

5<sup>th</sup> Ethnic Nationalities Conference**THE SPDC's 2010 GENERAL ELECTIONS**

August 26-28, 2008

The SPDC's 'Road Map' has consistently excluded the winners of the 1990 general elections. It has also ignored constitutional recommendations made by the ethnic nationalities. The military's constitution concentrates power in the hands of the president and the army chief. There is no independent judiciary. There is no decentralization of administrative powers. The military remains above the law and is independent of the government that will be elected in 2010. The military's new constitution will not lead to a democracy, 'disciplined' or otherwise.

Given these crucial defects, unless the process becomes more inclusive and responsive to the needs of all the peoples of the Union of Burma, the 5<sup>th</sup> Ethnic Nationalities Conference cannot endorse the SPDC's 'Road Map' or the 2010 elections.

The Conference is of the opinion that the 1990 election winning parties are obliged to continue to oppose the implementation of the SPDC's 'Road Map'.

In the same way, the Conference is also of the opinion that the organizations which do not have a cease-fire with the Burmese military, are obliged to continue their resistance, unless and until the SPDC makes the process more inclusive and democratic.

But should the organizations which have cease-fires with the SPDC decide to form parties or support political parties to contest the elections, the Conference is of the opinion that they should try to express the true will of the people.

The Conference is also of the opinion that given the coercive nature of the SPDC, the general populace will have no option but to participate in the 2010 elections. The Conference, therefore, urges the people of the Union of Burma to organize themselves to be able to effectively express their true will in the 2010 elections.

The will of the people must be the basis for deciding the legitimacy of a government. Unless and until the people of Burma can freely and fairly express their true will, there can be no legitimate government. True legitimacy cannot be bought by coercion, trickery or bribery. A truly legitimate government must be of the people, elected by the people, and work for the people. A government that cannot resolve problems, does not protect the people and does not provide the people with any benefits cannot be considered legitimate even if it manages to win an election.

Therefore:

1. The 5<sup>th</sup> Ethnic Nationalities Conference calls on the SPDC to initiate a roundtable political dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and ethnic nationalities leaders, to deliberate how a truly legitimate government of the Union of Burma can be established.
2. The Conference calls on the international community, especially the United Nations, to make it possible for the people of Burma to express their true will without intimidation and fear.
3. The Conference also continue to call for multi-party talks on Burma to enable the SPDC to have a round-table dialogue with our neighbours and other key nations under the auspices of the UN, to resolve the Union of Burma's many problems - political, economic, social and humanitarian.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Ethnic Nationalities Conference

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