

U.N. envoy arrives in Myanmar

by UPI

YANGON, Myanmar - Ibrahim Gambari, the U.N. special envoy, arrived Thursday in Myanmar for another effort to get the military junta to talk to its opposition. Myanmar leaders put forward their own proposals for democracy after Gambari's last visit. They include a constitutional referendum in May and elections two years after that. Critics say the junta is no closer to yielding than it was in September when scores of people were killed in a crackdown on demonstrations, The Times of London reported. Gen. Thang Shwe's government has not released its proposed constitution. "Without input from the public and opposition parties, the process fails to be a real step toward democracy," said Brad Adams of Human Rights Watch. "Gambari should tell the generals that marching a fearful population through a stage-managed referendum will not advance democracy or reconciliation in (Myanmar)." The party, led by Aung San Suu Kyi, won the last election in 1990. But the junta refused to recognize the results, and she has spent most of the intervening years under house arrest.

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