



Her Excellence Daw Aung San Suu Kyi
State Councillor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs
No(8), Naypyitaw
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar

October 2018

Your Excellence

We are writing on behalf of the Asia for Animals coalition, representing international organisations with extensive knowledge of animal welfare issues, to voice our concerns surrounding the planned export of three Asian elephant calves from Myanmar to Russia as reported within the media.¹

These elephants are reportedly² living within an environment in Myanmar where they have access to other elephants in which they can interact and socialize. As they grow they will reportedly have access to natural forested areas where they are able to find their own food sources and interact and develop relationships with other captive elephants. Removing them from such unrestrictive conditions and placing them within the confines of the Durov Animal Theatre is likely to have serious consequences for their individual welfare.

There are grave concerns regarding whether the Durov Animal Theatre has the resources, expertise or facilities to provide adequate care for these elephants. The theatre is a public entertainment facility and these elephants will be subjected to brutal training regimes, poor living conditions and forced to endure the indignity and in many cases physical pain of being made to perform circus tricks, such as standing on their heads, spinning in circles whilst standing on one leg and walking on top of rolling barrels. Forcing animals to perform unnatural tricks also portrays them to the public in a humiliating manner, instead of showing their natural grace and beauty and thereby promoting empathy and respect.

Elephants used in circuses are deprived of the ability to perform most natural behaviours. They are either confined, tethered, or under the ankus of the trainer. Most important, they are deprived of

¹ <https://www.mos.ru/en/news/item/43390073/>

² Personal communications with Dr Khyne U Mar

<https://www.zsl.org/sites/default/files/document/2014-01/demography-life-history-strategies-elephants-Myanmar-khyne-mar-2007.pdf>

choice: choice of behavior, social encounters, activity, cognitive engagement, foraging, foods, resting times and places – in short, everything with which a free animal occupies him or herself all day is denied and replaced by human-mandated activities. The combination of boredom, frustration and fear can cause severe pathology.³

Elephants may not show overt signs of distress. Chronic stress is internalized to engender physiological and psychological changes that make the animal ill over time. Chronically high levels of cortisol, immune suppression, structural changes in the brain, cognitive dysfunction, heart disease, kidney disease, weakening of the muscle structures, and endocrine disturbances are but some of the problems which chronically stressed animals may suffer from. Poor veterinary care and compromised immune function from stress can result in high parasite burdens, nutritional disturbances, viral infections, and wounds that do not heal.

Elephants are a wide ranging species with complex behavioral and psychological needs and the nature of the Durov Animal Theatre alone is wholly inadequate at managing these needs. In addition, there are concerns that the cold winter climate in Moscow, with the average mean temperature falling below freezing for five months per year, could further worsen the welfare of these elephants.

Furthermore, there are grave concerns regarding the impact an international relocation could have on the elephants' welfare. The international travel would result in an enormous amount of stress which could have serious and lasting repercussions on their physical and psychological well-being.

Asian elephants are an endangered species and CITES trade restrictions also apply requiring close scrutiny of international transactions.

We thereby respectfully urge you – on the grounds of animal welfare and international trade restrictions - to intervene, and kindly request your consideration to revoke the permission to export these three calves to ensure they remain within their country of origin.

Sent on behalf of the following organisations;

1. Animal Concerns Research & Education Society
2. Animal Guardians
3. Animal People Forum
4. Animals Asia Foundation
5. Big Cat Rescue
6. Blue Cross of India
7. Born Free Foundation
8. Change for Animals Foundation
9. Federation of Indian Animal Protection Organisation (FIAPO)
10. Humane Society International
11. International Animal Rescue
12. International Fund for Animal Welfare
13. The Jane Goodall Institute - Nepal
14. The Philippines Animal Welfare Society
15. RSPCA

³ Kati Loeffler, DVM, PhD, MRCVS, Veterinary Advisor, International Fund for Animal Welfare. Personal communications, 2015

- 16. Sarawak Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
- 17. Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (HK)
- 18. World Animal Protection

Please respond to David Neale, Animal Welfare Director, Animals Asia Foundation, Room 1501, Tung Hip Commercial Building, 244-252 Des Voeux Road Central, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong
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With support from;

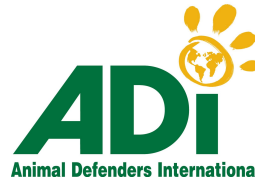
1. Act Asia for Animals, WORLDWIDE
2. Action for Dolphins, WORLDWIDE
3. Agriculture & Forestry University, NEPAL
4. All Life In A Viable Environment, JAPAN
5. Alliance for Animal Rights, IRELAND
6. Alliance for Earth, Life, Liberty & Advocacy, HONG KONG
7. Ananta Jyoti Dhayn Kendra , NEPAL
8. Andhra Pradesh Goshalala Federation, INDIA
9. Anima-Society for the Protection of Animals, CHINA
10. Animal Advocacy and Protection, EUROPE
11. Animal Defenders International, LONDON
12. Animal Friendly Alliance, HONG KONG
13. Animal Friends Croatia, CROATIA
14. Animal Friends Niigata, JAPAN
15. Animal Liberation Sanctuary, NEPAL
16. Animal Nepal, NEPAL

