Challenges lie ahead in submitting the policies from the Karen National-Level Political Dialogue to the 21st Century Panglong Conference, also known as the Union Peace Conference, as they need to pass through three stages, the Karen National Union (KNU)’s joint secretary Pado Mann Mann Mann said on 20 January.

“The policies we have set down at the [national-level political] dialogue have to pass through three stages in order to reach the 21st Century Panglong Conference. First, they will arrive in the hands of the Working Group Committee. Then, they will be sent to UPDJC (Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee). From there, they will be sent to the 21st Century Panglong Conference. We are facing many difficulties to pass these three stages,” said Pado Mann Mann Mann.

The KNU’s joint secretary made the remarks to the press on the last day of the Karen National-Level Political Dialogue, which was held in the Karen State’s capital Hpa-an from 18 to 20 January under the aim to build a future federal union.

He talked about the need to include all ethnic armed organisations in the national-level political dialogues and insisted that the policies from the dialogues depend not on whether the Burmese government and the Burma Army would allow them but on how much they would accept them.

He believes the views of other ethnic people will not be much different from the policies of the Karen National-Level Peace Dialogue.

The national-level political dialogues will also be held in other areas based on ethnicity, region, and topic.

“We couldn’t say the word ‘federal union’ for over 60 years. I feel that the National-Level Political Dialogue, which was held in Hpa-an, was good for both the country and all ethnic people because we were able to speak the words from our heart,” said Mann Htain Win Sein, vice-chairman of the Karen National Party (KNP).

In a speech delivered on 18 January, the KNU’s chairman General Mutu Say Poe has called on the Burmese government and the Burma Army to become more open for non-signatories of the nationwide ceasefire agreement (NCA) to sign the NCA and join the national-level political dialogues.