

MEDIA MONITORING REPORT – OCTOBER 2015

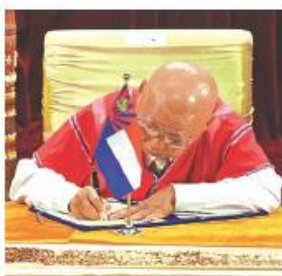
NATIONWIDE CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT

Eight ethnic armed organizations signed a Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) in Nay Pyi Taw on Thursday 15th October. It is a major step towards peace after more than six decades of civil conflict in the Southeast Asian country. The event was observed by foreign diplomats from 50 countries, political parties, civil society organizations as well as international witnesses including the United Nations, the European Union, China, India, Thailand and Japan.¹

Three days before the formal signing of the NCA, the government removed the eight signatory groups from the list of "Unlawful Associations" and "Terrorist Organizations" respectively.

The eight ethnic groups that signed the NCA with the government are:

- (1) Karen National Union (KNU)
- (2) Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA)
- (3) Karen National Liberation Army - Peace Council (KNLA-PC)
- (4) Chin National Front (CNF)
- (5) Pa-o National Liberation Organization (PNLO)
- (6) All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF)
- (7) Arakan Liberation Party (ALP)
- (8) Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS/Shan State Army-South (SSA-S))



KNU Chairman
Saw Mutu Say Poe



KNU/KNLA-PC Chairman
Saw Htay Maung



RCSS/SSA-S Chairman
U Yawd Serk



ALP Vice Chairman
U Khaing Soe Naing Aung



PNLO Chairman U Khun Myint Tun



ABSDF Chairman Yebaw Than Ge



DKBA Chief of Staff Saw Lah Bwe



CNF Chairman U Pu Nang Lian Thang

PHOTOS: MNA

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Seven groups said that they are not ready to sign the NCA at the moment². They are:

- (1) Kachin Independence Organization (KIO)
- (2) Kayinni National Progressive Party (KNPP)
- (3) National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA)
- (4) New Mon State Party (NMSP)
- (5) National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang (NSCN-K)
- (6) Shan State Progressive Party/Shan State Army-North (SSPP/SSA-N)
- (7) United Wa State Army (UWSA).

The government agreed that three other ethnic groups take part in political dialogue³ based on the fact that they no longer have an armed conflict with the government.⁴ They are:

- (1) Lahu Democratic Union
- (2) Arakan National Council
- (3) Wa National Organization

Separate ceasefire talks are to be held between the government and the:

- (4) Kokang's Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA)
- (5) Arakan Army (AA)
- (6) Taaung National Liberation Army (TNLA)

POST-NCA DEVELOPMENTS

The United States government and the European Union have both welcomed the signing of the NCA and strongly encouraged the inclusion of the remaining groups in the next step of the peace process.^{5 6}

- The Myanmar government and ethnic organizations that signed the NCA have formed two Joint Committees to implement the Agreement and bring forward the next steps towards a political dialogue.
- The *Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee* is to prevent a recurrence of armed clashes, and the *Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee* is to support the political dialogue. All sides also agreed to strive for remaining armed groups to take part in the peace process.
- The signatories will draw-up a political framework within 60 days after the NCA signing and begin the political dialogue within 90 days. The signatories will meet again in mid-November to review the process.
- Development priorities will be given to areas where the ceasefire agreement is in place. The government will boost funds for development, with assistance from international donors, as

prescribed in the NCA. Development projects will also happen in areas of the groups who did not sign the ceasefire, upon agreement of the relevant group.

- Top priorities include demining, food and shelter, creating jobs and providing assistance to those who wish to return home after having fled earlier conflicts.⁷

The NCA is an essential and historical milestone towards a just and sustainable peace in Myanmar. It also allows for the start of a comprehensive political dialogue and further steps towards national reconciliation, respect for the rights of all people and equitable development for all.⁸



¹ Xinhua, 15 October 2015, "Myanmar gov't signs nationwide ceasefire accord", http://www.china.org.cn/world/2015-10/15/content_36817762.htm

² The Global New Light of Myanmar, 16 October 2015, "Peace Deal Signed", http://issuu.com/yelay/docs/16_oct_15_gnlm_0805103f78fe8f

³ Xinhua, 15 October 2015, "Myanmar gov't signs nationwide ceasefire accord", http://www.china.org.cn/world/2015-10/15/content_36817762.htm

⁴ ELEVEN, "Struggle to earn ethnic rebels' trust", <http://www.elevenmyanmar.com/opinion/struggle-earn-ethnic-rebels-trust>

⁵ Council of the European Union, 15 October 2015, "Declaration by the EU High Representative on the occasion of the signing of the NCA", <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/10/15-declaration-hr-myanmar>

⁶ U.S Department of State, 15 October 2015, "Signing of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in Burma", <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2015/10/248222.htm>, paragraph 1

⁷ The Global New Light of Myanmar, 16 October 2015 "Development projects will prioritise areas under ceasefire", www.moi.gov.mm/npe/nlm/?q=download/file/fid/2179

⁸ Council of the European Union, 15 October 2015, "Declaration by the EU High Representative on the occasion of the signing of the NCA", <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/10/15-declaration-hr-myanmar>

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