

SAMPLE LETTER TO TEAK IMPORTERS

Clay Kingsley, Owner
Kingsley-Bate
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Fairfax, VA 22032

April 2, 2001

We are writing to alert you to the possibility that teak products imported from Burma by your company have been associated with child or forced labor, and to request that you refrain from importing teak from Burma while it remains under the rule of the current military regime.

In a January 5th, 2001 Executive Order, the U.S. Departments of Labor, Treasury and State wrote that,

"Based on recent, credible, and appropriately corroborated information from various sources, the Department of Labor, the Department of State, and the Department of the Treasury have concluded that there is a reasonable basis to believe that the following products, identified by their country of origin, might have been mined, produced, or manufactured by forced or indentured child labor: Bamboo(Burma) Beans (including yellow, soya, and green beans) (Burma) Bricks (hand-made) (Burma, Pakistan) Chilies (Burma) Corn (Burma) Pineapples (Burma) Rice (Burma) Rubber (Burma) Shrimp (aquaculture)(Burma) Sugarcane (Burma) Teak (Burma) (emphasis added)."

The Order goes on to state that:

"federal contractors who supply products on the list are required to certify, among other things, that they have made a good faith effort to determine whether forced or indentured child labor was used to produce the item."

Regardless of whether you have federal contracts, we believe it is your moral duty to avoid association with products that may have been produced with child labor, forced labor, and/or without consideration for the environment and local communities.

The Burmese military junta is one of the most brutal and lawless in the world today. Their word alone cannot be taken as assurance that wood has been harvested sustainably or that child and forced labor has not been used. In addition, providing revenue, especially hard currency, to Burma at this time serves to prop up an illegitimate and repressive regime. The leaders of the democratically elected party of Burma, including Aung San Suu Kyi, have asked U.S. and other western firms not to invest in Burma. In the U.S., consumer boycotts have been initiated against companies sourcing apparel from Burma.

EarthRights International is a non-profit organization with offices in the U.S. and Thailand. For five years, we have monitored the human rights and environmental situation in Burma. Our research confirms what many U.S. companies have determined for themselves - there is no way to do business in Burma without abetting the violation of human rights.

Again, we urge you to cease importation of teak from Burma, and we look forward to a response to this request. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

EarthRights International

Investments made previous to 1997, such as Unocal's notorious Yadana pipeline project, are grandfathered in.

A January, 2001 Executive Order orders all federal agencies buying from Burma to determine whether certain items are made from forced labor.

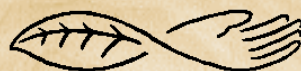
The International Labor Organization, for the first time ever, has asked all member nations to take measures against Burma for its widespread use of forced labor.

WE NEED TO BAN TRADE WITH BURMA

Despite these measures, which have the support of the Nobel Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi and the democracy movement in Burma, imports of Burmese goods into the U.S. have increased in recent years, providing additional income to the Burmese military.

As of November, 2001, 20 U.S. Senators and 33 Representatives are co-sponsoring a Burma Import Ban Bill to close the enormous loophole in U.S. efforts to promote democracy in Burma. This bill, known in the Senate as S.926 and in the House as H.R.2211, is co-sponsored by North Carolina Republican Jesse Helms and Iowa Democrat Tom Harkin, among others.

You can support this effort by contacting your Senators and Congressional Representatives and letting them know of your support for the Burma Freedom Act. For more information see www.freeburmacoalition.org



EARTHRIGHTS INTERNATIONAL

EarthRights International (ERI) combines the power of law and the power of people to protect human rights and the environment.

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Burma's forests, home to many critically endangered species, are being rapidly destroyed by logging and the teak trade. Although Burma holds 70% of the world's teak, only 10% of Burma's teak forests remain.

BOYCOTTING TEAK AND OTHER BURMESE GOODS

What do teak, shrimp, luggage, gems and birdseed have in common? They are all made in Burma, where one of the most repressive and brutal regimes in the world routinely uses forced labor and violence to control villagers and ethnic minorities. And American consumers, knowingly or not, buy into this repression when they buy goods made in Burma. In the case of teak, they are also abetting in the destruction of Southeast Asia's last frontier forests and the loss of most of the world's teak trees.

