

# *Women's League of Burma*

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### Multiple discrimination in the military-rule Burma (Myanmar)

The military dominates every aspect of life, and the non-members of military, particularly ethnic nationalities are facing multiple forms of discrimination in the military-rule Burma.

Speaking at the WCAR Plenary Session this morning, Ms. Naw Chai Mei Hua, a Karen ethnic woman from Burma said that ethnic persecution practised by the ruling military has led thousands of Burmese citizens to flee their country into neighbouring countries. And they face more discrimination in the host countries.

“The root cause of this multiple discrimination is half-a-century long civil war resulted from ethno-political conflict and militarization in Burma”, she said.

“We ethnic women, who are always non-members of military, face multiple discrimination because of gender and ethnicity. Discrimination is exacerbated ethnic lands due to the war against the ethnic nationalities by the Burmese ruling authority. The soldiers commit sexual violence against ethnic women with impunity, the most obvious form of discrimination,” added Naw Chai Mei Hua, who is attending the World Conference Against Racism representing the Women’s League of Burma (WLB).

The Women’s League of Burma is an umbrella of eleven women organizations of Burma, which was formed in December 1999 in a Thai-Burma border area. Burma is a country where more than 135 nationalities are staying, speaking over more than a hundred languages. The present military junta, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) came into power in September 1988 after killing thousands of peaceful protestors who were demanding for the restoration of democracy and human rights.

Over 50,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDP), refugees and migrants who are living on the Thai-Burma border and India-Burma border signed a petition calling upon the WCAR to address the consequences of racial discrimination and related human rights violations committed by the ruling authorities in Burma.

In her 3 minute speech, Naw Chai Mei Hua demanded the Burmese military junta to eliminate the multiple discrimination against the ethnic nationalities in Burma, and to end all human rights violations. She also requested the United Nations to encourage the Burmese government to negotiate a nation-wide cease-fire and to enter the genuine dialogue with all political actors in Burma.

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