



Office of the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Republic of the Union of Myanmar

**Statement by the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Myanmar, Knut Ostby on Kachin State**

(Yangon, 20 April 2018): “I am deeply concerned about reports of an escalation in armed conflict in several areas of Kachin State since 7 April. I have been particularly alarmed of reports of civilian casualties and the plight of communities affected by the fighting in Tanai and Hpakant townships, while other areas have been gravely affected as well. This includes possibly up to 2,000 people who reportedly have been displaced from Awng Lawt, Sut Ring Yang and Sut Ra villages in Tanai Township. They are said to be sheltering in a remote forest area and unable to leave. These civilians include women, as well as pregnant and breastfeeding women, children, elderly people, sick and injured people, who are in a dire situation and in urgent need of humanitarian assistance and protection. In Hpakant, civilians in Hlaing Naung Hku village are similarly reported to be unable to leave the area affected by fighting to safer locations.

I appeal to all parties to the conflict to allow displaced people and other civilians who may remain in the areas of conflict to be permitted to move to a more secure location of their choice and to allow for humanitarian assistance to reach these populations as a matter of urgency. Moreover, I appeal to all parties to the conflict to ensure that civilians are protected at all times and remind them of their obligations under International Humanitarian Law.”

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