

Team Burma Event Guide



Thank you for hosting a Team Burma event!

It's critically important that while the world turns its attention to the Olympics, people are made aware of the fact that Olympic host China is the biggest supporter of Burma's military regime, which tortures and kills, uses rape as a weapon of war, denies aid, and turns children into soldiers.

Have questions? Email info@8808forburma.org or call 347-756-4088

Six athletes will comprise Team Myanmar at the Beijing Games from August 8 to 24. But a limitless number of people will make up Team Burma during that same period of time and beyond. Refugees, activists, men, women, young, and old – Team Burma includes all individuals around the world who want to see an end to military dictatorship and the beginning of a free and democratic Burma. Team Burma is you.

Here's a summary of how you can host a Team Burma event:

- On August 8, 2008 – a global day of action – and after until August 24, you'll set up a table in a **public place**. You'll station one or two people at the table and roving to hand out flyers and get contact information for Team Burma, while the others gather people in a circle for a game of chinlone, Burma's national sport, using a special Team Burma chinlone ball. See suggested roles for volunteers under "Steps to Set Up Your Event."
- You'll ask everyone who walks nearby to **join Team Burma**. They can take a pin or a flyer, or jump into an ongoing Team Burma chinlone game.
- To join, all they have to do is **sign up** with their contact information and step into the Team Burma chinlone circle.
- You should **invite local media** to come cover your event.

Chinlone is a great way to bring new and old faces in the Burma movement together. The rules are simple: don't let the ball touch the ground and don't use your hands! Because there aren't competing teams, players have to work in unity and, in the end, everyone wins.

This is why we chose chinlone as a way to connect Burma's situation to the Beijing Olympics and the principles of the Olympic charter – human dignity, peace, and brotherhood.

Also, the game is fun! Team Burma's slogan is "Giving Dictatorship in Burma a Good Kick!" Every time someone gives our chinlone balls a kick to keep it in play, he or she makes a statement about military dictatorship in Burma – that it needs a good kick.

Steps to set up your Team Burma event

1. Decide on a location

You should hold the event in a place with **lots of foot traffic** at the time of your event, so that you can ask lots of people to join Team Burma and play a round of chinlone.

- The ideal location is a **public place** with lots of foot traffic and space for a small chinlone game. Check out the website for your local parks department to see if you need a permit for setting up a table at a park or other public location.
- Or, you could hold your event in a dense shopping area, near a tourist-friendly monument, or in front of a friendly grocery or natural foods store— just think of the best place in your community to attract lots of Team Burma recruits.
- Take a minute to think about what you'll do in case of rain. Is your location close to an awning or overhang? Can you set up a tent over your table?

The best time to hold this event is afternoon rush hour, or when you think lots of people will be walking around outside.

2. Get ready for your Team Burma event

Invite friends. If you're involved in any activist communities or organizations, send an email, and call other members who might attend. Use Facebook, Myspace, and other social networking websites to invite people to your event.

Contact your local media. Don't forget to call media outlets a day or two before the event, and to call them back the morning of the event. Be sure to check out our enclosed sample media advisory and talking points for the event.

Prepare yourself and your team. You have a very important role at the event itself. It's your job to assign tasks, manage all the volunteers who come, and respond to any problems that come up. So you should really think through the whole event from start to finish. Here are some key tips:

- Know who's coming. A good rule of thumb is that half as many people as sign up will actually attend, but you can improve that by making reminder calls and knowing people personally.
- If anyone volunteered to photograph and/or video the event, follow up with them by phone and make sure they can upload those photos to the Internet and send them to info@8808forburma.org.
- If someone volunteered to come early and help set up, arrange a time and place to meet before the event.
- Send out a reminder email to all volunteers the day before and the day-of the event.

