



November 7, 2014

President Obama
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

We are writing on behalf of Kachin American communities residing in the United States.

In 2009, your administration took the courageous step of engaging with one of the world's most repressive regimes, and embarked on a mission to help transition it into a more democratic Union. Your inaugural address on the steps of Congress: "We will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist" resonates with us to this day.

We sincerely believe that you have stepped up to the plate in delivering what was promised to the government of Burma during the past three years. However, we feel that your administration's good intentions have not been reciprocated in kind by the government of Burma. Although we applaud the Burmese government for some progressive actions it has taken, we must denounce its inactivity or unwillingness to curb the violence being committed against unarmed civilians in the Kachin area and other parts of the country.

On the eve of your second visit to the Union of Burma, we call upon your administration to seek to strengthen the engagement policy, which we hope will foster genuine change and durable peace.

- 1) We request the US government to actively participate in the national reconciliation process by serving as an observer in the peace talks, and act as a witness to the signing of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement which would subsequently address issues of federalism and self-determination put forward by ethnic minority groups.
- 2) As Burma is home to a multi-ethnic population, we desire your Administration to demand both President Thein Sein and opposition leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, to commit to defending the rights of ethnic and religious minorities, many of whom have been internally displaced by armed conflict or inter-religious strife and living in deplorable situations in makeshift camps along the border areas.
- 3) We urge your government to call upon President Thein Sein and his ruling party to amend the constitution in a display of genuine intention to work for peaceful coexistence amongst the diverse peoples of the Union.
- 4) We urge your administration to refrain from giving legitimacy and prestige through premature military engagement.

As Burma is on the cusp of a momentous change, we believe that a robust and dynamic interaction with all stakeholders will ensure a brighter future for the Union.

Kachin Alliance, USA