



ထံတူလီဂ်ဂလကညီကရာ
International Karen Organisation

Asia Pacific Region

European Region

US/Canada Region

Karen New Year Message from International Karen Organisation
The Karen Era 2755 – AD 2016

1st Thalay 2755: 10th January 2016

Dear Karen Brothers and Sisters,

On this auspicious first day of the waxing moon of the month of Thlay, year 2755 of the Karen era, the International Karen Organisation (IKO) takes great pride and pleasure in celebrating our glorious Karen New Year with you.

This is a day to not only take pride in our history and culture but also remember the efforts of the elders, who first established the Karen National Association (KNA) in 1881, and then later the Karen National Union (KNU) in 1947 and who have led the political struggle on behalf of all Karen (*dawkalu*). On this occasion we also remember the leaders, soldiers and martyrs who have fought to protect the Karen people from the violence and oppression of the Imperial Japanese Army, Burmese military (*Tatmadaw*) and other enemies. Yet even in the face of political repression, war and genocide faced by the Karen people we have maintained our dignity and continue the struggle for equality, freedom, justice, democracy and a genuine lasting peace in Burma not only for ourselves but all ethnic nationalities.

It is because of the historic commitment of the Karen people that during the past year so many of our community remained disappointed with the current peace-process in Burma. The failure of some Karen leaders to try and hold the Thein Sein regime to account for continued crimes and ceasefire violations carried out by its military – not just in Karen State but also in other regions of Burma – may even have caused many of you to feel that our cause and its goals now face defeat.

Rather than give-up hope, this new year should be a time to raise our spirits and recommit ourselves to the vision and goals such as the ‘Four Principles’ of Saw Ba U Gyi that were firmly held to by the great national leaders of our recent history, including President Mahn Ba Zan, General Saw Bo Mya, Padoh Saw Ba Thein Sein, General Saw Tamlabaw and Padoh Mahn Sha Lah Phan. It is only by holding fast to these that we can ensure that current and future generations can enjoy of life in peace and harmony in with dignity in our homeland (*Kawthoolei*).

May you enjoy peace and prosperity this coming year and let us continue to work together to achieve the freedom and self-determination of our people.

Central Executive Committee
International Karen Organisation (IKO)

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