17. Animal Projects & Environmental Education Sdn Bhd, SEA
18. Animal Protection and Environmental Sanctuary, SOUTH AFRICA
19. Animal Protection Network, SWEDEN
20. Animal Refuge Kansai Japan, JAPAN
21. Animal Rights Action Network, IRELAND
22. Animal Rights Center Japan, JAPAN
23. Animal Rights Hawaii, HAWAII
24. Animal Sanctuary Trust Indonesia, INDONESIA
25. Animals Australia, AUSTRALIA
26. Australians for Animals, AUSTRALIA
27. Bali Animal Welfare Association, INDONESIA
28. Bali Street Dogs, INDONESIA
29. Behavioural & Environmental Solutions, USA

30. Bharatiya Prani Mitra Sangh, Hyderabad, INDIA
31. Blue Cross of Hyderabad, HYDERABAD
32. Blue Cross Youth Seva Sangham - Andhra Pradesh, INDIA
33. British Hen Welfare Trust, UK
34. Causes for Animals (Singapore) Ltd, SINGAPORE
35. Centre for Orangutan Protection, INDONESIA
36. Changsha Small Animal Protection Association 长沙市小动物保护协会, CHINA
37. China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation, CHINA
38. China Farm Animal Protection Coalition 中国农场动物保护联盟, CHINA
39. China Zoo Watch, CHINA
40. Coexistence of Animal Rights on Earth, KOREA
41. Compassion in World Farming, WORLDWIDE
42. Compassion Unlimited Plus Action, INDIA
43. Compassion Works International, USA
44. CPR Environmental Education Centre, INDIA
45. Darjeeling Animal Shelter, INDIA
46. David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, UK
47. Djurens Ratt (Animals Right Sweden), SWEDEN
48. Djurrättsalliansen (The Animal Rights Alliance), SWEDEN
49. Djurskyddet Sverige (Animal Welfare Sweden), SWEDEN
50. Dobro Surtse, BULGARIA
51. Dogstop, ASIA
52. Dzivnieku Draugs, LATVIA
53. Egyptian Society for the Protection & Welfare of Working Animal, EGYPT
54. Egyptian Society of Animal Friends, EGYPT
55. Elemotion Foundation,
56. Elephant Asia Rescue & Survival Foundation, HONG KONG
57. ElephantVoices, KENYA
58. EMS Foundation, AFRICA
59. Environment Films, UK
60. European Animal Protection Foundation / Europaeische Tierschutzstiftung, SWITZERLAND
61. FAADA, SPAIN
62. Finnish Federation for Animal Welfare Organisations (SEY), FINLAND
63. FLIGHT, INDONESIA
64. Franciscan Order - Hong Kong, HONG KONG
65. Free the Bears, ASIA
66. Freedom for Animals, UK
67. Friends of Asian Elephant - Asian Conservation Alliance, THAILAND
68. Friends of the Orangutans, MALAYSIA
69. Future for Elephants, WORLDWIDE
70. GAIA (Voice of the Voiceless), BELGIUM
71. Global Sanctuary for Elephants, INTERNATIONAL
72. GREY2K USA Worldwide, WORLDWIDE
73. Greyhound Compassion, EUROPE
74. Himalayan Animal Rescue Trust, NEPAL
75. Hollow Logs, FRANCE
76. Hong Kong Dolphin Conservation Society, HONG KONG
77. Iceland Animal Welfare Foundation, ICELAND
78. In Defence of Animals USA, USA
79. In Defence of Animals, India, INDIA
80. Infocircos, SPAIN
81. Instituto Pasteur de São Paulo, BRAZIL
82. International Animal & Birds Welfare Society, INDIA
83. International Otter Survival Fund, WORLDWIDE
84. International Primate Protection League, INTERNATIONAL
85. Island Rescue Organisation, THE PHILIPPINES
86. Jakarta Animal Aid Network, INDONESIA
87. Japan Anti-Vivisection Association, JAPAN

