



**OFFICE OF THE SUPREME HEADQUARTERS  
KAREN NATIONAL UNION  
KAWTHOOLEI  
[www.karennationalunion.net](http://www.karennationalunion.net)**

### ***Press Release***

## **Ceasefires Are Not Peace: KNU Lays Out Crucial Steps to Achieve Lasting Peace in Burma**

**22<sup>nd</sup> February 2012**

In a press conference today, the Karen National Union laid out a four-step roadmap of essential stages that will be required to achieve genuine and sustainable peace in Burma:

1. Preliminary ceasefire stage
2. Durable ceasefire stage
3. Initial political dialogue, resolution of underlying political problems, and national reconciliation
4. Political participation

The roadmap was released to build upon the vision of “lasting peace” described by President Thein Sein in his Union Day speech. The President recognized that the “participation of the entire national people is sorely needed to bring internal armed conflicts to an end and build lasting peace, and in nation-building endeavors.” However, ceasefires alone will be insufficient to bring about the lasting peace outlined by President Thein Sein.

As Naw Zipporah Sein, General Secretary of the KNU, stated in today’s press conference, “The KNU welcomes the President’s Union Day speech. However, ethnic nationalities want a peace based on national equality and the right to self-determination. Previous ceasefires were not successful because they did not address the political aspirations of the ethnic nationality peoples.”

The KNU strongly believes politics—not just disarmament agreements—will be the key to enduring peace. Such peace will be achieved only through genuine dialogue between the United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC), which includes the representatives of the different ethnic nationalities, and the Burmese government.

“The Burmese government must acknowledge the Karen people’s right to effective participation in decisions that affect them,” said Saw Hla Ngwe, Joint General Secretary-1 of the KNU. “This is fundamental and essential for the realization of their right of self-determination and the development of an inclusive and just society.”

The KNU recognizes, however, that ceasefire agreements are the prerequisite to the commencement of that dialogue. Indeed, continued militarization efforts on both sides will be a barrier to a peaceful resolution to the armed conflict in Karen State. Thus, in the spirit of building trust and in accordance with our shared nation-building goals, the KNU calls upon the Burmese government to immediately:

- Withdraw all troops in close proximity to villages in KNU-administered regions;
- Reduce troop levels and cease sending additional troops and supplies to ethnic areas;
- Release all KNU and Karen community members who continue to be held as political prisoners; and,
- Cease military operations in all active war zones, including Kachin areas.

These concrete measures will make it possible for the KNU to begin an initial political dialogue with the government on the path to lasting peace in Karen State and all of Burma.

***For more information, please contact:***  
***Naw Zipporah Sein: +66 85 651 1078***