

ETHNIC NATIONALITIES COUNCIL UNION OF BURMA

Statement No. 1 / 2005

The Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC) held its quarterly meeting in Kawthoolei on 4-5 March 2005. The meeting was attended by the ENC members, Advisors and ENSCC members, and discussed current political situation in the Union of Burma.

The Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC) is committed to finding a political solution to the crisis in Burma through a 'Tripartite Dialogue' as called for by United Nations General Assembly resolutions since 1994.

The Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC) is committed towards rebuilding the Union of Burma that has been torn apart by war since independence in 1948.

To find such a solution, the Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC) is committed to the following objectives:

1. The non-disintegration of the Union of Burma;
2. The non-disintegration of national unity;
3. The stability of the sovereignty of the Union of Burma;
4. The development of a genuine multi-party democracy;
5. The promotion of social truths such as justice, freedom, equality, etc; and
6. A political role for the Tatmadaw in the Union of Burma in the transition period.

To achieve these objectives, the Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC) encourages the ruling State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) and the various ethnic armies to enter into ceasefire talks and engage in political dialogue.

The Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC), however, believes that the current National Convention will not lead to a democracy as claimed by the SPDC. The National Convention -

Does not include the political parties that won the 1990 general elections. Their leaders are in fact under detention; Does not reflect the aspirations of the ethnic ceasefire groups who have repeatedly called for a dialogue on the future of Burma. Some of their leaders have been detained;

Procedures are not democratic or transparent. The delegates to the National Convention are not allowed to freely and openly debate the constitutional principles proposed by the SPDC. It is also illegal to discuss the constitution outside the National Convention.

To make the National Convention meet the objectives of the SPDC's proclaimed road map towards a democracy and reflect the will of the people, the ENC calls on the SPDC to -

1. Amend the procedures of the National Convention to allow free and open debate on the constitutional articles proposed by the SPDC;
2. Release the detained leaders of the political parties and ceasefire groups;
3. Allow the political parties to function freely and to participate in the constitution drafting process;
4. Allow the ethnic ceasefire armies to freely organize and to participate in the constitution drafting process;
5. Conclude ceasefires with the remaining ethnic armies and allow them to participate in the constitution drafting process;
6. Rescind SPDC Law No.5/96 and allow the public to openly debate provisions of the new constitution;

7. Allow the international community especially ASEAN to observe the National Convention, the proposed referendum for the new constitution, and the projected general elections under the new constitution;

Should the SPDC not change or accept any of the suggestions above, the Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC) will have no option but to strongly oppose any new constitution that the SPDC proposes.

If the SPDC cannot accommodate the Ethnic Nationalities Council's suggestions towards finding a political solution, the ENC will hold the SPDC responsible for all consequences including the resumption of hostilities.

**Ethnic Nationalities Council
(Union of Burma)**

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