



November 11, 2014

The Honorable President Obama
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

We are writing on behalf of Kachin Society from Myanmar and abroad, composed of (27) organizations and networks.

We would like to welcome your administration's courageous step in engaging with the Myanmar government, including your visit in 2012 and your delivery of the important speech at the University of Yangon. It resonates with us to this day.

Myanmar needs the US to be a partner in genuine democratic change. Many challenges remain and there are some fundamental issues that still need to be addressed such as the ethnic struggle and peace process, ongoing communal violence, the legislative process and new laws that do not protect ordinary people and their rights.

The armed conflict between the Government of Myanmar and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) has been ongoing since the ceasefire agreement was broken on June 9, 2011. Due to this conflict more than 120,000 people have been displaced from their home villages and need to stay in the camps for more than three years now.

During the second visit to the Union of Myanmar, we called upon your administration to consider the following points for your engagement policy.

1. We urge your government to call upon President Thein Sein and his ruling party to redraft the Constitution. A better look at the 2008 constitution will reveal that it is not a democratic one because it gives veto power to the military and it lacks other elements of justice such as ignoring the rights and self determination of the ethnic minorities. Redrafting of the Constitution should reflect elements of federalism and self-determination put forward by ethnic nationalities.
2. We urge the US government to actively participate in the national reconciliation process in the peace talks, and act as a witness to the signing of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement which would subsequently ensure to continue political dialogue. However, the Nationwide Ceasefire should not take advantage and put pressure on the non state actors and IDPs.

kachinpeacenet@gmail.com

3rd Floor, No 22, Kyan Khin Street, Sanchaung, Yangon, Myanmar



3. Humanitarian assistance is still needed for Kachin Internal Displaced Persons (IDPs) until they can return safely home; this requires the unconditional support of the international community to support and work hand in hand with local organisations.
4. Return or resettlement of IDPs should be done only when conditions are met to ensure they can return safely, voluntarily and with their rights fully respected according to international standards.
5. Foreign investment policies should support the peace process, and not exacerbate the conflict. They should be respectful of communities' rights, land and their entitlement of use of natural resources. Foreign investment should be a dividend of sustainable peace, not a parallel dynamic to the peace process. A temporary moratorium on large scale projects and investment projects in ethnic areas until a full peace agreement can be reached, decentralized federal union achieved.
6. We urge your administration to refrain from giving legitimacy and prestige through premature military engagement. The crimes committed by the military personals over the civilians must be tried in the civil courts and disclosed to the public.

Sincerely,

May Sabe Phyu
Coordinator
Kachin Women Peace Network
kachinpeacenetWORK@gmail.com
09421170783

Khon Ja
Coordinator
Kachin Peace Network
khonja2014@gmail.com
09425288899

Endorsed Kachin Organizations

1. Bishop Francis Daw Tang, Catholic Diocese of Myitkyina, Myanmar
2. Htoi Gender and Development Foundation
3. Humanity Intitute
4. Kachin Alliance (USA)
5. Kachin Association Norway (KAN)

kachinpeacenetWORK@gmail.com

3rd Floor, No 22, Kyan Khin Street, Sanchaung, Yangon, Myanmar



6. Kachin Communities in Denmark
7. Kachin Communities in Europe
8. Kachin Communities in Singapore
9. Kachin Community in the Netherlands
10. Kachin Conservation Working Group- KCWG
11. Kachin Development Foundation, USA
12. Kachin Development Networking Group
13. Kachin National Organization
14. Kachin Peace Network
15. Kachin Refugee Committee Malaysia
16. Kachin State Urban Rural Mission
17. Kachin State Women Network-KSWN
18. Kachin Women Peace Network
19. Kachin Women Association Japan
20. Kachin Women Union
21. Lhaovo Literature and Culture Committee
22. Myu Sha Sustainable Development Network –
23. Research and Documentation Consultancy Cluster
24. Sustainable Forest and Environment Conservation Group Kachin State - SECKS
25. Sha-it Local Development Foundation
26. Shingnip Legal Aid Network
27. TANKS- Transparency and Accountability Network Kachin State
28. APLFD- WLF: Asia Pacific League for Freedom and Democracy, World League for Freedom and Democracy, Myanmar

kachinpeacenetwork@gmail.com

3rd Floor, No 22, Kyan Khin Street, Sanchaung, Yangon, Myanmar