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Press Release on The Eighth Congress Women's League of Burma

Date: February 24, 2015

The Women's League of Burma successfully held its Eighth Congress attended by delegates from member organizations, Advisory Board members, members of the Secretariat and Coordinators of the programs from 21 to 23 February 2015.

The Secretariat reported the program activities and financial reports of the 7th Congress Term to the Congress. The delegates of the Congress identified the achievements and challenges of the previous two years term, and constitution amendment. In accordance with WLB's focus under current political development, the Congress amended the structure of WLB.

The Congress formed the Policy Board of WLB's Eighth Congress Term with representatives selected by each member organization, and elected the General Secretary and Joint General Secretary.

During the Congress, the Presidium Board of the Seventh Congress submitted an analysis paper on the current political situation highlighting human rights abuses, refugee situations, women's rights abuses and the impact of the "development projects" on women. The Women's League of Burma pointed out that the government's military is exploiting the conflict in Laukkai (Laogai). They have been launching a propaganda campaign to gain support from the people, and coercing people to recognize the role of military in the country. WLB clearly perceives that the military is using all these tactics in expense of the lives of lower ranking soldiers to continue holding their power.

Because of the more than 60-year long civil war between the government's army and ethnic groups, women in our country are living in an extremely vulnerable situation with lack of personal safety. The renewed fighting in Kachin State and northern Shan State under the current government led by U Thein Sein has worsened human rights situation of women, escalating incidents of sexual violence against women by the military.

WLB also sees that the women's protection laws drafted by the U Thein Sein government are intentionally dividing the women in the country. WLB seriously think the women in Burma should be aware of these tactics and motives.

Therefore, it is reiterated that WLB will continue exposing systematic sexual violence and other human rights abuses committed by the government's military and seeking justice for women.

Moreover, WLB will continue to push for the meaningful participation of women in the Peace Process. And WLB reaffirms our commitment to continue working with alliances to establish federal union with a sustainable peace.

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