



**Statement of Karen National Union Standing Committee of Mutraw District Regarding the Demands of Civilians of Hpla Koh Village Tract and Ee Tu Hta IDP Camp**

Date: 29 May, 2017

1. We, the Standing Committee of Mutraw District, have received full information concerning the civilians living in Hpla Koh Village Tract and the civilians taking refuge in Ee Tu Hta IDP Camp. On May 24, 2017, these civilians released a statement demanding the withdrawal of 17 Burmese government army camps stationed inside Mutraw District and along the Thai-Burmese border of the Salween River, so that the IDPs can return to re-establish their homes and livelihoods without harassment or threats. We view their demands as reasonable and fully support them, as these are necessary conditions for genuine and sustainable peace.
2. The Burmese government army's occupation and building of military roads, their protracted persecution, continued atrocities, and indiscriminate killings are the root causes of these civilians fleeing their homelands and living in a constant state of fear for decades. Until, and unless, the government withdraws its troops and army bases, there will be a lack of suitable land to use for livelihoods, as well as no guarantee for a safe return of the IDPs. Thus, these people will certainly not be able to return to their lands.
3. Our District Standing Committee has analyzed and deliberated over the demands of the civilians, and have resolved to inform KNU Central leaders, relevant authorities of neighbouring countries, and other related organizations about this issue, and have requested them to support the IDP communities' demands. We regard the demands of the civilians as a genuine prerequisite for them to be able to securely return to re-establish and restore their homes and livelihoods.
4. To realize the demands of these civilians, we are committed to working together with them in finding appropriate solutions. At the same time, we would like to invite those who are willing to support the IDPs to come and join our existing efforts.

Standing Committee  
Karen National Union  
Mutraw District