



**OFFICE OF THE SUPREME HEADQUARTERS
KAREN NATIONAL UNION
KAWTHOOLEI**

Clarification of KNU Policy on 2010 Elections

October 5, 2009

1. We, the Karen National Union (KNU) are aware that a recent letter by the Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC), appearing to state that the SPDC's elections due in 2010 could present some kind of opportunity for change, has caused some confusion.
2. We would like to reaffirm our statement of April 24, 2009 that elections due in 2010 do not represent any kind of progress towards democratization in Burma.
3. The overwhelming evidence that the elections due in 2010 offer no hope for any kind of change is as follows:
 - The referendum in 2008 exposed that no political campaigning is allowed unless approved and in line with SPDC policy, so no genuine political space will be created by the process of the elections.
 - The referendum in 2008 has shown that results will be rigged, and with the many other restrictions on freedom, they will ensure there is no way the elections will be free and fair.
 - The Constitution not only enshrines military rule, it also grants no ethnic rights or protection. The Constitution represents a serious threat to ethnic diversity in Burma.
 - The Parliament will be a rubber-stamp Parliament, and with laws blocking freedom of speech remaining in place in the new Constitution, and the SPDC investing in a new computerised media censorship system, it is clear there will be no genuine opening of political space after the elections.
4. The 2008 Constitution is in breach of international law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
5. We have repeatedly warned that elections in 2010 will not result in any improvement of the human rights and humanitarian situation in Burma, and that repression and instability will continue.
6. We are saddened that our predictions have proved correct, and that there has been a dramatic escalation in military attacks as the dictatorship seeks to crush all opposition ahead of the election.
7. The apparent 'wait and see' approach of the international community regarding the 2010 elections is not a viable option. A major human rights and humanitarian crisis is unfolding in ethnic areas of Burma as attacks on ethnic people escalate. This is a result of SPDC's 2010 elections agenda.
8. The international community seems content to allow the SPDC to defy them, and is following their 2010 agenda. We repeat our call on governments around the world **not** to endorse the 2010 elections and to redouble efforts to persuade the SPDC to enter into genuine tri-partite dialogue.
9. We call on the SPDC to follow the demands of the UNGA, UNSC, EU, USA and others, and engage in genuine tripartite dialogue leading to genuine change in our country.
10. We are working for a peaceful, stable, federal Burma. We stand ready to enter into genuine tripartite dialogue, as facilitated by the United Nations, at any time.

**The Central Executive Committee
Karen National Union**