



အမျိုးသမီးများအဖွဲ့ချုပ် (ပြန်ဟန်ခိုင်ခံ့) WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF BURMA

The Statement of WLB welcomes the report released by the UN Fact Finding Mission – FFM

Date – August 25, 2019

WLB welcomes the report released on 22 August, 2019, by the UN Fact Finding Mission which highlighted the systematic sexual violence committed by the Burma Army against non-Burman ethnic women. The August 5 report of the UN Fact Finding Mission calling for economic sanctions against the Burma Army (Tatmadaw) and its companies, and calling for an arms embargo.

Income from the Tatmadaw's investments has enabled it to buy heavy weapons, and expand its forces to commit serious human right violations and war crimes. This includes using rape as a weapon of war against non-Burma ethnic women – which WLB strongly condemns.

The economic strength of the Burma Army has perpetuated its power, threatening and obstructing the current peace process and democracy movement. It has led to increased offensives in the ethnic areas, causing over 240,000 local people to become internally displaced in Kachin State, Shan State, Karen State, and Rakhine State. Since 1990 the military has used the 4 Cuts policy in Karen State, Shan State, and Karenni State, driving hundreds of thousands of villagers over the border to become refugees. Over 100,000 in Thailand cannot return home till today. There are also over 700,000 Rohingya who fled into Bangladesh as refugees since 2017. Currently, the local people from Kachin State, Shan State, Rakhine State are facing torture, killing, inhuman treatment, rape and other sexual violence because of ongoing Burma Army of offensives.

The Burma Army has been committing war crimes with impunity for decades. Communities have faced many challenges and barriers when seeking accountability for these crimes. Rohingya women are facing the same barriers as other ethnic women when seeking justice.

A 27-year-old Ta'ang woman was raped by two Burma Army soldiers, out of uniform but holding pistols, when she went to a tea farm at about 1.30 pm on 10 May, 2019, in Namsan township, Northern Shan State. A 51-year-old woman, Daw Nang Htan, was killed brutally in her shop at Nam Saung Kyae village, Pain Pwin Tract, Kutkhai Township on July 4, 2019, after Burma Army troops arrived in the village. Neither of these cases has seen justice.

The economic growth of the Tatmadaw, with the support of businessmen and cronies, is fuelling their strength and impunity, and prolonging the civil war in our country – in which civilians, including woman and children, are targeted for war crimes, including sexual violence. Therefore, WLB urges the international community to impose more effective economic sanctions in accordance with the Fact Finding Mission's recommendations.

WLB also supports the Fact Finding Mission's recommendations that the Myanmar Government must:

- Promptly investigate and prosecute Tatmadaw and other security personnel, including senior officials in the Tatmadaw's chain of command, for sexual and gender-based violence, including as serious crimes under international law, such as crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide.
- Ensure that the Tatmadaw's Commander-in-chief of the military issues military orders expressly prohibiting rape and all forms of sexual violence.

- Ensure that reports of alleged sexual and gender-based violence by the Tatmadaw, and other security personnel, results in credible investigations, fair trails and appropriate sanctions, such as imprisonment and dismissal.

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