Burmese democracy group issues anti-landmine statement

BURMA, 7 April 2010 (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific) - Text of report by Norway-based Burmese Democratic Voice of Burma website, on 5 April The National League for Democracy (NLD) issued a statement today calling for an end to the use of landmines in Burma. Democratic Voice of Burma [DVB] correspondent Ma Khin Hnin Htet filed this report. [Begin recording]

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[Ma Khin Hnin Htet] The statement claimed that the call is made to end the use of landmines as many innocent people have been killed or maimed due to the use of landmines by the government's army and the armed organizations. The points raised in the anti-landmine statement are explained by NLD Information Committee Member U Ohn Kyaiang.

[U Ohn Kyaiang] The landmines are used usually during wartime. It is not surprising for armed personnel engaging in warfare to be hit by landmines but the leftover landmines pose a huge threat causing innocent people to be killed or maimed and creating a great loss to society. These are very sad issues and the respective organizations are urged not to use landmines. Furthermore, the Mine Ban Treaty [the international agreement that bans antipersonnel landmines] has been signed by many countries although Burma has not signed the treaty as yet. These are explained in the statement and urged those concerned that the treaty should be adhered to. The statement declared that if the NLD was given the authority to do so, it would adhere to the treaty. [End recording]

[Ma Khin Hnin Htet] That was NLD Information Committee Member U Ohn Kyaiang. Furthermore, the NLD's anti-mine statement was supported by the Committee Representing the People's Parliament, CRPP, it is learned. CRPP Secretary U Aye Thar Aung said the danger of the use of landmines in Burma has reached a critical stage.

[U Aye Thar Aung] The threat posed by the landmines is not restricted to military positions in the township but also in civilian areas such as farmlands, paddy fields, and pathways causing ordinary civilians to be killed or maimed. Furthermore, grazing cattle and livestock are also not spared. That is why the threat of landmines in Burma is great. [End recording]

Source: Democratic Voice of Burma website, Oslo, in Burmese 1430 gmt 5 Apr 10

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