



Karen Women's Organization (KWO)

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Press release

Women directly targeted in Burmese regime's terror campaign in Karen State

State of Terror, a report launched today by the Karen Women's Organisation, provides graphic evidence of the widespread terror tactics being employed by the military regime's troops against women across Burma's Karen State.

As the atrocities continue, the KWO appeals for concerted international pressure on the regime to bring about an immediate nationwide ceasefire and withdrawal of Burmese Army troops from the ethnic states.

"We deeply regret the veto by China and Russia and South Africa's vote against the UN Security Council Resolution on Burma last month," said KWO Secretary Naw Zipporah Sein. "It is equivalent to endorsing the regime's terror campaign in Karen State. They are giving us a death sentence."

The report documents over 4,000 cases of abuse, including rape, murder, torture and forced labour, mainly over the past few years, in over 190 villages by troops from over 40 Burmese Army battalions.

Repeated incidents of gang-rape in 2006 reveal that the patterns of systematic sexual violence exposed by the KWO in their 2004 report *Shattering Silences* are still continuing.

Harrowing testimony in the report describes women seeing their children killed before their eyes, women used as human minesweepers, and pregnant women suffering miscarriages while carrying heavy loads for the army.

Many of the abuses took place during the ongoing military offensives by the regime in eastern Burma, which have displaced over 25,000 villagers during 2006.

Blooming Night Zan, who collected information for the report emphasized that the military offensive was still going on. "It was heart-breaking to hear the personal tragedies from the hundreds of people I interviewed. It is unbearable to know this hell still going on right now, even as people are doing their best to survive. The situation is past critical. The international community must act now to stop it."

The full text of the report can be viewed at www.karenwomen.org

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