



ABSDF



CNF



KNU

OPEN LETTER to UNCT, UNSE, UN and ASEAN Member States and JPF

This letter is In Response to JMC being proposed as “neutral agency for humanitarian support” proposal by some diplomats that claim the KNU’s endorsement of this proposal citing KNU participation at NCA celebration. We understand the UN Country Team is believing and promoting this false position. This letter serves to rectify this misunderstanding to the UN and its member states, including JPF members. It also serves to explain what ABSDF, CNF, KNU and the EROs are doing to counter SAC’s blatant weaponization of much needed humanitarian support.

Date: 27 October 2023

Dear Excellencies and Friends,

It is with great concern that the Karen National Union (KNU), All Burma Student Democratic Front (ABSDF), and Chin National Front (CNF) has learned some diplomatic missions and UN agencies in Myanmar are promoting the collapsed NCA’s Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) as a “neutral agency for humanitarian support”. We also understand that they claim the KNU’s endorsement of this citing “KNU” participation in the 8th NCA anniversary celebrations on October 15th, 2023.

NCA and JMC

As stated in our joint statement and open letter of 13 October (see attached) on the NCA Anniversary Celebrations, the military coup of February 2021 violated the basic principles and objectives of the NCA and made its implementation impossible. The State Administration Council (SAC) - established by the Tatmadaw following the coup has undermined and blocked the path to an inclusive and just peace process, attempting to destroy the country's democratic structures by imprisoning or killing the legitimately elected leadership. Massive destruction is being inflicted by SAC security forces on civilians, including women and children, as a result of continuous artillery shelling, aerial bombings, burning of villages, imprisonment, torture and killings, and the destruction of clinics, schools and religious buildings. These repeated serious attacks are flagrant violations of International Humanitarian Law and the NCA's own provisions that are based on the same.

Humanitarian Support

We are deeply disappointed in those in the diplomatic community and UN agencies that continue to promote defunct and discredited NCA structures under SAC control as “neutral entities”. This amounts to weaponization of humanitarian support and access and UN and other international agencies are choosing to ignore the basic principle of humanity by enabling this manipulation of aid instead of working with all available authorities and actors to deliver assistance to those most in need.

Our first and most important priority is the safety, health and protection of our people. It is therefore essential to put in place strong firewalls between humanitarian initiatives agreed between SAC and UN and other donors and those in place to provide humanitarian initiatives towards areas under attack from the same military. We need to avoid information leakages and ensure the safety of victims and their families. It is unacceptable that SAC-managed entities be mobilized to provide humanitarian support to territories and hundreds of thousands of displaced persons that they are attacking and trying to eliminate or destroy.

To enable ALL vulnerable and affected people to receive humanitarian support — without the interference and prevention of SAC -- we insist that there be parallel but firewalled processes for providing assistance in SAC-controlled areas and those which the SAC is attacking. Ways must be found to ensure the two humanitarian processes are complimentary with the needed firewalls.

KNU and NCA Anniversary Celebrations

KNU's official joint statement and Open Letter together with CNF and ABSDF, made clear NCA and its implementing institutions such as JMC are regarded as void. The attendance at the NCA Anniversary events by individual former office bearers and retired members of the KNU should under no circumstances be interpreted as the KNU's support of the defunct NCA and its "joint" implementations structures. Those persons participated in their own individual capacity they were key signatories of the NCA while they held official positions in the KNU and ABSDF at the time in 2015. The ABSDF, CNF and KNU were indeed a strong supporter of the peace process ushered in through bilateral ceasefires with the Thein Sein government and the political dialogue process initiated through the 2015 NCA. The KNU greatly regrets the destruction of those processes by the action of the military commander in chief in overthrowing the elected government in the coup of February 1st, 2021.

When international actors promote the SAC's inaccurate and harmful propaganda narratives, it risks driving greater mistrust in our work towards future inclusive peace, harming public attitudes towards international involvement in our country, fomenting divisions rather than unity, and rewarding the SAC's commission of human rights atrocities.

We request your support of urgent humanitarian needs, support to vulnerable civilian protection infrastructures protecting people from SAC's brutal attacks, and to the ethnic and democratic governing structures working to achieve a federal democratic and peaceful future Burma. As stated in our Open Letter, we believe in dialogue as a means to resolve the current military and political conflict but also there can be no dialogue while the SAC Forces continue to attack and commit gross human rights violations against the people.

Signed



Ye Baw Than Khe
Chairman
All Burma Students' Democratic Front



Dr. Suikhar
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Saw Kwe Htoo Win
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