Ambassador U Aung Lynn   Date: 08/21/2019

Myanmar Mission to the United States

Myanmar Embassy, Washington D.C

2300 S St NW, Washington, DC 20008

Re: Letter of Concern for Naw Oh Hla and leaders of the Karen Youth Network.

Dear Your Excellency U Aung Lynn,

We are writing to express our concern regarding legal actions taken by the Yangon Region government against Naw Oh Hla and leaders of the Karen Youth Network for organizing the Karen Martyr's Day on August 12, 2019 in Yangon. The prohibition of the Karen Martyr's Day and the subsequent legal actions taken against the event organizers show that the government of Myanmar does not want to respect and accord the rights of the Karen people to express their cultural and political identity as equal citizen. We believe that these actions taken by the Myanmar government are detrimental to peace, equality, and democracy in Myanmar and could undermine the already eroding trust the Karen community has in the current peace process.

We would like to see peace, equality and the rights of the Karen people to achieve their political aspiration through peaceful dialogue with the government of Myanmar, but this cannot be achieved unless Myanmar government stops suppressing the free speech of the Karen people and accord them equal rights to commemorate something they hold so dear to heart as the Karen Martyr's Day. As a result, we would like to convey our genuine concern to your excellency and urge the government of Myanmar to do the right thing by dropping all charges and legal actions against Naw Oh Hla and youth organizers of the Karen Martyr's Day in Yangon. We believe that understanding of and respect for the Karen people's political rights and identity by the government of Myanmar is crucial for the success of peace, democracy, and federalism in Myanmar.

Sincerely,

Karen Organization of America

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