About Burma:
Burma, formally known as Myanmar, is the second largest country in Southeast Asia, bordering India, China, Thailand and Laos. Though endowed with rich natural resources, Burma’s GDP per capita is the 13th lowest in the world, according to the UN Development Program. Burma’s military dictatorship is infamous for its corruption and economic mismanagement, dooming the country’s 47 million citizens to extreme poverty. Beyond development issues, Burmese history is blighted by ethnic violence. The military junta’s counter-insurgency initiatives against the ethnic populations employ execution, torture, rape, forced labor, and displacement as weapons of war against civilians. Recently, the government has made motions towards reform by releasing political prisoners and increasing some political responsiveness. Hope has begun anew, though Burma’s political future still remains uncertain.

Tonight’s Stories
The stories performed tonight are all excerpts from Nowhere to be Home: Narratives from Survivors of Burma’s Military Regime, a book recently published by Voice of Witness. “The narratives in this book offer a powerful depiction of daily life within Burma as well as the tenuous border regions to which an estimated 1-2 million have fled. In their own words, men and women from Burma describe how their lives have been deeply altered by the country’s current military regime: refugees who have fled military-sponsored violence and ethnic and religious persecution; political dissidents jailed and tortured for their actions and youth and community leaders working for solutions at great personal risk. This book is a unique compilation of stories from Burma, as seen through different lenses of gender, location, education, political opinion, and ethnicity. Woven together, these stories are testament to the complexity and magnitude of the human rights crisis in Burma, as well as to the resilience of its people.”
Program

~ Dinner is Served ~
Live Burmese Music
Su Wai, Local Musician

Introduction
Clémentine Stip, co-President Stanford STAND

Yun’s Story & Kyaw Zwar’s Story
Performed by Stanford Spoken Word

Advocacy Story
Kate Morton, Stanford Intern at US Campaign for Burma

Myra Dahgaypaw
Campaigns Coordinator, US Campaign for Burma

Environment and Conflict in Burma
Jared Naimark, Stanford STAND Coordinator

Aye Maung’s Story & Ma Su Mon’s Story
Performed by the Stanford Storytelling Project

Personal Experience
Shared by Armelle Goreux, Stanford STAND Member

Hla Min’s Story
Told by Stanford STAND

Closing Remarks
~Mingling & Dessert~

Special Guests

Myra Dahgaypaw
Myra is the Campaigns Coordinator for the US Campaign for Burma, an organization whose mission is “to build a broad based coalition of grassroots and institutional support for freedom in Burma.” Myra Dahgaypaw is a Karen human rights activist from Karen State, Eastern Burma. She was an internally displaced person for about 12 years and a refugee for 17 years until she resettled to the United States. Myra has lost many family members and friends to the brutality of Burma’s military regime. Since the age of 13, Myra has played a strong role in her community as an organizer and a human rights advocate. Please visit http://uscampaignforburma.org/ for more information!

Su Wai
Su Wai was born and lived in Burma until she recently arrived in the US. She has been a top Saung Gauk (Burmese harp) player, and singer in Burma — much in demand for performing and singing at weddings and other special events. She plays a variety of styles, including the old royal, classical repertoire (called Mahagita), as well as Asian and Western pop songs, blues, jazz, Brazilian, and classical. Su Wai recently released a CD, entitled Gita Pon Yeik, which means The Image of Music.

Stanford STAND is a student-led human rights activist and advocacy organization on campus. We seek to end and prevent genocides in the world around us. To that end, we focus on the current genocide in Sudan as well as the mass atrocities currently occurring in the DR Congo and in Burma. We also are working for the creation of a permanent anti-genocide constituency to ensure that genocide prevention becomes an institutionalized foreign policy issue. We work on the Stanford campus, in the local Bay Area, and in Washington D.C., using a three-pronged approach: advocacy, awareness, and fundraising.

Learn more at stand.stanford.edu.