Prepare your materials. Materials included in the materials section of the 8-8-08 for Burma website are:

- A flyer to hand out to passersby at your event
- A Team Burma signup sheet
- Sample media advisory and script

- A Chinlone leader script
- A Tabler script
- A Rover script
- A poster/banner you can print at home or at a copy shop

And you'll receive 1 stenciled Than Shwe chinlone ball in the mail (more available online for a donation to cover costs)

Here are other important materials you'll need:

- A booth or table that's light and easy to set up, like a card table
- Strong tape for the banner, and a couple rocks to hold down paper if it's windy
- Optional: Candy as prizes and thank yous for signing up for Team Burma

Have a plan for bad weather. If you see lightning, hail, or other extreme weather during your event, you should have a back-up plan. Think of any indoor or covered locations where you can go flyering. Is there an indoor mall that might let you flyer there? Is there a store awning that could protect your team while you flyer?

3. Suggested guidelines for the event itself

Show up 15-20 minutes early to set up. Hang banner in front of the table or behind it if there's a wall.

Assign everyone a role. For this event, some of the roles that need to be filled include:

- **Tablers** – Pass out flyers, pins and obtain contact information. Use the Tabler script for suggestions.
- **Media coordinator** — Watches out for media, and helps the event host talk to them using the Media advisory and script.
- **Chinlone leader** – Begins and maintains an ongoing chinlone game directing people to the table. See the Chinlone leader script in the materials section.
- **Rover** - Walk around the area directing people toward the table and chinlone game. Use the Rover script to tell people what the event is about.
- **Photographer** – Take pictures of Team Burma event and chinlone players.

Review script with volunteers. Be sure to remind them that for this event to be successful, you all need to actively reach out to passersby.

Get someone to staff the booth or table. Again, remind him or her to be assertive, and call to people as they walk by! If you wait for people to come to you, you won't talk to very many people.

Get someone to be a Rover with a clipboard and flyers. Apart from one or two people at the table, almost *everyone else* but the chinlone leader should fan out with clipboards or flyers getting people interested and over to the event.

Start a chinlone game! Encourage people at the table and other passersby to join the game.

Run the table for up to 2 hours.

Take pictures and get people to sign up for Team Burma.

At the end, gather all your volunteers and thank them for coming! Be sure to ask everyone to sign the contact sheet. Also, make sure that whoever took pictures can send them to info@8808forburma.org. Mail your contact list to 8-8-08 for Burma, PO Box 20025, New York, NY 10001.

Chinlone & how your event should feel

How your event should feel:

The goal is to have the table feel **fun** and **inviting** – not like a political table with literature.

Keep the table **exciting** and **energetic** by actively talking to people and passing out flyers.

Try to keep the chinlone game going in a way that is inviting for new people to join in. **Use the game to get people to the table to sign up for Team Burma and vice versa.**

How To Play Chinlone:

Get however many people you have together in a circle and toss the ball to someone in the game. The goal is to keep the ball off the ground and not to use your hands. If the ball hits the ground, someone picks it up and throws it to someone in the circle to start the game up again.

Tips for Chinlone Leader:

The chinlone leader is responsible for keeping the game fun and friendly, and directing people to the table to sign up for Team Burma.

- When someone new joins the game, quickly tell them the rules – no hands, no points, no teams, and have fun.
- When the ball rolls away and you have to wait for someone to go get it, that's a great chance to get to know people in the circle. It's also a great chance to ask people if they've signed up for Team Burma yet and tell them that people are having events like yours all over the world.
- Expect that some people will be hesitant to play or nervous that they aren't good. Reassure them that this is supposed to be a fun and new experience and that nobody loses chinlone. To keep the game light and fun, you might want to institute a "No Sorries" rule that bars people from saying "sorry" if they kick the ball out of the circle or let it hit the ground.

Further Resources:

History of Chinlone
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinlone>

The August 8, 2008 (8-8-08) Global Day of Action
www.burma-network.org

"Mystic Ball", a documentary about chinlone
<http://www.mysticball-themovie.com/>