



# အမျိုးသမီးများအဖွဲ့ချုပ် (မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ) Women's League of Burma

## **PRESS RELEASE ON PEACE SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN BY WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF BURMA WORLD REFUGEE DAY June 20, 2012**

**A public peace process is needed in Burma to restore hope for IDPs, Refugees and every citizens in Burma...**

Today, the Women's League of Burma (WLB) marks World Refugee Day; calling for public participation to ensure a genuine and sustainable peace process in Burma and to release the press statement on WLB organized Peace Signature Campaign that was launched on February 2012.

17,063 people from Burma, mostly IDPs, refugees and migrant workers, have signed an open letter to U Thein Sein's government, the Burma Army, pro-democracy groups, ethnic armed groups and political alliances in exile.

"It was hard for us to organize a signature campaign amongst the migrants and refugees in camps. Refugees were told that they were not allowed to carry out political activities, or talk about politics, even when Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visited Mae La refugee camp in early June" said Naw Wah Ku Shee, Joint General Secretary II of the Women's League of Burma.

"At present, we are so worried about the increased number of war refugees in Kachin State and the fighting continues despite some reforms taking place; now the number has increased to almost 80,000 IDPs. In Rakhaing State, there is also a fierce crisis where thousands of people are now refugees; in particular it is women and children who are greatly facing a humanitarian crisis. The government must take full responsibility for the safety, including urgent arrangement on food and shelter for these people."

Political resolution of the sixty-year conflict in Burma will not come through official negotiation between the government and armed groups alone. The country's citizens and civil society organizations can play a crucial role in finding solutions to issues that should be on the negotiation agenda. Only public participation in the process can ascertain a genuine peace that fully guarantees fundamental human rights and human security.

"This year's theme of World Refugee Day is "Restoring Hope". A public peace process is needed in Burma to restore hope for IDPs and refugees to return home and live safely. If we want to build peace and a common future in Burma, citizens' participation is a must and should not be ignored. Besides, the impacts of war are often on women and children in particular and it is essential to have women's participation at all levels of the peace process so that their concerns and voices are included in the discussion." said Tin Tin Nyo, the General Secretary of the Women's League of Burma.

The Women's League of Burma is urging political parties, civil society organizations, religious organizations, all armed forces, refugee and all citizens of Burma to prepare to be involved in a "Public Peace Process": a nationwide peace process which mobilizes people in all communities to raise awareness and support for peace and to highlight issues that are critical and must be included in negotiations.

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