



Worldwide Karen Community

Statement by the Worldwide Karen Community

Worldwide Karen Community Welcomes the ICJ Genocide and ICC Investigation

02 December 2019

The Worldwide Karen Community welcomes the filing of a case of genocide against Burma at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and the decision by the International Criminal Court (ICC) to proceed with an investigation into the crime of deportation against the Rohingya.

On 11 November 2019, Gambia, on behalf of the 57 member countries of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation, filed a case at the ICJ that Burma has violated the Genocide Convention. The Genocide Convention obliges countries to prevent and punish the crimes of genocide.

The United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar has concluded that the Burma Army should be prosecuted for the crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes at the ICC. It has also stated that: “the cycle of impunity enables, and indeed fuels, this reprehensible conduct on the part of the security forces.”

On 14 November 2019, the ICC gave the go ahead to the court prosecutor to open a full investigation into the crime of deportation against the Rohingya, including associated crimes against humanity related to the deportation. This is possible because, even though Burma is not a member of the ICC, Bangladesh, where the Rohingya refugees were forced to flee to, is a member of the ICC.

As with the Rohingya, our Karen people have suffered for decades from the systematic human rights violations by the Burma Army. The Worldwide Karen Community is thus greatly heartened by these cases at the ICJ and ICC, as they send a clear signal to Burma Army leadership that the net of justice is closing in, and their days of impunity – for crimes against all the ethnic peoples in Burma – are numbered.

This is a critical time for action. It is urgently needed for the International community to exert further pressure, including economic sanctions, to push for a complete halt to Burma Army offensives throughout the country – and to start a genuine, inclusive dialogue. Only a new federal constitution, granting the ethnic peoples their right to autonomy, and bringing the Burma Army under civilian control, can bring an end to the civil war and the ongoing crimes by the Burma Army.

Lists of Endorsement:

1. Australia Karen Organization (AKO)
2. Denmark Karen Organization (DKO)
3. European Karen Network (EKN)
4. Finland Karen Culture Association (FKCA)
5. International Karen Organization (IKO)

6. Karen Community Association – UK (KCAUK)
7. Karen Community of Canada (KCC)
8. Karen Community of Norway (KCN)
9. Karen Grassroot Women Network (KGWN)
10. Karen National Community – the Netherlands
11. Karen Organization of America (KOA)
12. KPSN Rights Based Advocacy Group
13. Karen Swedish Community (KSC)
14. Karen Women’s Organization (KWO)
15. Korean Karen Organization (KKO)
16. New Zealand Karen Association Incorporated (NZKA)
17. Karen Community of Toronto (KCT)
18. Calgary Karen Community Association (CKCA)
19. Karen Community of Leamington (KCL)
20. Karen Community of Winnipeg (KCW)
21. Karen Community of Regina (KCR)
22. Karen Society of Nebraska – Lincoln
23. Karen Community Society of British Columbia (KCSBC)
24. Karen Thai Group (KTG)
25. Oversea Karen Organization Japan (OKOJ)
26. Israel Karen Organization
27. Karen Community of Hamilton
28. Karen Youth of Toronto (KYT)
29. Karen Association of Huron, South Dakota (KAHSD)
30. Karen Community of Thunderbay (KCT)
31. Karen Community of Saskatoon (KCS)
32. Edmonton Karen Community Youth Organization (EKCYO)
33. Karen Community of Windsor (KCW)
34. Karen Environmental and Social Action Network (KESAN)
35. Karen Community of Kitchener (KCK)
36. Karen Community of London (KCL)
37. KNU Concerned Group (KNU CG)
38. Karen National Defence Organization (KNDO)
39. Karen Community of Minnesota (KCM)
40. Karen Student Network Group (KSNG)
41. Karen Community of North Carolina (KCNC)
42. Karen Community of Illinois (KCI)
43. Kansas City Karen Community (KCKC)
44. Karen Community of Louisville (KCL)
45. Karen Community of Georgia (KCG)
46. Utica Karen Community (UKC)
47. California Karen Youth Forum (CKYF)
48. Karen Community of Akron, Ohio (KCAO)

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