



**Karen National Union  
Supreme Headquarters  
Kawthoolei  
[www.knuhq.org](http://www.knuhq.org)**

**July 16, 2020**

**The KNU's Felicitations Letter Sent on 73<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of KNDO Day**

Today is the auspicious 73<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the foundation of the **Karen National Defense Organization**. On this 73<sup>rd</sup> anniversary occasion of the foundation of the **Karen National Defense Organization**, the KNU extends its best wishes for health and happiness to all the Karen National Defense Organization members, who are shouldering duties of the national defense.

The **Karen National Defense Organization (KNDO)** was founded by the **Karen National Union**, and it has been organized to defend the Karen national political stand, defend the Karen people against all kinds of oppression and for the full realization of the Karen national aims and objectives.

In their historical progression, the Karen people had been subjected to all kinds of oppression. Especially, during the period from 1942 to 1945 (WW-2 period), the Karen people had to face all kinds of atrocities and genocidal massacre. On reviewing the prevailing political situation, our Karen national leaders found it necessary to set up a Karen national defense force to defend the Karen national movement and the Karen people, and founded the **Karen National Defense Organization** on July 16, 1947.

At the time of founding the **Karen National Defense Organization**, units are formed according to areas, and a brigade was formed in each administrative district. The brigades formed in the eastern part were:

- (1) Karenni Brigade;
- (2) Toungoo Brigade;
- (3) Nyaunglebin Brigade;
- (4) Thaton Brigade;
- (5) Mawlamyaing Brigade.

Towards the end of 1949, brigades of the **Karen National Defense Organization** were formed in the Irrawaddy Delta, and our leaders designated the area as the **Irrawaddy Delta Military Region**.

The Karen national history has it that the Karen people had endeavored peacefully by political means to gain their rights as a nationality, equality and freedom several times, but as the AFPFL government did not accept our leaders' demands, the Karen national leaders, after deliberations, eventually decided to start armed revolution to gain the Karen national rights, equality, freedom and to defend the Karen people.

At the time of the foundation, the aim was strictly for the defense of our own people. The entire Karen people also participated in their own respective areas and defended the Karen villages from being burnt, the people from terror killing, the properties from destruction and the people from life threatening dangers. For those reasons, the **Karen National Defense Organization** is a historic organization.

Moreover, it is standing up steadfastly with the KNU and a force defending the Karen people. Likewise, the **Karen National Defense Organization** will truly defend the destiny of the Karen people in the future, as well.

Currently, we are in a political situation in which we are trying to resolve the political problems by political means through political dialogue. We are trying to find solutions to the political problems causing the civil war and national conflicts. The fundamental causes of the civil war are the nationalities' loss of their equal rights, the ruination of democracy and the system of military dictatorship, based on racist chauvinism. In resolving these problems, we are facing with many challenges. In such a situation, we the KNU have laid down the political programs in consonant with the prevailing objective political circumstances, after a review of the various situations, and are striving in accordance with the political aspirations of the entire Karen people and those of the nationalities.

For that reason, as the KNU is struggling and striving, in line with the principle of determination of the Karen destiny by the Karen, for the establishment of a democratic federal union having full national equality and self-determination, yearned for by the Karen people, the Karen National Defense Organization (KNDO) is urged with this letter to struggle on, hand in hand, with unity, fortitude, full conviction, firm and active spirit, under the political leadership of the KNU.

Karen National Union (KNU)  
Supreme Headquarters