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***Religions for Peace* Calls on Myanmar Government to Exercise Restraint
and Enter Peaceful Dialogue**

**—“The World’s Religious Communities Stand with
the Buddhist Monks of Myanmar in their Peaceful Protest.” —**

(NEW YORK, 25 September 2007)—Dr. William F. Vendley, Secretary General of *Religions for Peace*, the world’s largest and most representative multi-religious coalition, today issued the following statement calling on the military government of Myanmar to exercise restraint and enter into peaceful dialogue with Myanmar’s religious communities and other groups:

“The Buddhist religious community of Myanmar, demonstrating immense courage, has taken to the streets in peaceful protest seeking political and economic reforms.

The Buddhist monks of Myanmar are demonstrating the power of religious communities as a force for peace. The world’s religious communities of all faiths must stand with the Buddhist monks of Myanmar in their peaceful protest.

The world’s religious communities share the belief that we all are part of the human family and are only as secure as the most vulnerable among us. Right now, the Buddhist religious community of Myanmar faces a grave and imminent threat of violence because it chose to speak out for peace. All people of faith, their religious communities, and leaders must raise their voices against violence and speak out in support of the people of Myanmar and their religious communities.

The Myanmar authorities must exercise restraint, eschew violence, and enter into peaceful dialogue with the country’s religious communities and other groups.

The international community must work together urgently to ensure a peaceful outcome in Myanmar.

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon should use all tools at his disposal to avert a violent crackdown on peaceful protestors by the Myanmar military or its proxies. He should also encourage meaningful, peaceful dialogue between the military and all sectors of Myanmar society, including the Buddhist religious community and the opposition National League for Democracy.

Violence against the religious communities in Myanmar should trigger immediate action by the United Nations Security Council, as well as regional mechanisms, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).”

Founded in 1970 as an international, non-sectarian organization, the global Religions for Peace network comprises a World Council of senior religious leaders, including Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, and Indigenous leaders from all regions of the world; more than seventy national and four regional inter-religious bodies; and affiliated networks of religious youth and women of faith.

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