The democracy movement in Burma has asked the citizens of the U.S. and of the world to stop supporting the military dictatorship of Burma. The U.S. already has sanctions prohibiting new investments in Burma, but **imports from Burma are actually growing**. The time has come to increase the pressure on the military regime, to weaken it economically. **International pressure is working**. It is possible the regime will soon come to the bargaining table with the democratically elected party and ethnic minorities of the country to achieve peace and a lasting political settlement for Burma.



Above: The Burmese military, which routinely uses forced labor, participates in logging. The U.S. government has found a "reasonable basis" to believe that teak products from Burma are produced with forced labor.

SELECTED RETAILERS

Ken Rash's

7214 Cantrell Rd.
Little Rock, AR 72207
voice: 501-663-1818
fax: 501-663-0696

Tri-City

40900 Grimmer Blvd
Fremont, CA 94538
voice: 510-651-9600
fax: 510-651-2759

Patio Shop

420 Water St.
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
voice: 831-423-3143
fax: 831-423-0510

Home, Hearth & Patio

428 W Putnam Ave
Greenwich, CT 06830
voice: 203-622-4696
fax: 203-622-4347

Park Place

2251 Wisconsin Ave.
Washington, DC 20007
voice: 202-342-6294
fax: 202-342-9255

Casa Furnishings

DBA Patio & Things, Inc.
3900 NE 1st Ave
Miami, FL 33137
voice: 305-576-5545
fax: 305-576-5352

Hearth & Home

530 W Northwest Hwy.
Mt Prospect, IL 60056
voice: 847-259-7550
fax: 847-259-7570

Seasons Four

1265 Massachusetts Ave.
Lexington, MA 02420
voice: 781-861-1200
fax: 781-861-7608

Basil Garden Supply

95 Tinker St.
Woodstock, NY 12498
voice: 914-679-8137
fax: 914-679-2607

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT DEMOCRACY AND STOP FORCED LABOR IN BURMA

If you want to support democracy, protect the environment and stop forced labor in Burma, **don't buy apparel, teak, luggage, shrimp, gems or birdseed from Burma.**

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN TO STOP IMPORTS OF BURMESE TEAK:

- Contact major teak importers and tell them to stop buying Burmese teak.
- Contact teak retailers and ask if they are selling teak from Burma. Visit www.earthrights.org/teak/retailers.html for a complete list of company names and addresses.
- Organize a protest at teak dealers near your home or school.
- Support the Burma Freedom Act (S.926 and H.R.2211) by asking your Senator or Representative to co-sponsor or support the bill. Visit www.freeburmacoalition.org for more details.



Above: Teak is widely used for expensive outdoor furniture such as these deck chairs. For all uses, Burmese teak is a luxury item, and can be replaced by other materials.

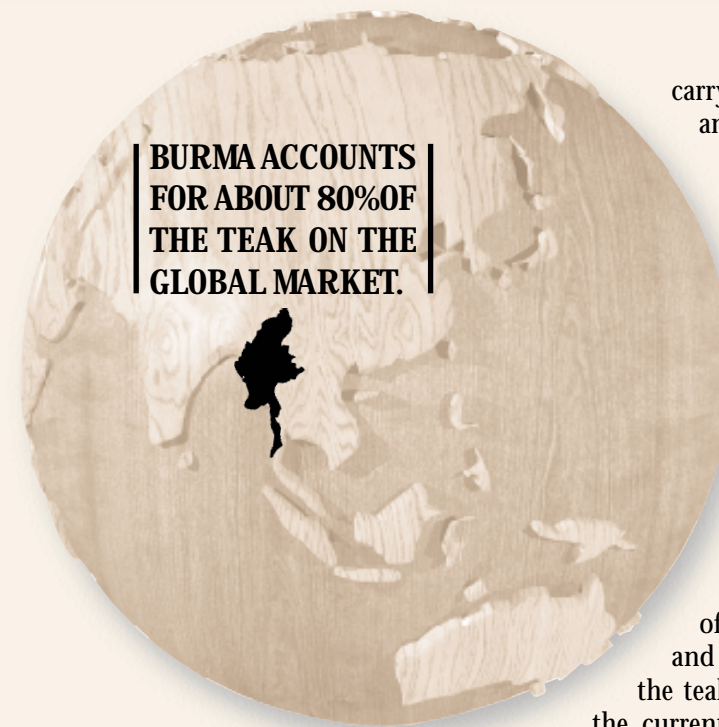
HOW DO YOU KNOW IF IT'S TEAK FROM BURMA?

