

KNU Statement Appealing UN and Democratic Countries to Act for Stopping Offensives against Kachin and Other Ethnic Nationalities

1. The Karen National Union (KNU) is very much concerned about the Kachin and Shan peoples' life and security as President Thein Sein government has been sending more troops and conducting military offensives against the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) and the Shan State Progress Party (SSPP). Human rights violations, rape of women and atrocities come with the offensive and the peoples in the conflict zones have to face untold miseries and denial of humanitarian assistance.

2. On May 30, 2011, U Thein Sein was inaugurated as president of the country. It was his most important obligation to settle the political problems relating to the ethnic nationalities and take steps for establishing peace. However, the installation of a new government has not stopped military offensives in the ethnic nationalities' areas. As the Burmese troops remain in the Karen State and other KNU areas as before, military attacks, human rights violations, forced labor, use of women and children as human shields, looting, arbitrary arrest and torture of the innocent civilians are being committed by the Burmese troops, as before.

3. Due to violent military offensives in the Kachin and Shan States in the north, more than 20,000 civilians have to flee and hide for their life. The offensives aim to destroy not only the KIO and the SSPP but also the civilian populations. The vicious military offensives with gross human rights violations, rape of women and destruction of livelihood of the people can only be termed as war crimes and crimes against humanity.

4. The ethnic nationalities are ready for dialogue if President U Thein Sein sincerely wants to resolve the political problems. In July this year, the United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC) wrote a letter on behalf of the ethnic nationalities, to President U Thein Sein, urging him to hold dialogue for peace. However, as there has been not only any response but major offensives have been launched with increasing ferocity in the northern part of Burma, we, the KNU, earnestly appeal to the United Nations and democratic countries of the World:

- (a) To vigorously give more pressure to President U Thein Sein government in order to stop immediately the sending of more troops to the north and the offensive against the Kachin and Shan peoples;
- (b) To undertake for resolving political problems together with the ethnic nationalities for establishment of peace in the country, after stopping also the Burmese offensives against the peoples in the Karen and Karenni States;
- (c) To urge the Burmese government to allow humanitarian organizations to give assistance to the Kachin and Shan peoples in distress;
- (d) To find means and ways for protecting the security and rights of the Kachin and Shan peoples, and giving humanitarian assistance to them.

Peace, stability and guarantees will not be able to be established, so long as the political problems of Burma are not resolved by political means.

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Date - 2/11/2011
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