



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

### **KNU Statement on Increasing Military Operations by SPDC in Some of the KNU Base Areas**

- Starting from February 2006, the SPDC troops have been conducting military operations in the KNU base areas of Toungoo, Nyaunglaybin, Papun and Thaton Districts. Those involved in the military operations are units under (Light Infantry Division) LID-66, (Local Military Operation Command) LMOC-16, LMOC-21 and LID-101. There are a total of 56 battalions, including battalions under the Southern Command.
- In the operational areas, the SPDC troops ban civilian populations from traveling, trips for buying food and going to work in their agricultural fields. They are shelling the villages with heavy weapons, force the villages to relocate, burn down the villages, orchards, forests, farms and rice barns, loot properties of the villagers, including Karen bronze drums which are cultural objects of the Karen people, plant landmines, subject the people, including women, children and old people, to forced labor, arrest, torture and kill suspects, commit rape of women etc. openly without restraint.
- As a result of these military operations implementing the scorch-earth policy, about 11,000 Karen people have to abandon their villages and flee to hide. More than a thousand have reached the border area, but the rest have to severely face problems of lack of security, food, medicines and clothing in the jungles. The situation of these people is becoming worse as the rain has now started.
- Considering the facts that the SPDC troops have sent more than necessary quantities of weapons and ammunitions, food supplies and mules, out of all proportions, to their frontline camps in advance during this dry season, and that they are conducting forward moving operations until now, it is quite obvious that they have a plan to continue operations in this rainy season as well.
- We, the KNU, strongly protest and condemn the SPDC's wicked act of increasing military operations against us, instead of working toward nation-wide ceasefire, the release of all political prisoners and holding political dialogue without delay, with a view to serving interest of the country and the people made up of various nationalities, at a time when the country is deep in crisis and destitute.
- In conclusion, we, the KNU, solemnly call upon the SPDC military regime to immediately stop its current military operations and withdraw its operational troops, hold talks seriously with the KNU, abandon its policy of total obliteration and resolve the country's problems by political means, at the earliest date.

May 3, 2006

