

## Statement of 8th Karen Unity Seminar

29 May 2011

The 8th Karen Unity Seminar was successfully held from May 24 to 27, 2011, at a certain place in the area of Karen revolutionary resistance. The Seminar was attended by 117 representatives from 42 Karen organizations based at home and abroad.

At the Seminar, discussions were held particularly on the subjects of strengthening unity among the Karen people, current political situations in Burma and the sufferings the entire Karen people have to go through.

- In building national unity, the Seminar decides to follow leadership of the Karen National Union (KNU) and stand for achieving the political objectives of ethnic equality and self-determination, democracy and establishment of a federal union of states;
- Instead of restoring peace and resolving the political problems, the USDP government, which is a proxy of the previous military regime and which has gained power through the unfair 2010 elections, continues to commit genocide and ethnic cleansing against the ethnic peoples, including the Karen, with scorched-earth operations, just like the military dictatorship. Accordingly, the Seminar refuses to recognize the current government in power.
- The sham development projects being implemented, and the domestic and international investments being made, starting from the time of previous military regime up to the time of the current new government, are for the benefit of the dictatorship. They bring only misfortunes to the entire population, including the Karen. Moreover, they destroy unity among the Karen people and as they are a system of economic imperialism designed to drive the Karen people systematically into slavery, this Seminar strongly opposes and condemns them.
- We, participants of the Seminar, call on the Royal Thai Government and the UNHCR to accept the refugees numbering thousands, who have to seek refuge temporarily in Thailand, due to military clashes taking place currently in the eastern part of Burma, and not to repatriate the refugees in the camps in the border areas, so long as there is no political stability in Burma.
- The USDP government is making the effort to build up its armed organizations into strong and modern armed forces. As a result, there can be ever more gross human rights violations, the destruction of more hearths and homes, and farms of the people, and more crimes against humanity. For that reason, we call on the UN to send immediately an inquiry commission and take actions against the USDP government.

In conclusion, we affirm our determination to strive for building a strong unity among the Karen people and to work for achievement of rights and liberation of the Karen as well as fellow ethnic nationalities.