

## THAILAND

7 – 19 January 2016

### MEDIA MONITORING REPORT # 141

#### PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

##### Myanmar's Suu Kyi calls for all insurgents to take part in talks

Reuters, 12 January 2016

More of Myanmar's ethnic minority rebel groups should be brought into peace talks and the effort to end conflict should not divide groups that are involved in negotiations and those that have shunned the process, Aung San Suu Kyi said on Tuesday.



Suu Kyi said, "It is important not to have conflicts between the ethnic armed groups which have signed the NCA and the groups which are still not involved in the agreement."

The gathering in Naypyitaw was also attended by President Thein Sein and the powerful army chief Min Aung Hlaing. The appearance of the two alongside Suu Kyi reflected what has been a smooth

transfer of power.

**Link:** <http://uk.reuters.com/article/myanmar-suukyi-peace-talks-idUKKCN0UQ0BR20160112>

##### Aung San Suu Kyi Urges Efforts Toward a 'Lasting Peace' in Myanmar

Radio Free Asia, 12 January 2016

Myanmar's incoming government will work hard to build peace with separatist ethnic armies left out of a cease-fire agreement signed in October, National League for Democracy (NLD) leader Aung San Suu Kyi said in a speech at the opening of a peace conference held in the capital Naypyitaw on Tuesday.

"We are ready to work for a lasting peace according to the mandate that the people gave us," said Suu Kyi whose party swept national polls in a landslide victory Nov. 8 and will form a new government sometime early this year.

"We urgently need national reconciliation," Suu Kyi said, taking part for the first time in peace talks in Myanmar. "We can't build a long-term peace without it."

Speaking as the conference opened, outgoing Myanmar president Thein Sein called the gathering an important step forward in building peace in the formerly military-ruled Southeast Asian nation.

**Link:** <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/peace-01122016184513.html>

### Myanmar ethnic groups place faith in Suu Kyi govt for peace

Channel News Asia, 17 January 2016

Rebel negotiators applauded talks with Myanmar authorities on Saturday (Jan 16) at the end of five days of discussions, but said the real business of crafting peace rests with Aung San Suu Kyi's government-in-waiting.

At the opening of the peace talks on Tuesday, Suu Kyi pledged to make peace a priority of her administration, citing "the mandate given to us by the people and ethnic minorities."

Speaking to AFP after the talks on Saturday, Salai Lian Mone Ar Khaung, a representative from rebel ethnic group the Chin National Front, said he was hopeful that the NLD would understand his people's wishes for greater autonomy.

Representatives from armed ethnic factions, the government and army, agreed this week to conclude the peace process within the next five years, said Aung Min, a government minister who facilitated the meetings.



**Link:** <http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/myanmar-ethnic-groups/2432898.html>

### Burma army pledges to cooperate with Suu Kyi on peace

Democratic Voice of Burma, 15 January 2016

The Burmese military says it will work with Aung San Suu Kyi's incoming government when it takes over the country's peace process.



Friday saw the fourth day of the Union Peace Conference in Naypyidaw, a gathering of 700 delegates from Burma's military, ethnic armed organisations and political parties. The summit comes as the second step in Burma's lurching peace process, begun by the outgoing Thein Sein administration in 2012.

On Friday, speaking to DVB on the sidelines of the historic talks, the Burmese army's Gen. Tin Maung Win said the Tatmadaw was ready and willing to cooperate with Suu Kyi in the continuation of the peace process.

"Regardless of who becomes the government, I believe the next government will continue the effort to successfully implement peace. The Tatmadaw will continue to cooperate with any government to bring about peace with utmost dedication," the army spokesperson said.

**Link:** <http://www.dvb.no/news/burma-army-pledges-to-cooperate-with-suu-kyi-on-peace/60336>

### Ethnic Groups Demand Self-Administered States

Mizzima, 18 January 2016

Ethnic Pa-O, Shan-ni, Ta'ang and Wa representatives demanded self-administered states at the Union Peace Conference in Naypyitaw last Thursday, 14 January.

During the five-day meeting in Naypyidaw, U Sai Paung Nub, a Wa Democratic Party (WDP) representative, asked for a Wa state to be set up in six northern and eastern Shan State townships, which, according to the 2008 constitution, have a Wa majority.

The sentiments were supported by the Pa-O, who has had a designated Pa-O Self-Administered Zone in the southern Shan State townships of Hsihseng, Hopong and Panglaung since 2010.

Colonel Khun Okkar, the chairman of the Pa-O National Liberation Organization (PNLO) said: “What we are demanding is not for only Pa-O people, but also for other ethnic groups to be recognized as [having the right to] self-administrated states, this includes the Wa and Ta’ang people.”



**Link:** <http://www.bnionline.net/news/shan-state/item/1427-ethnic-groups-demand-self-administrated-states.html>

### **Next peace conference must include NCA non-signatories: members**

Eleven, 18 January 2016

Officials involved in the ongoing peace process have stressed the need for ethnic armed groups that did not sign the nationwide ceasefire agreement (NCA) to participate in efforts to restore internal peace, thereby strengthening the effort to reach a political solution.



“This conference is aimed at seeking a political solution to 58-year-old internal armed conflicts. All of us need to try to strengthen the likelihood of success of the ongoing political dialogue. I believe the foundation of political dialogue will become stronger in the next meeting,” said Upper House MP Khet Htein Nan, a secretariat member of the UPDJC, at a press conference following the closing ceremony for the Union Peace

Conference, which ran from January 12 to 16 in Nay Pyi Taw.

