



# အမျိုးသမီးများအဖွဲ့ချုပ် (မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ) Women's League of Burma

## Press Release on Women's testimonies of ongoing abuses

8 July 2006

### **Women's testimonies of ongoing abuses, including sexual violence, belie SPDC's "Myanmar Women's Day" propaganda**

Further evidence of recent rape and sexual slavery by SPDC troops, added to testimony from women suffering from forced displacement and failed drug policies, give the lie to statements issued by local state-sponsored women's organisations throughout Burma on the occasion of "Myanmar Women's Day" since July 3. The statements denied reports by WLB members concerning sexual violence, drug production and forced displacement.

Many international reports have detailed the current offensive against civilians in Karen State, which has already displaced over 18,000 villagers. Refugees, mainly women and children, arriving at the Thai-Burma border are clear evidence of the ongoing forced displacement policies of the military regime.

At the same time, abuses by the regime's troops have been continuing in other parts of Burma. Between January and April 2006, in six Palaung villages in Murg Kerng township, central Shan State, at least 29 Palaung women suffered sexual violence, including gang-rape, sexual slavery and torture to death, committed by SPDC officers and soldiers from LIB 514, 515 and IB 64. Women were seized by patrolling troops and kept for sexual abuse for up to five nights. In one village, women were gang-raped in front of their husbands, who had been tied up. One mute woman was beaten to death and her body left outside her village.

The testimony of these rape survivors, the hundreds of thousands of displaced women, and the wives and mothers of drug addicts interviewed for the Palaung Women's Organisation's report "Poisoned Flowers", reflect the true reality of life for women inside Burma today. Such testimonies constitute the strongest evidence of the regime's crimes and failed policies.

"By attempting to conceal their crimes, and using women as false witnesses, the regime is not fooling anyone but themselves," said Nang Yain, the General Secretary of WLB "Despite all the risks, women inside Burma are continuing to speak out, and we will continue to collect and compile their testimonies. We fully believe that this evidence will be a decisive factor in bringing about change in Burma."

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