



# သံဂုဏ်ဒီဂုဏ်ကညီကာရ

## International Karen Organisation

Asia Pacific Region

European Region

US/Canada Region

### **IKO Statement on 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Karen Revolutionary Resistance**

29-1-2019

1. January 31, 2019 is the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Karen revolutionary resistance. Accordingly, the International Karen Organization (IKO) bows in respect to the patriotic Karen martyrs, who had sacrificed their lives for the country and Karen people, while shouldering duties of the revolution.
2. The Karen people had made the demand for a Karen Homeland with full self-determination even in the time of the British colonial period, from the British government. After the independence of Burma/Myanmar, the Karen continued to make the demand from the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) Party Government in power. However, the AFPFL government militarily attacked and seized the Karen National Union (KNU) Headquarters on January 30, 1949, instead of resolving the political problem by political means. The next day, on January 31, 1949, as it attacked the Karen National Defense Organization (KNDO) Headquarters, and the Karen people resisted in self-defense, the great Karen people's armed revolutionary movement occurred.
3. At the start of the Karen revolution, the Karen people's patriotism, unity and political awareness had reached the highest point and many victories were achieved. For that reason, on the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Karen revolution, the IKO urges every Karen to recover and foster the Spirit of 1949.
4. In the 70 years of revolution, there have been great victories and immense losses as well. Those experiences are invaluable matters for the Karen revolution. Consequently, it is vital for the Karen revolutionaries to learn lessons and not to commit errors again. Likewise, the IKO would like to advise for raising performance of the revolution through planning for continued advancement, by setting the accomplishments as an example.
5. The Karen revolution has met with successive Burman/Myanmar governments six times for peace talks. It has been found that the Burman/Myanmar governments have no genuine desire for peace, but they just manipulate peace talks for getting political and military advantage. Currently, the peace process has descended into a stalemate. The statement of Burman/Myanmar Tatmadaw, dated December 21, 2018, said that military operations would be suspended in 5 military regions for 4 months. If peace is sincerely desired, it should declare the suspension of military operations nationwide and without time limit. The IKO views the suspension of military operations currently, with limitation, as one of the usual tactics used by Burman/Myanmar Tatmadaw against the ethnic nationalities for divide-and-conquer.
6. We have learnt that the President Office has directed to crush the Arakan Army (AA) militarily, according to the President Office spokesperson's account made on 7-1-2019. The attempt to resolve the political problem by military means instead of using the political means, would not achieve a solution and it would throw more bumps into the current peace process. The IKO views the NLD government's action as the

unveiling of Burman/Myanmar chauvinism within the NLD Party and it highlights the fact that the NLD is just an entity covering itself in the cloak of democracy.

7. According to experiences of the 70-year long Karen revolution, the Burman/Myanmar ruling class' divisive scheme of bribery and favors has disrupted unity within the Karen revolution as well as within the alliance of the non-Burman ethnic nationalities. Accordingly, it is essential for the groups, which have split from the Karen revolution, to return and stand up as one organization like before, join hands and work earnestly with fellow ethnic national revolutionary organizations. Together with the Karen revolutionaries, the IKO vows to fight on with indomitable spirit and determination until victory is achieved, for the establishment of a federal union based on national equality and self-determination, which is the goal of the Karen revolutionary resistance.

International Karen Organization (IKO)

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