



**Karen National Union  
Supreme Headquarters  
Kawthoolei**

[www.knuhq.org](http://www.knuhq.org)

## **Kawthoolei Safe School Declaration**

**Date - 9/9/2024**

### **Introduction:**

The Karen National Union (KNU), recognizing the fundamental right to education for all children residing within Kawthoolei, and deeply concerned by the ongoing armed conflict that threatens the safety and well-being of students, teachers, and schools, hereby establishes this Safe School Declaration. The KNU is committed to creating a secure educational environment despite the challenges posed by conflict and instability. In 2013, the KNU signed the Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict, reinforcing our dedication to safeguarding children in conflict zones. This declaration outlines our commitment to ensuring that schools remain safe havens for learning and growth, hereby establishes this Safe School Declaration focusing on key areas:

1. Emergency Support
2. Protection of Education from Attack
3. Fulfilling Infrastructure Needs of Children and Teachers
4. Documentation and Reporting

### **1. Emergency Support:**

- **Emergency Preparedness:** The KNU will work with education authorities and communities to develop and practice clear procedures for emergencies like evacuations or lockdowns in schools. This includes establishing designated safe zones within schools and nearby communities.
- **Psychosocial Support:** The KNU recognizes the psychological impact of armed conflict on students and staff. We will collaborate with relevant organizations to provide access to counseling and support services to ensure their well-being during and after emergencies.

### **2. Protection of Education from Attack:**

- **Military Non-Use of Schools:** Schools within Kawthoolei shall not be used for any military purpose, including as bases, recruitment grounds, or storage facilities. The KNU is

committed to upholding this principle within its areas of influence and will advocate for its wider adoption.

- **Community Engagement:** We will work with all communities within Kawthoolei to establish clear communication channels and early warning systems to alert schools and communities of potential threats.

### **3. Fulfilling Infrastructure Needs of Children and Teachers:**

- **Safe Learning Environments:** The KNU will work with education authorities and international organizations to identify and address infrastructure needs for schools in Kawthoolei. This may include repairs to damaged buildings, construction of safe shelters, and provision of essential supplies like clean water and sanitation facilities.
- **Teacher Training:** The KNU will support training for teachers on emergency preparedness, child protection, and psychosocial support techniques to empower them to better care for students during times of conflict.

### **4. Documentation and Reporting**

- **Monitoring and Reporting:** The KNU will establish a system for documenting incidents of violence affecting schools, students, and teachers. This data will be used to prepare reports for relevant international organizations like the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Human Rights Watch (HRW), Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF).
- **Advocacy:** The KNU will use these reports to advocate for international support in protecting education in Kawthoolei and ensuring the right to education for all children during conflict.

### **Conclusion:**

The KNU is dedicated to creating a safe learning environment where all students within Kawthoolei can access quality education. We call upon all stakeholders, including the international community, to support this declaration and the right to education for all children in Kawthoolei during this time of conflict.