



Statement Supporting Karen Global Action for Peace in Burma/Myanmar

18 June 2018

Karen Peace Support Network

The Karen Peace Support Network (KPSN) fully supports Rallies for Peace in Burma organized by Karen communities in Canada, the United States, Australia, and around the world. We support their calls for global action to denounce the Burmese military's human rights violations; to increase humanitarian aid and support for ethnic civil society on the Thai-Burma Border; to provide transparent and open reporting on development aid to Burma; to investigate Burmese military leaders for war crimes against civilians; and to implement sanctions on the Burmese military, government leaders and military related companies.

The Burmese military is without a doubt using the peace process and the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) as tools to invade and attack ethnic armed groups, including not only non-signatories to the NCA but signatories as well. Under the pretext of "development," the military has intruded into Karen National Union territory, threatened local communities, murdered a civilian leader, and forced thousands of civilians to flee their lands and homes.

In the conflict areas, human rights violations and displacement of ethnic nationalities, including the Karen, are increasing due to the Burmese military's wars of aggression. With declining humanitarian assistance, an uncertain peace process, and increased armed conflict, the future for refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP) is bleak.

We urge the US, Canadian, Australian, and European governments to call on the Burmese military and civilian government to cease all military offensives nationwide, to stop ethnic cleansing against all minorities, and to focus on achieving genuine peace in the country. IDP and refugee return must be voluntary and should only begin when peace is secured, and their dignity and human rights are fully granted. During the interim transition period, vulnerable communities should be protected and should not have to endure further humanitarian crises due to declining aid and pressure to return to Burma before it is safe.

KPSN is the largest Karen civil society network consisting of 29 organizations in Burma. Its members have been providing support for vulnerable people and communities in this conflict torn region for decades, striving to empower local communities, build transparent and accountable institutions, and help create a sustainable and equitable peace in Burma.

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