



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

KNU President Saw Tamlabaw's Address on 63rd Anniversary of Founding of the KNDO

July 15, 2010

Today, July 16, 2010, is the 63rd Anniversary of the founding of Karen National Defense Organization (KNDO). On this special occasion, I would like to extend my greetings and best wishes to all leaders and personnel of the KNDO for health, happiness and high morale, and I would like all concerned to bear in mind the essential facts given below.

The founding of KNDO on July 16 1947, before the Karen people's revolutionary resistance started, was led by Mahn Ba Zan, an executive committee member of the KNU, with duty for defense affairs. It was the position of the KNU that a defense organization was needed, under the prevailing circumstances, to protect the Karen people, and the aims for founding the KNDO were as follows.

1. To prepare the Karen people for self-defense as they are likely to come under armed attack from various non-state armed groups viewing the Karen people's movement for freedom and rights in negative light;
2. To protect the Karen people's lives and properties in case of an outbreak of general violence and instability in the country;
3. To provide close security to the KNU in the situation where lack of security and stability is prevailing.

The founding of the KNDO, approved by the then AFPFL government led by Prime Minister U Nu, engendered a sense of security and protection among the Karen people, who had been under severe apprehension due to lack of security and stability right after independence, especially in the country side. As the KNDO was able to give protection to the Karen people against anti-Karen groups and elements, there was help and support to it from the Karen people. At the same time, the leadership role of the KNU was enhanced.

The KNDO must continue to perform the duties and aims of its founding, nowadays also, and it must do so as long as there is the threat to eliminate the Karen as a people.

The Karen people have not yet gained freedom from oppression by the SPDC military dictatorship. They have to resist attempt by successive military dictatorships to subjugate them and enslave them. Oppression of the people made up of various ethnic nationalities by the dictatorship is on the increase. Since the Karen people still have to suffer such horrendous violence as forced labor, extortion, looting, destruction of homes and livelihood, torture, extra-judicial executions and rape of women, the KNDO must continue to shoulder the duties of protecting the Karen people from these atrocities.

Though successive military dictatorships have relentlessly tried to wipe out our revolutionary resistance and the Karen people, the protection and sacrifices made by the KNDO and the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) have prevented destruction of our organizations and the Karen people.

The enemy has plots to demolish our revolutionary movement, by various means, such as military offensives, economic war, corrupting our members, sowing dissension to break up our organization & etc. For that reason, it is vital for all of us to defeat the enemy's evil plots with moral courage and revolutionary spirit, to develop political insight, to build unity and to cooperate closely in our revolutionary struggle. Remember that we have to base our unity on cooperation in the implementation of the programs, policies and upholding the principles, the KNU has laid down.

Our revolutionary struggle is a just struggle, and we will definitely achieve the ultimate victory!