

February 23, 2004

Statement by the Women's League of Burma on current political developments in Burma

1. The Third Presidium Board meeting and strategy meeting of the Women's League of Burma (WLB) were successfully held from February 18 to 22, 2004 on the Thai-Burma border.
2. In order to cover up the May 30th massacre and to deceive the international community, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) has announced its 7-stage "road map" and has been making

attempts to revive its National Convention, temporarily suspended in 1996.

3. We strongly believe that the SPDC's 7-stage "road map," including its National Convention with its "basic principles," is aimed not to bring democracy to Burma, but to legitimize its military rule in Burma.
4. In order to achieve genuine peace, democracy and national reconciliation in Burma, we make the following demands to the SPDC: · To immediately implement a nationwide ceasefire;

- To stop the process of increased militarization in Burma and withdraw their troops stationed in the ethnic states;
- To end the systematic violations of human rights and various forms of violence against women, including sexual violence against ethnic women;
- To immediately release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners;
- To allow the political parties and ethnic forces to freely engage in all forms of political activity;
- To hold a tripartite dialogue between the SPDC military clique, the 1990 election winning party, NLD, and other political parties, and the leaders of the ethnic nationalities;
- To lay down a strategic plan for a political settlement including the implementation of a national convention based on the results of the tripartite dialogue;

5. Moreover, in order for the National Convention to lead to genuine democracy, the SPDC must allow the following:

- All parties attending the national convention must be able to select their own representatives;
- All representatives must be able to debate freely and openly;
- The media must have free access to the convention so that people can obtain accurate information about the proceedings of the convention;
- The international community must be able to monitor the convention to ensure that it is convened freely and fairly;

6. In particular, to ensure women's representation and active participation at every level of decision-making in Burma's peace-making process, the Women's League of Burma urges all parties involved:

- To follow the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and
- To fulfil Burma's obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

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