88. JBF (India) Trust, INDIA
89. Jinchuan Society for the Protection of Stray Animals 甘肃省金昌市金川区流浪动物保护协会, CHINA
90. Kalimpong Animal Shelter, INDIA
91. Karuna Society for Animals & Nature, INDIA
92. Kathmandu Animal Treatment Centre,
93. Korea Animal Rights Advocates, KOREA
94. Korean Alliance for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, KOREA
95. Korean Animal Welfare Association, KOREA
96. Landmark Foundation, SOUTH AFRICA
97. Lanta Animal Welfare, ASIA
98. Life Conservationist Association, TAIWAN
99. Lifelong Animal Protection, HONG KONG
100. Light of Life Veterinary Clinic, SINGAPORE
101. Liuzhou Small Animal Protection Association 柳州市小动物保护协会, CHINA
102. Marine Connection, UK
103. Melbourn Dolphin, AUSTRALIA
104. Mind Life Foundation, INDIA
105. moonbears.org, KOREA
106. Navale Consulting Group, INDIA
107. Neotropical Primate Conservation, UK
108. NY4Whales, US
109. Orangutan Aid, HONG KONG
110. PAWS Bangkok, BANGKOK
111. PAWS Philippines, THE PHILIPPINES
112. People for Animals, Trivandrum, INDIA
113. People social service and education development society, INDIA
114. Performing Animal Welfare Society, USA
115. PETA Asia 亚洲善待动物组织, HONG KONG
116. Plants and Animals Welfare Society (PAWS Asia), ASIA
117. Pro Wildlife, WORLDWIDE
118. Qingdao Society for the Protection of Animals 青岛爱护动物协会, CHINA
119. RAKSHA, INDIA
120. Rattle the Cage Productions, THAILAND
121. Rimba Satwa Foundation , INDONESIA
122. RSPCA - New South Wales, AUSTRALIA
123. Sahabat Alam Malaysia (Friends of the Earth Malaysia), MALAYSIA
124. Sahayog Organisation, Andhra Pradesh Goshalala Federation, Hyderabad, INDIA
125. SAI (Save Animals Initiative) Sanctuary Trust, INDIA
126. Sanctuary for Health & Reconnection to Animals & Nature, WORLDWIDE
127. Scorpion Foundation Indonesia, ASIA
128. Showing Animals Respect and Kindness, WORLDWIDE
129. SJZ One Meter More Love stray cats rescue group 石家庄一米爱流浪猫救助团队, CHINA
130. Society for Animal Welfare and Management, NEPAL
131. Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals - Penang, MALAYSIA
132. Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals - Selangor, MALAYSIA
133. Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Singapore, SINGAPORE
134. Society for the Protection of Animals Ljubimci, YUGOSLAVIA
135. Society for Travelers Respecting Animal Welfare (STRAW), AUSTRALIA
136. Soi Dog Foundation, THAILAND
137. Stiftung fuer Baeren / Foundation for Bears, SWITZERLAND
138. Stray Relief and Animal Welfare, INDIA
139. Sun Bear Centre - Kalimantan, INDONESIA
140. Swiss Animal Protection, CHINA
141. Taiwan SPCA 台灣防止虐待動物協會, TAIWAN
142. Thai Fund for Elephant Foundation, THAILAND
143. Thane Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, INDIA
144. The Cattitude Trust - Chennai, INDIA

145. The Corbett Foundation, INDIA
146. The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, KENYA
147. The Home of Love (The Salvation Centre of Animals), CHINA
148. The Humane Education Trust, SOUTH AFRICA
149. The Jane Goodall Institute - Australia, AUSTRALIA
150. The Jane Goodall Institute - UK, UK
151. The Kerulos Center Elephant Liberation, USA
152. The Kerulos Center Science in Service to Animals, USA
153. The Welfare of Stray Dogs - Mumbai, INDIA
154. The Winsome Constance Kindness Trust, AUSTRALIA
155. Tibetan Volunteers for Animals, INDIA
156. United Against Elephant Polo, INDIA
157. Voice for dogs abroad, ASIA
158. Voice for Zoo Animals, JAPAN
159. Wild & Free - Rehabilitation & Release, UK
160. Wild Futures, WORLDWIDE
161. Wildlife Alliance, CAMBODIA
162. Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand, SE ASIA
163. Wildlife in Need, PHILIPPINES
164. Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre, INDIA
165. Wolf Watch UK, UK
166. Working for Animals , AUSTRALIA
167. World Animal Net, WORLDWIDE
168. World Association of Zoos and Aquariums, SWITZERLAND
169. Xi'an Grenadine Companion Animal Rescue Center 西安红石榴伴侣动物救助中心, CHINA
170. YeuDongVat, VIETNAM
171. Zoocheck Inc., WORLDWIDE





DAVID SHEPHERD
WILDLIFE
FOUNDATION



Djurens Rätt.

DJURRÄTTSALLIANSEN

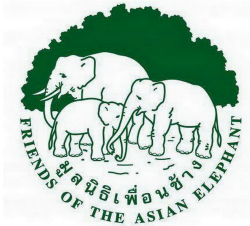
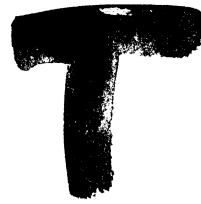


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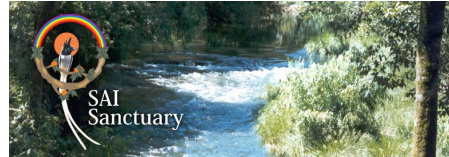
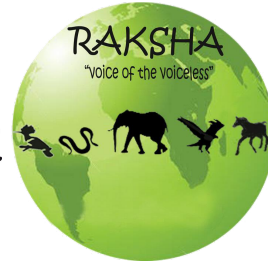


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