



6.9.14

BURMA | Organizations Worldwide Call For Peace Action on Kachin Anniversary

Three years ago today, the Burma Army broke a 17-year ceasefire with the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and unleashed a major new military offensive against the Kachin people. Since June 9, 2011, over 120,000 Kachin people have been displaced, forced to flee their homes.

At least 200 villages have been destroyed. A humanitarian emergency unfolded, with a desperate need for shelter, food and medical care. As the Kachin Peace Talk Creation Group has said, "the impact of the war this time has been enormous. Many have lost land, plantations, livelihood. Those people can no longer support their children. People are living in the middle of nowhere, hopeless, desperate, suffering...People are hopeless and desperately need help."

In recent months, several rounds of peace talks have been held and hopes for peace have been raised. Even as the government and the Burma Army have engaged in talks with the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO) and its armed wing, the KIA, attacks by the Burma Army have continued and the situation remains unstable. On April 10, 2014, Burma Army soldiers attacked the Lagat Yang camp for internally displaced peoples, forcing IDPs to flee. Since the beginning of May, fighting has continued in Mungbaw, resulting in at least 500 IDPs seeking shelter in Muse.

The Burma Army and the government of Burma have committed myriad human rights violations with absolute impunity since breaking the ceasefire. Among the more heinous abuses are credible allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity, which merit immediate investigation. These criminal acts include grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions such as the deliberate targeting of civilians by military forces, rape and other forms of sexual violence, extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detention, torture, and restrictions on the provision of humanitarian assistance. Such violations could amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. Immediate, thorough, and impartial investigation into these and all allegations of serious human rights abuses must be conducted. Suspected perpetrators must answer for their crimes before a competent judicial authority, and victims of serious rights abuses must be afforded the justice they deserve.

On this third anniversary of the resumption of war against the Kachin, the undersigned organizations, representing members of the European Burma Network, Kachin civil society organizations and other concerned groups around the world, make the following urgent recommendations:

1. We call on the Government of Burma and the Burma Army to immediately cease its attacks in Kachin State, to end hostilities, establish peace and withdraw to positions held before the ceasefire was broken;
2. We call on all parties to the conflict to fully respect and protect international humanitarian and human rights laws;
3. We call for urgent protection for internally displaced people, and unhindered international humanitarian access to all parts of Kachin and Northern Shan States;
4. We call on the international community to provide urgently needed humanitarian assistance to the internally displaced people in Kachin and Northern Shan States;
5. We urge the People's Republic of China to respect the principle of 'non-refoulement', as set out in international humanitarian law, and respect the rights of refugees;
6. We urge the government of Burma to provide full compensation to all those displaced by the conflict, to enable them to rebuild homes, businesses, schools, clinics, farms, and for suffering caused;
7. Given the refusal of the government of Burma to investigate and act to end the use of rape and sexual violence, the international community should establish an independent investigation into the use of rape and sexual violence;
8. Women must be involved in the peace process and future dialogue to agree a political settlement.
9. We call on the President of Burma and the head of the military to publicly commit to constitutional reform to establish a federal system of government, and enter into immediate dialogue to achieve this goal;

We call for immediate steps to build trust and strengthen dialogue, and hope that three years of war will be brought to an end soon and the people of Kachin and Northern Shan States will be able to live in genuine freedom with lasting peace.

1. Actions Birmanie
2. All Kachin Students and Youth Union (AKSYU)
3. ALTSEAN-Burma
4. ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights (APHR)
5. Association Suisse Birmanie
6. Burma Action Ireland
7. Burma Aktion (Germany)
8. Burma Campaign UK
9. Burma Info (Japan)
10. Burma Partnership
11. Chin Human Rights Organization
12. Children on the Edge
13. Christian Solidarity Worldwide
14. Committee for Restoration of Democracy in Burma C.R.D.B (Germany)
15. FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights)
16. Fortify Rights
17. Free Burma Campaign (South Africa)(FBC(SA))
18. Free Youth Burma
19. Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust (HART)

20. Humanity Institute
21. Info Birmanie
22. Institute for Asian Democracy
23. Inter Pares
24. Kachin Association Norway (KAN)
25. Kachin Baptist Church Denmark (KBC.DK)
26. Kachin Community- The Netherland
27. Kachin Community- Sweden
28. Kachin Community-UK
29. Kachin Development Networking Group
30. Kachin Relief Fund-UK
31. Kachin Refugee Committee (KRC) Malaysia
32. Kachin Development Foundation, USA
33. Kachin National Organisation-Australia
34. Kachin National Organisation-Denmark
35. Kachin National Organisation-India
36. Kachin National Organisation- Japan
37. Kachin National Organisation-Malaysia
38. Kachin National Organisation-Thailand
39. Kachin National Organisation- UK
40. Kachin National Organisation-USA
41. Kachin Literature and Culture Committee- Singapore (JLH-Singapore)
42. Kachin Peace Network
43. Kachin Politics Watch and Research Network
44. Kachin Women Peace Network
45. Kachin Women Union
46. Karenaid
47. New Zealand Kachin Community
48. Norwegian Burma Committee
49. Pan Kachin Development Society
50. Partners Relief & Development UK
51. Research and Translation Consultancy Cluster
52. Society for Threatened Peoples
53. Swedish Burma Committee
54. U.S. Campaign for Burma
55. Voice of Women