Some distributors may admit that their products originated in Burma. But if a salesperson tells you that the teak was "made in Thailand," assume that the wood grew in Burma. Thailand has banned logging for the past decade, and imports at least 40% of all teak logged in Burma. In fact, almost all high-end teak products — furniture, veneers, etc. — come from Burma, home of the world's last stands of old teak forests. Other teak-producing countries like Indonesia, Costa Rica, and Brazil, harvest much younger trees from plantations. Plantation teak is relatively cheap. Expensive teak furniture made in many European countries also originates in Burma's forests. If it's teak, and it's expensive, it's a safe bet that it came from Burma. If it's not that expensive, the chances are still better than 50/50 that it came from Burma.

WHY BOYCOTT TEAK?

- Currently, U.S. companies import about \$8 million worth of teak directly from Burma, and at least \$25 million of Burmese teak from Thailand and other third-party countries. In addition, the U.S. imports an unknown quantity of teak from China and other third-party countries that is smuggled out of Burma and does not appear on shipping records.
- This money goes to prop up the military dictatorship in Burma, in contradiction to the U.S. policy of pressuring the regime through sanctions.
- The Burmese government is notorious for its widespread use of forced labor. Villagers, especially ethnic minorities such as Karen and Shan, are forced to

BURMA ACCOUNTS FOR ABOUT 80% OF THE TEAK ON THE GLOBAL MARKET.



carry heavy loads, clear roads, and grow food for battalions of soldiers, who often torture, rape and even kill villagers who do not comply with their demands. A U.S. Federal Executive Order identifies teak and shrimp among products likely to be made using child and/or forced labor in Burma.

- Burma holds some 70% of the world's teak forests, and accounts for about 80% of the teak on the global market. At the current rate of logging, most of Burma's teak trees will be gone in just

one generation. In today's Burma, environmentalists dare not protest against unsustainable logging or clearcutting — forest protection will have to wait for a transition to democracy. Meanwhile, an international boycott of teak is a stay of execution for this valuable, beautiful and unique tree.

- Teak is used mainly for outdoor furniture, flooring and decking. For all uses, Burmese *teak is a luxury item, and can be replaced* by other materials, including plantation-grown teak from other countries.
- The National Labor Committee, the Campaign for Labor Rights, UNITE!, United Students Against Sweatshops, and the Free Burma Coalition are pressuring major labels and retailers to stop sourcing apparel in Burma. A boycott of Burmese teak, shrimp, luggage, gems and birdseed will complete the strategy.

CURRENT SANCTIONS AGAINST BURMA

The U.S. and the international community have a number of sanctions in place against Burma, and additional measures are planned.

The 1997 Burma Sanctions Law prohibits new investments in Burma.

ANNUAL RATES OF U.S. IMPORTS FROM BURMA, JAN. 2000 TO JUNE 2001

Item	Annual rate
Apparel	\$387 million (86% of total)
Shrimp	\$26 million (6% of total; 43% of non-apparel)
Timber products*	\$9 million (2% of total; 15% of non-apparel)
Luggage	\$8 million (2% of total; 13% of non-apparel)
Bird seed	\$7 million (2%; 11%)
Jewels	\$6 million (1%; 10%)
Linens	\$1.9 million
Fish	\$1.4 million
Other	\$2.2 million
Total	\$448 million

*Does not include teak shipped through third countries such as Thailand and China. Third country imports of teak account for at least an additional \$25 million, not including smuggled and illegal shipments.

MAJOR IMPORTERS OF BURMESE TEAK

EarthRights International has written to major importers and distributors of teak asking them to eliminate their tacit support for forced labor and the Burmese dictatorship by stopping imports of Burmese teak. So far, the companies have not responded.

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P.O. Box 249
Sultan, WA 98294
Tel: 1800 537-3361
Fax: (330) 793-7835

Charles Dean, President
Dean Hardwoods
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Wilmington, NC 28401
Tel: (877) 430-0883
Fax: (910) 763-3748

Bobbie Lopatin, President
Country Casual
9085 Comprint Court
Gaithersburg, MD 20877
Tel: (900) 284-8325
Fax: (301) 926-9198

NOTE: Each of these importers supplies teak products to dozens of furniture and flooring retailers. A list of these retailers can be found at www.earthrights.org/teak/retailers.html