

## Mae Tha Raw Hta Agreement

January 15, 1997

we, the ethnic nationalities of the Union of Burma held a seminar from January 7 to 14, 1997 at Mae Tha Raw Hta in the base area of the Karen National Union (KNU). The seminar was attended by 111 delegates and observers from the ethnic nationality organizations mentioned below.

1. Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP)
2. Pa-O People's Liberation Organization (PPLO)
3. Wa National Organization (WNO)
4. United Wa State Party (UWSP)
5. Palaung State Liberation Front (PSLF)
6. Kachin Independence Organization (KIO)
7. All-Arakan Students and Youth Congress (AASYC)
8. Lahu Democratic Front (LDF)
9. New Mon State Party (NMSP)
10. Arakan Liberation Party (ALP)
11. Kayan New Land Party (KNLP)
12. Shan United Revolutionary Army (SURA)
13. Chin National Front (CNF)
14. Shan Democratic Union (SDU)
15. Karen National Union (KNU)
16. Special guests of various nationalities.

At the seminar we, the participants, earnestly discussed and deliberated upon the important issues, namely, internal peace, democracy, rights or national equality and self-determination for the ethnic nationalities and establishment of a genuine federal union, which are the principle political problems.

In the deliberation, we determined that since the time of independence in 1948, successive regimes in power have violated the right to "equality of all citizens irrespective of race," as provided for in Panglong Agreement. Armed subjugation by successive regimes, practising racial chauvinism, for the last 49 years, has been a disastrous experience of suffering, unprecedented in history, for the ethnic nationalities. Brutal suppression of the ethnic nationalities by armed might is still continuing.

The Union of Burma still lacks peace and stability. The refusal of the Slorc to resolve the questions of the rights of the nationalities and democratic freedom, which are the two principle political problems, has raised tensions and worsened the situation in the country, day by day. Accordingly, we unanimously adopted and affirmed the resolutions as follows.

1. We are resolved to carry out democratic changes in accordance with the will of the people of Burma and to establish a genuine federal union based on the equality and self-determination of nationalities, in accordance with the will of the ethnic nationalities.
2. We demand the dissolution of the Slorc's sham National Convention and the holding of a Tri-partite Dialogue comprised of representatives of the Slorc, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and pro-democracy forces, and the ethnic nationalities, for the resolution of political problems by political means.
3. We demand that the Slorc cease its military operations and oppression against the ethnic nationalities and other resistance organizations, while effort are being made to resolve the principle political problems of the country by political means.
4. We demanded the postponement of the acceptance of Burma as a member of Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) until there is positive political change. We request that all foreign investment be withdrawn from Burma and that there be no new investment until this

change occurs.

5. We are resolved to oppose the Slorc's sham programs of narcotic eradication and cooperate with international narcotic eradication agencies and organizations.

6. We ardently support the people's movement led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi for democracy and the dismantling of the military dictatorship.

7. We are resolved to strengthen the country-wide coalition body of the ethnic nationalities, the National Democratic Front (NDF), so as to make it strong on all sides and at the same time, to raise the level of mutual understanding support and cooperation between the ethnic nationalities and pro-democracy forces.