chairman of the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, regarding the reported hunger strike by Burmese pro-democracy leader, Aung San Suu Kyi:

“Aung San Suu Kyi is reported to have gone on a hunger strike. There are unconfirmed reports that her condition has worsened and that she is gravely ill. The military authorities refuse to allow anyone -- friend, colleague, or international observer -- to confirm these reports.

Burma’s military rulers bear full responsibility for her condition. They must take every step to ensure that she receives high quality and humane medical treatment. It is in their interest, as well as Aung San Suu Kyi's, to allow the International Committee of the Red Cross to assist in her treatment and assure the world that she is receiving proper care. The regime should also release all political prisoners, including Suu Kyi, and start a substantive dialogue that will bring Burma to the democratic rule its people voted for 13 years ago.

Democrats around the world have spoken strongly about the regime's oppression of Burma's democrats. Now it is time for them and all concerned governments to act resolutely and in concert to support the elected democrats of Burma.”

NDI is a nonprofit organization working to strengthen and expand democracy worldwide. Calling on a global network of volunteer experts, NDI provides practical assistance to civic and political leaders advancing democratic values, practices and institutions. NDI works with democrats in every region of the world to build political and civic organizations, safeguard elections, and promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in government.

NDI is supporting international efforts to promote a return to democratic government in Burma. For more information, see www.burmapeacecampaign.org

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