



H.E.DR. SASA'S MESSAGE ON THE 74TH ANNIVERSARY OF KAREN NATIONAL DAY

11 February 2022

Today we mark Karen National Day, the second Karen National Day to take place during the military aggression against the democratic progress and federalization of our nation. It is the very process of democratization and federalization that the Karen people have fought for over the last 74 years. For nearly three quarters of a century the Karen have been at the forefront of the fight to save Myanmar from strongmen, tyrants, and dictators. The brave Karen people have fought for freedom in the political arena and the battlefield equally. Successive generations have given their lives to this noble cause. We all, as the people of Myanmar, owe a debt of gratitude to the Karen for their ongoing efforts to push back the forces that would crush and destroy our dreams of a free and democratic country. Our Karen brother and sisters have selflessly given their all, even sadly their lives, to build a better future, a better nation, a better Myanmar, and for this, we give our sincerest thanks to all the Karen people.

Through their struggle and their sacrifice, as through the sacrifices of all people of Myanmar, we step closer each day to freedom. Every step we take is one step towards peace, towards stability, and towards bringing to life the dream of a federal democratic union. We are all, each of us, born free. Freedom and self-determination are our birthrights which no-one has the right to take from us. And yet we are beset by evil, but the genocidal junta who have taken from us our homes and property, and have come now to rob us of even our most basic rights. Let us take time on this day to reflect on the contributions the Karen have made to our country, not least by opposing the oppressive military regime, and let us thank the Karen for their selfless and tireless efforts, without which, we may never see freedom and peace again.

That this is the second Karen National Day marred by the coup is a tragedy, and sign of a conflict gone on far too long, but for the Karen, almost all national days have been stained with the blood of the military's victims. Their fight against the military has been longer and more brutal than most. They defended their homes and communities from genocide when others still entertained the notion that the military could be reasoned with, that cooperation would lead to a gradual de-escalation and a lasting peace. It is not plain for all to see that this was folly. With our combined forces, with a unity Myanmar has not seen since the days of independence, we will help to finish the job our Karen brethren started all those years ago, and for which they have consistently fought and continue to fight to this day. Together, we will end the era of dictatorship, oppression, and genocide. We will usher in a federal democratic state so that all can enjoy the peace and self-determination which are their



birthrights forever more. And for working to make this possible, we once again offer our most humble thanks to the brave Karen people.

May God bless the brave Karen people and May God bless Karen State!

Sincerely,

Dr. Sasa

Union Minister of the Ministry of International Cooperation
Spokesperson of the National Unity Government of Myanmar
Former Myanmar Special Envoy to the United Nations

