

KEITH TAYLOR
Green Party
for the South East of England

Shri Okram Ibobi Singh,
Chief Minister of Manipur,
Chief Minister's Bungalow,
Athokpam Makha Leikai,
P.O. Thoubal

8th November 2010

Dear Minister

I am writing to call for the release of Irom Sharmila Chanu who has been on hunger strike since November 2000, protesting against the imposition of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act 1958 (AFSPA). She was charged with attempting to commit suicide despite the fact that hunger strike, according to the World Medical Association, is not equivalent to suicide as those who embark on hunger strike generally hope and intend to survive.

Irom Sharmila has never been brought to trial, but has been detained, force fed and re-arrested many times. I urge the Government of Manipur to release Irom Sharmila and withdraw the criminal proceedings of attempting to commit suicide.

Irom Sarmila's hunger strike is in protest against the imposition of AFSPA which, according to Amnesty International, provides impunity for perpetrators of serious human rights violations, including extrajudicial executions enforced disappearances, rape and torture. The act also violates human rights law, including right to life, the right to remedy and the rights to be free from arbitrary deprivation of liberty, all of which are enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which India has signed. I therefore urgently call on the government to repeal the AFSPA in line with its commitment to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Many thanks for your attention to this highly important matter. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,



Keith Taylor, Green MEP, South East England.