



## **KNU/KNLA PEACE COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS TOKAWKO, KAREN STATE**

### **CLARIFICATION STATEMENT**

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of June 2014, Mahn Nyein Maung from the KNU made a public statement saying that the KNU is representing all Karen. He also mentioned that he is a representative for the UNFC and NCCT which includes all 13 Ethnic Groups.

Such a claim is totally untrue and full of manipulation for their own self-interest and glory. By using the KNU name, it doesn't mean that he represents all the Karen, or has a right to decide the future of the Karen as the Burmese authoritarian government also claims. The Karen people are the ones that will decide their own future and destiny.

Mahn Nyein Maung also publically attacked Aung San Suu Kyi on changing the 2008 Military Constitution to the People's Constitution. Over 90% of the Burmese public including the Ethnic groups support this change. The KNU/KNLA PC firmly believe and stand for this change, without the change from the 2008 Military Constitution to a solely People's Constitution, Burma's future will go nowhere. Only those who are biased and with a low class mentality and self-interests, would dare oppose this change publicly just to please the regime.

The KNU/KNLA Peace Council totally supports Aung San Suu Kyi, the 1988 generation students and those who are striving for the freedom of all citizens in Burma, including the Ethnic groups, and we will work closely together with any political party who is fulfilling the will of the people.

Since the KNU/KNLA Peace Council began peace talks with the Burmese Military Regime in 2006, Gen. Htain Maung made a strong stand, demanding the Burmese military troops to leave the 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade area first, prior to beginning talks, otherwise

he would not be willing to talk. This took two weeks of confrontations and negotiation. Gen Ler Moo and Gen Htain Maing, including Dr. Timothy, made certain that all the Burmese troops left from the 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade area before they commenced peace talks in Yangon. The late Gen. Bo Mya's son, Gen. Nerdah Mya was aware and can testify of the whole process of tough stand-off in negotiations with the Burmese during that time.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade led by Gen Htaing Maung, Gen Ler Moo and Dr. Timothy strategized three things before engaging in talks with the Burmese:

1. Regaining of our land
2. Karen Soldiers to live among the Karen people, to secure a peaceful purpose and environment
3. Karen State must be ruled by Karen not Burmese.

Under these 3 conditions we made a peace dialogue with the Burmese Military Regime for the stability of the Karen by peaceful means.

The KNU/KNLA PC will oppose any corrupt so- called Karen leaders who sell the future of our own Karen into the hands of the oppressive Burmese authoritarian government in the name of peace.

Peace is simple. True peace comes with common sense and with sincerity, prioritizing in the interests of the people. What we are seeing in this 'friendship' previously addressed is the total opposite, with inviting the enemies to invade the Karen land to build the future of our Karen, which does not result in true peace. We want true peace which comes with freedom and dignity for our people, to be respected in their own identity and landscape. Look at the example and past experience that we have mentioned above. Our Karen and all the Ethnic nationalities are traumatized by the Burmese war crime activities and their authoritarian rule for more than 60 years. We cannot sell our Karen future into the hands of the Burmese authoritarian government.

The KNU/KNLA Peace Council will unite and work only with those who serve the interests of our own Karen for peace, freedom and prosperity.

It is so shameful to see these corrupt leaders taking photos with the Burmese President or Army Chief Min Aung Hlain and handing over our Karen future. While our Karen are still suffering and their future still bleak. Trust and Friendship with Burmese Authoritarians is not first the first image to portray. Showing respect for each ethnic identity and landscape and not to overrun each other but to live in peace is the first impression that needs to be presented. Being friends with our former enemies is not meaningful or impressive for our Karen. What is meaningful and impressive for our Karen is freedom from Burmese Military Oppression, Karen country run by Karen and freedom to express our own Karen identity.

Trust has to be earned by the showing of their sincerity in removing all the military troops, military activities and authoritarian hostile activities from the Karen and all the Ethnic areas.

When the KNU/KNLA Peace Council made peace dialogue with the Burmese they had the Burmese Military removed from Karen areas, but when the KNU made peace dialogue with the Burmese they not only brought back Burmese Military into Karen areas but also have now allowed them to go further into areas that they had not been before.

If this small group KNU leaders continue as they are doing now, bringing the Burmese military into the Karen areas - it is similar to the Jews being betrayed into the hands of Hitler. They may not realize that their actions are selling the bones of their Karen Revolutionaries into the hands of the Burmese. All we want is, to not allow hostile authorities to come and disturb the peaceful living of our people and their areas.

Let our people live in peace and security and build a future of their own.

We wrote a letter to the KNU leaders advising them not to rush into talks with the Burmese first but to put priority on the unity within the Karen such as between the

DKBA, KNU/KNLA Peace Council and the KNU, then, go as one unified team to talk to the regime. But they disregarded this and went ahead anyway, jumping in first as a lone cannon to talk with the Burmese regime and it seemed like for them to unite with the Burmese was more important to them than unity among the Karen.

Another issue that is bothering us very much is that these corrupt KNU leaders are saying that "political problems must be solved by political means" which is totally wrong. A political problem is as simple as "you go out and I come in to take your seat".

For the Karen and all the other Ethnic, conflict didn't start as a political issue. It started by the Myanmar race wanting to dominate and trying to colonize all the Ethnic states through ethnic cleansing and genocide against Ethnic nationalities. Civil war and conflict with the country started as a national issue. Without solving this as a national issue and regaining the right to remain in their identity and be shown respect of landscape, which is a basic and fundamental issue - there won't be any peace and stability in Burma.

But what these KNU leaders are doing is totally wrong, they are emphasizing on political dialogue just for their own position and power and completely ignoring the basic fundamental rights of the Karen and all the Ethnic nationality issues.

The Burmese agenda from the very beginning was to dominate all the Ethnic and colonize and take over under their Authoritarian rule.

The whole issue comes down to one basic point - leave us alone, leave our Karen alone, leave our Ethnic alone as we are sick and tired of their violent and authoritarian rule - if we can achieve that, then there will be peace in Burma.

The KNU/KNLA Peace Council and DKBA and other Karen groups including KNU leaders who are patriotic for the freedom of our Karen will not allow our future to be sold into the hands of the Burmese authoritarian rule. In other words, we do not agree with the behavior and the motive of these few KNU leaders, who are friendly and associating with the Burmese authoritarian rulers for their own self-interest. This

handful of KNU leadership cannot represent all Karen and all the Karen will not agree with them to allow the Burmese to invade and colonize all Karen future.

This statement is not pointing the finger or saying we are better than others, but this statement is just to reveal the truth and clarify what is going on in the present situation and what are the priorities and needs of our Karen. This is not about the difference between the KNU/KNLA Peace Council and the KNU but this is to clarify that you cannot make such a claim on behalf of all Karen without any transparency, openness or sincerity for our Karen people as a whole.