

## URGENT RELEASE: THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS UPDATE AND KEY MESSAGES FOR KACHIN STATE AND NORTHERN SHAN STATE

The Joint Strategy Team for Humanitarian Response in Kachin and Northern Shan State would like to raise concerns over the recent increases of clashes and military actions near Laiza where over 17,000 IDPs are taking shelters in 4 camps. JST would like to request your urgent action and support for the safety and protection of the IDPs as well as ensuring unhindered and continuing humanitarian assistance for the IDPs in the KIO control area.

On 21 and 22 November 2014, heavy mortars fired by Myanmar Tatmadaw dropped close to the Bum Kahtawng and Manhtang near Nhkawng Pa camps in Mai Ja Yang area and Ja Htu Kawng in Laiza area, where Je Yang camp, that shelters 8000 IDPs, is very closely located.

The IDP families are anxious and terrified by these incidents and many of them fear that another displacement is imminent. Most of the IDP camps located along the Myanmar/China border have no choice but to cross into China, which once had indifferently expelled them back to the war zone in 2012. Meanwhile, IDPs in Laiza area are facing food shortage, which they expected would be delivered by the UN cross line mission in November.

Under such circumstances which threatens IDPs' lives and security and hampers the peace process, **the undersigned organisations, (the Joint Strategy Team), are actively responding to the emergency needs of IDPs and their safety and security** and want to deliver the following **urgent key messages** to all stakeholders:

1. **We urge for an immediate cessation of hostilities:** A peaceful solution to the conflicts in Myanmar is a critical priority for the future of the country and its people. Both parties should not violate agreements that have been reached previously and they must implement the agreements immediately.
2. **We call for full respect for the International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law.** All parties to the conflict (the Myanmar government armed forces and the KIA) should respect the rights of civilians, and observe the principles of distinction between civilians and combatants and take precaution in the case of attacks to avoid civilian victims. As well as ensuring that civilians are not exposed to any "violence to life and person, cruel treatment and torture, outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment."
3. **Protection, safety and security of the Internally Displaced Persons is an urgent concern.** This should be the FIRST and MOST IMPORTANT PRIORITY for everyone. This should include:
  - a. IDP camps should be protected from any military incursion under International Humanitarian Law.
  - b. Humanitarian work should be reinforced immediately, this includes all sectors of humanitarian intervention and particularly:
    - Immediate psychological support , before it is too late. Hope and morale should be kept high among IDPs;

- Food: no threats on any further food shortage should be placed upon IDPs. Donors should commit now to secure food supplies, which will last at least six months;
- Education: keeping education programmes running and reinforced; and
- Shelter and livelihood programmes, focusing on shelter repairs, improvements and livelihood opportunities.

4. **IDP Humanitarian Access:**

Unimpeded Humanitarian access should be granted for Humanitarian agencies. The additional involvement of international NGOs (INGOs) and UN agencies should be reoriented to provision of accompanied support to local NGOs (LNGOs); this should be a permanent strategy and with a Long Term perspective and not only based on up and downs of security conditions.

5. **We call upon all international and national Humanitarian organisations and the donor community to provide the urgently needed humanitarian assistance and advocacy support. Ongoing programmes and activities of humanitarian agencies should be redesigned urgently according to the new context and assuming a more prolonged scenario of Humanitarian assistance at camps. We urge to **SECURE HUMANITARIAN PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE NOW, TO PAVE THE WAY FOR PEACE AND SAFE RETURN LATER.****

Joint Strategy Team

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