



Regime's authority would only be legitimized anyway.

I believe the 2010 general election, if it takes place as planned, will have no benefit for ethnic minorities. It will not guarantee the rights of ethnic groups and women because the 2008 Constitution does not grant equality, autonomy, culture and tradition to the ethnic groups. The Constitution also grants 25 percent of seats in Parliament to the Burmese armed forces. So, I think the election will bring no change and will only legitimize the power of the military regime.

Even if the election takes place—and I believe it will be postponed—there will be more warfare if the regime exerts greater pressure on ethnic cease-fire groups like the Wa and Kachin to become border guard forces. They will confront the junta if more pressure is imposed on them. So I think the election will not advance democratic reform.

I believe conditions in eastern Burma will worsen in 2010 as the Burmese regime has plans to launch offensives to overrun the areas influenced by all armed ethnic groups—not only the Karen National Union (KNU). The regime also plans to bring about the collapse of ethnic armies and all opposition organizations and democracy forces.

I don't believe all members of the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) will become border guard forces. There will be division among them. Some will become border guard forces and

some will return to the KNU. I don't think the regime can control all of the DKBA's soldiers. There will be conflict between the Burmese army and the DKBA, some of whose troops will turn their guns on the regime.

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