“There might be different views between the government and the ethnic armed groups. In the past, all of us used military action, but now we are using a process of negotiation to end the prolonged internal armed conflicts politically. The Tatmadaw has expressed its opinions, as have the ethnic armed groups at the same place. This conference is regarded as a new political landscape,” said Sai Kyaw Nyunt, a political party representative member of the UPDJC.

“I hope the whole peace process will be successful. But now, only the signatories to the NCA are attending the conference. If the ethnic armed groups that did not sign the NCA attended the conference, it would be an encouraging step toward peace process,” said Dr Salai Hlan Hmone, an ethnic armed group representative member of the UPDJC.

**Link:** <http://www.elevenmyanmar.com/politics/next-peace-conference-must-include-nca-non-signatories-members>

## **LAW AND GOVERNANCE**

### **Political prisoners hope for NLD help**

Myanmar Times, 19 January 2016

With so many supporters soon to be in high places, the Former Political Prisoner Society has high expectations of the incoming National League for Democracy government. About 100 of the MPs preparing to take their



seats on February 1, including NLD leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, served time as prisoners of conscience, they say.

The FPPS is repositioning itself as a more political organisation, expanding its focus as it adjusts to the new political realities in the country, said society secretary U Tun Kyi. “We can’t say yet if we will contest the 2020 election, but we are going to get more involved in political matters.”

The goals of the FPPS are to secure the release all political prisoners without exception, to support their family members, to rehabilitate their lives, and to pursue national reconciliation, peace and democracy.

Membership of the society is open to all who fit the current definition of a political prisoner – that is, anyone who has been detained for political reasons because of actions intended to promote freedom, equality, human rights or ethnic minority rights.



**Link:** <http://www.mmtimes.com/index.php/national-news/nay-pyi-taw/18528-political-prisoners-hope-for-nld-help.html>

### **Female Candidate Wins Local Election in Mon State**

Irrawaddy, 18 January 2016

Former school teacher Mi Ja Lon Htaw was elected head of Tarana village tract in Mon State’s Kyaikmayaw Township on Sunday, a rare victory for a female leader in a local administrative structure traditionally

dominated by men.

The 41-year-old ethnic Mon woman successfully contested Sunday’s local level poll against three male counterparts.

“Two hundred and twenty people voted and I won 140 votes. I felt very happy when I found the people supported me,” said Mi Ja Lon Htaw, a former Mon language teacher with the Mon National Education Department.

Mi Ja Lon Htaw said her first priority would be to obtain electricity for her village. She also vowed to tackle local corruption, citing instances where villagers gave money to administrative heads to secure recommendation letters to travel and obtain ID cards.

**Link:** <http://www.irrawaddy.com/burma/female-candidate-wins-local-election-in-mon-state.html>

## **ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT**

### **NLD in Dawei ready to cooperate with local party for development**

Mizzima, 18 January 2016

The National League for Democracy (NLD) in Tanintharyi Region says it is ready to cooperate with the Dawei Nationalities Party (DNP) in order to implement regional development. In order to move forward with this effort the party in Tanintharyi must receive instruction from party headquarters, according to NLD officials in Tanintharyi Region.

There are two ethnic parties in the region, the Karen Party and the DNP. U Ho Pin, the NLD’s chairman for

Tanintharyi Region says that the NLD is already cooperating with the DNP on issues pertaining to Dawei national affairs.

Although the DNP did not win any seat during the last election, it has continued to advocate for Dawei ethnic affairs. The party has indicated that it is willing to cooperate with the NLD, the party's chairman U Aye Min told BNI Election Newsroom.

**Link:** <http://www.bnionline.net/2015-election/other-region/item/1426-nld-in-dawei-ready-to-cooperate-with-local-party-for-development.html>

## LAND AND PROPERTY

### NLD to compile land grabbing list for Karenni State

Mizzima News, 7 January 2016

The National League for Democracy (NLD) issued an announcement at the end of last month indicating that it will make a list of expropriated farmland in Karenni State, the country's smallest state.

Ko Thae Reh, a central committee member from the Karenni State Farmers' Union (KSFU), told BNI that his union is still collecting data for the list of confiscated farmland in Karenni State.

"We are still collecting data in Hpruso, Demoso, and Loikaw townships, where the majority of the farmland issues have taken place," he said.

He added that the KSFU will review the collected data and submit this data to the elected NLD candidates and request them to deal with the matter.

**Link:** <http://www.mizzima.com/news-domestic/nld-compile-land-grabbing-list-karenni-state>



## CENSUS AND ELECTION

### First post-election meeting for Suu Kyi, US envoys

DVB, 19 January 2016

Aung San Suu Kyi met American diplomats on Monday as Burma transitions to a new government after her party's sweeping election victory last November.



Suu Kyi met with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken in the capital, Naypyitaw.

The purpose of the visit was to discuss the Burmese government's status in moving power from the military-linked Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) to Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD).

Burma has been embroiled in decades of conflict with a myriad of ethnic minority rebel groups.

An NLD-led government will take power in March,

following a presidential election expected to take place in February, but the military will remain a powerful political force.

A quarter of seats in parliament are reserved for unelected military officials. Three important cabinet ministers – home affairs, defense and border affairs – are also chosen by the commander-in-chief.

**Link:** <http://www.dvb.no/dvb-video/first-post-election-meeting-for-suu-kyi-us-envoys/60363>

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