

KNU Statement on Baseless Accusation by SPDC and Call for Nationwide Ceasefire

24 Feb 2011

We, the Karen National Union (KNU), reject totally the baseless accusation by the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), the military dictatorship of Burma, that the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) troops fired heavy weapons at a lemon farm owned by U Zaw Lay Htoo in Shwegyin Township, Bago Division, at about 9 am on 17 February, leaving four farm workers dead and three wounded.

The SPDC further asserted that the KNU was undermining the peace of the State, and committing destructive acts causing death and injury. The world knows well that it is the SPDC policy to allow its troops to shoot and kill innocent civilians, burn villages and farms, torture suspects, commit rape of women etc. in all the KNU areas. In urban areas, the SPDC imprisons people asking for human rights and freedom, sells narcotic drugs freely and deliberately to impoverish the population.

The latest accusation is just a smoke screen for the military dictatorship to build up an offensive against the KNU and the KNLA, which is the armed wing of the KNU. Our troops have few heavy weapons and unlike the SPDC, they never deliberately fire on civilian targets.

To help solve Burma's problems, we have repeatedly urged the Burmese regime to respond to calls by the United Nations General Assembly, United Nations Security Council, European Union, United States of America and others, to engage in genuine tripartite dialogue with the opposition forces, for positive change. However, the regime refuses and instead continues to target our civilian populations for military attack.

We, the KNU together with the other ethnic nationality forces, are ready for dialogue in order to resolve Burma's political problems through political means. We call upon the international community, and peace and justice loving countries around the world to support actively the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to secure a nationwide ceasefire, leading to meaningful and inclusive dialogue to achieve national reconciliation and a return to democracy and normalcy in our country.

**Supreme Headquarters
Karen National Union**