



## KARENNI HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP

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### **Joint Statement: 67 Karenni Community Organizations from Around the World Demand the Burmese Military Junta to be Held Accountable for the Massacre of the 40 Unarmed Civilians and other crimes**

December 30, 2021

(Washington, DC, December 30, 2021) – We, Karenni people around the world, are shocked and horrified at the news of 40 villagers being burned alive by the Burmese military on December 24, 2021. Karenni state has witnessed atrocities and human rights violations for far too long, making this attack only the most recent in a decades-long campaign of increasingly brutal violence by the Burmese military.

Even before the February 1st coup, the Burmese military had a well-documented history of committing human rights abuses in Karenni state. The Karenni National Women's Organization has reported on the systematic rape, torture, and forced labor imposed on Karenni women and girls, causing many to seek refuge along the Thai-Burma border. In 2019, Burmese military forces used excessive force to disperse peaceful protesters in Loikaw—14 protesters were arrested and an additional 15 were injured.

Since the February 1st coup, the Karenni people have experienced mass persecution due to participation in the Civil Disobedience Movement. Those who present opposition to the illegal military coup have been arrested, detained, and tortured in an increasingly brutal campaign in Karenni state. The military has conducted several violent crackdowns in the region targeting members of the People's Defense Force (PDF) - people have been arbitrarily arrested, clashes between the military and PDF have increased, and thousands of civilians have been forcibly displaced.

In April, several peaceful anti-coup protests were violently attacked by the Burmese military - multiple protesters were injured and arrested while two were killed. In May, the Burmese military launched mortars and artillery shells at Demoso township and Loikaw, killing 26, injuring dozens, and forcing tens of thousands to flee to surrounding areas. To combat the anti-coup movement, the Burmese military has arrested and forced approximately 100 civilians to be hostages, porters, and human shields. In October, the Burmese military arrested 200 people, 30 of whom were detained for helping Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). The Burmese military is steadily attacking its own people with airstrikes, bombing, burning down buildings, and raiding homes. In addition to arresting and detaining anti-coup protesters, the Burmese military is also [arresting humanitarian aid workers](#).

While the real number is likely larger, reports estimate that roughly one-quarter of the Karenni population has fled their homes in Karenni state since the start of the coup. Many of those displaced are forced to live on [limited resources](#) in remote areas of the jungle or attempt to find refuge across the Thai-Burma border. Most recently, on December 20, it was [reported](#) that 150 IDPs were forced to relocate from the forest to Demoso Township due to a severe lack of water

in the forests. This move is particularly dangerous given the ongoing clashes and heightened military presence in Karenni state.

Even against this backdrop of systematic and widespread human rights abuses, the attack on December 24 is stunning in its barbarity. According to the Karenni Human Rights Group, Light Infantry Battalion 108 entered Moso village and captured about 40 villagers, including women, children, and the elderly, as well as two staff members from [Save the Children](#), on December 24th. After forcefully arresting the villagers, the Burmese military handcuffed and burned them alive within vehicles. Once finished with the clearance operation, the Burmese soldiers then retreated from the area leaving the bodies to be discovered by others. This unprovoked and heinous attack on civilians demonstrates that an unchecked Burmese military will only increase its targeting of civilians and escalate violence with no regard for human rights in Karenni state.

We are deeply saddened and upset by the senseless killing in Karenni state and would like to emphasize the need to hold the Burmese military accountable for its crimes against humanity and illegal seizure of power. The situation in Karenni state, as well as Burma as a whole, demands the attention of the international community, including the UNSC and ASEAN. Awareness and recognition of civilian suffering is necessary to foster the tangible change needed in Burma.

Therefore, we urge the United Nations Security Council and Secretary-General, and international community, to take immediately the following-actions to end the heinous human rights abuses of the terrorist regime led by General Min Aung Hlaing and to support the people of Burma:

1. Impose a coordinated global arms embargo and sanctions on the supply of aviation fuel
2. Hold the Burmese junta to account for their crimes by referring the situation to International Criminal Court
3. Impose targeted sanctions on the military junta including its gas revenue, its family-owned businesses as well as its cronies
4. Deny legitimacy to the Burmese military and do not sign MOU with them for humanitarian and development aid
5. Provide cross-border aid and other life-saving assistance to IDPs

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Signed by Karenni Community around the world:

1. DEEKU, the Karenni Community of TX
2. Kansas Karenni community, KS
3. Karenni Baptist Association in Finland
4. Karenni Baptist Convention of America
5. Karenni Community of Amarillo, TX
6. Karenni Community of Arizona
7. Karenni Community of Arkansas
8. Karenni Community of Austin, TX
9. Karenni Community of Bowling Green, KY
10. Karenni Community of Buffalo, NY
11. Karenni Community of Chicago, IL
12. Karenni Community of Colorado

13. Karenni Community of Connecticut
14. Karenni Community of Dallas, TX
15. Karenni community of Des Moines, IA
16. Karenni Community of Florida
17. Karenni Community of Fort Wayne, IN
18. Karenni Community of Fort Worth, TX
19. Karenni Community of Georgia
20. Karenni Community of Grand Rapid, MI
21. Karenni Community of Houston, TX
22. Karenni Community of Idaho
23. Karenni Community of Indianapolis, IN
24. Karenni Community of Lansing, MI
25. Karenni Community of Louisville, KY
26. Karenni Community of Massachusetts
27. Karenni community of Minnesota
28. Karenni Community of Missouri
29. Karenni Community of New Jersey
30. Karenni Community of North Carolina
31. Karenni Community of Portland, OR
32. Karenni Community of Rockford, IL
33. Karenni Community of San Antonio, TX
34. Karenni Community of Sioux Falls, SD
35. Karenni Community of Utah
36. Karenni Community of Utica, NY
37. Karenni Community of Washington
38. Karenni Community of Wisconsin
39. Karenni Education Department (KnED)
40. Karenni Evergreen (KEG)
41. Karenni Federation of Australia
42. Karenni Health Department (KnHD)
43. Karenni Human Rights Group (KnHRG)
44. Karenni Legal and Human Rights Center (KnLHRC)
45. Karenni Literacy and Culture Development Committee (KLCDC)
46. Karenni National Society (KNS-Japan)
47. Karenni National Women Organization (KNWO)
48. Karenni National Youth Organization (KNYO)
49. Karenni Refugee Committee (KnRC)
50. Karenni Social Welfare and Development Centre (KSWDC)
51. Karenni Society Finland RY
52. Karenni Society New Zealand
53. Karenni Society of Canada
54. Karenni Society of Omaha, NE
55. Karenni Student Union (KSU)
56. Karenni Talkshow-KTS, USA
57. Karenni Youth of Minnesota, MN
58. Karenni-American Association
59. Karenni-American Catholic Association
60. Kayah State Student Union (KSSU)
61. Kayahlilaykloe, Austin, MN

62. Kayahlipu Youth – KLY
63. Kayan New Generation Youth (KNGY)
64. Kayan Women Organization (KyWO)
65. Organization Of Karenni Development Malaysia,
66. Rochester Karenni Community, NY
67. Women for Women Foundation (Karenni State)