

Statement from Karen Women's Movement Second Karen Women's Seminar

February 6, 2017

In order to strengthen Karen women's rights and the women's movement across Karen communities, Karen Women Organization brought together the second Karen Women's Seminar in Lay Wah (Law Khee Lar), Karen State, on 2-3 February, 2017. Around one hundred women attended the seminar, representing many Karen civil society organizations from various parts of Karen state, local and international chapters of Karen Women Organization, human rights groups, and local communities.

The aims for holding the two-day seminar were to establish a network to support the Karen women's movement. The participants discussed a range of critical issues, including the need to empower women's voices in the ongoing peace process, and how to address the problems and difficulties that Karen women face on a daily basis. Social justice issues such as refugee repatriation and rehabilitation, and the protection of women and children were also in the heart of the discussions and deliberations.

In this seminar, the women participants reviewed and discussed Karen women's activities during the Democratic transition period, and developed strategies for how to promote and advance the work of women's rights organizations. At an all-female assembly, women safely raised their voices, and found opportunities for collaboration and assistance among like-minded women's rights advocates.

At the conclusion of this Karen women's seminar, the attendees jointly and endorsed the following resolutions to address the ongoing lack of gender justice that Karen women face every day.

1. Karen women in the Karen communities will be actively involved in building the future of Karen people by creating strong networks and links between Karen women, by receiving and sharing technical assistance from the respective organizations.
2. Karen women will actively participate in and take responsibility of the peace process with the Myanmar Government, and shall campaign through legal means. Karen women's participation in politics shall increase, through the cooperation of women in local communities to share information and advice about women's rights and political engagement.
3. Karen women vow to cooperate and help each other to fight for human rights, particularly those of ethnic nationalities, as well as advocating for basic healthcare, education, legal protection of women, environmental protection, land ownership rights, and refugee repatriation and rehabilitation.

Contact Persons:

1. Naw Ohn Hla: +95(0)9778432670,+95(0)9454718543 (For Karen and Burmese Language)
2. Nan Tin Tin Hlaing: +95(0)9425041734,+95(0)9794614185 (For Burmese Language)
3. Naw Htoo Htoo: +66(0)872051856 (For Karen,Burmese and English Language)
4. Naw Ler Lah Khu Htoo: +66(0)862078993 (For Karen and English Language)