

## POLITICAL MONITOR NO.33

### OFFICIAL MEDIA

#### SEVERAL KILLED IN NEW COMMUNAL UNREST IN THANDWE, RAKHINE STATE

An argument that reportedly started from the parking of a three-wheeled motorbike in front of a shop in Thandwe, Rakhine State, led to setting fire to houses and buildings from 29 September to 1 October. Due to the dispute, a total of 59 houses—each of Dwarawadi Ward and Ward Nos. 5, 6 and 8, 28 houses of Pauktaw Village, 14 of Thabyuchaing Village, four of Shwehlay and nine of Mekyun Village in Thandwe—and two religious buildings of Kyaukyi and Kyekanye Villages, and one fuel station of Linmutaung Village were destroyed. Five people were killed and five injured in the riot. According to a police officer in Thabyuchaing, more than 700 rioters took to the streets and a 94-year old Muslim woman died from stab wounds in the clashes that followed. The government, however, has not confirmed the final number of casualties and a curfew has been announced in Thandwe to prevent further outbreaks and to restore law and order.<sup>1</sup>

#### PRESIDENT THEIN SEIN TOURS TOWNSHIPS IN RAKHINE STATE

President Thein Sein arrived in Rakhine State on 1 October to visit the region amidst the latest sectarian violence in Thandwe Township, where he met with government officials, community leaders, Rakhine and Kaman nationals and discussed matters on community peace and regional development affairs. The President also stated that the government is carrying out political, economic and administrative reforms for bringing about peace and stability, and rule of law, and socio-economic development to the region. During his 2-day visit, the President toured Sittway, Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw and Maungtaung Townships, internally displaced persons camps in the region and inspected on-going regional development projects in Rakhine State. General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) Chief General Hla Htay Win also toured Thandwe, Thabyuchai, Pauktaw, Mekyun, Kyaukyi and Kyekanye Villages in Thandwe Township and assured residents that concerted efforts are being made for restoring peace and stability and rehabilitation tasks are being implemented to meet the needs of those affected by the unrests.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Five killed, five injured in Thandwe riot -

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-10-04-red.pdf> (NLM) 4 October 2013 (p. 16) /

Unrest occurs in Thandwe, measures being taken to restore stability -

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-10-02-red.pdf> (NLM) 2 October 2013 (p. 10) /

Local people in Thandwe urged to cooperate with authorities to deter conflicts from erupting again -

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-10-03-red.pdf> (NLM) 3 October 2013 (p. 9) /

Myanmar Muslims hide amid deadly sectarian clashes -

<http://news.yahoo.com/myanmar-muslims-hide-amid-deadly-sectarian-clashes-104315501.html> (AP) 2 October 2013

<sup>2</sup> President U Thein Sein makes inspection tour of Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw, Maungtaung Townships in Rakhine State -

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-10-02-red.pdf> (NLM) 2 October 2013 (p. 1 & 9) /

President U Thein Sein inspects Rakhine, Sittway, Kyaukpyu, meets towns-elders, departmental officials -

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-10-03-red.pdf> (NLM) 3 October 2013 (p. 1 & 9) /

Conflicts in Rakhine State cause sufferings to nation -

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-10-04-red.pdf> (NLM) 4 October 2013 (p. 8) /

No winner in Myanmar's 60-year old armed conflict. Government to use all ways and means vested by the Constitution for restoring peace and stability, ensuring rule of law in Rakhine State : President -

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-10-04-red.pdf> (NLM) 4 October 2013 (p. 1 & 8) /

Kyaukpyu SEZ Project to create job opportunities for locals and contribute to economic development -

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-10-04-red.pdf> (NLM) 4 October 2013 (p.16 & 9) /

General Hla Htay Win comforts victims in Thandwe -

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-10-03-red.pdf> (NLM) 3 October 2013 (p. 9) /

General Hla Htay Win inspects riot-hit villages in Thandwe Township -

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-10-04-red.pdf> (NLM) 4 October 2013 (p. 16 & 9)

## **PRESIDENT THEIN SEIN ADDRESSES THE NATION**

Speaking to the nation in his monthly address on 1 October, President Thein Sein emphasized the importance of the on-going peace process and its long-term implications in achieving national reconciliation in Myanmar.

In his speech he said that the process was delicate and that successive governments had tried, but failed in achieving peace and that his government would seek to solve the root causes of the problems through political means. He also stated that while there had been setbacks, the current state of the peace process unambiguously showed that the achievements outweighed them and as a result he expressed his thanks to those involved in negotiations including all ethnic group leaders. Thein Sein also welcome the decision by all ethnic groups not to secede from the Union and that the government is now planning to organize a signing ceremony for a nation-wide ceasefire agreement in order to recall and reaffirm all the achievements and agreements attained thus far.

He also urged the media to enforce media ethics, avoid covering unfounded rumours and stop making personal attacks at a time the country is sowing the seeds of media freedom. "At a time when the entire country is engaging in a historic state-building process, we all must work together to prevent such unethical personal attacks that rise to the level of abuse of recently acquired media freedoms." Thein Sein also stated that during the remainder of his term in office he would strive to do everything possible in achieving lasting peace, improve the living standard of the general public and to create a bright future for the younger generations. *(Please see Annex A for full text of President Thein Sein's speech).*<sup>3</sup>

## **CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE TO SEEK ADVICE FROM STAKEHOLDERS**

The parliamentary Joint Committee for Reviewing the Constitution issued a press statement through state media that it is to seek assessment and advice from the Legislative Pillar, Administrative Pillar and Judicial Pillar through Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, and would seek assessment and advice of political parties, organizations and individuals regarding moves to amend or rewrite the 2008 Constitution. The Review Committee has set a deadline of 15 November for the submission of such advice and assessment.<sup>4</sup> *(Please see Appendix B for full text of the Press Release).*

## **MON NATIONAL CONFERENCE HELD**

A 3-day Mon National Conference attended by senior government officials, leaders of the New Mon State Party (NMSP) and 400 participants was held Mawlamyaing, the capital of Mon State from 27 - 29 September. In his address, NMSP Chairman Naing Htaw Mon called for collective efforts to bring peace and prosperity to Mon State. Union Minister Aung Min said that both parties have agreed principally to hold Union-level peace talks between the government and KIO in Myitkyina at the end of the first week of October. The Minister underscored the importance of political dialogue that will bring about a lasting peace, understanding that process of making effort to reach ceasefire is part of the whole process. Although there are still some conflicts despite the more than 2-year long peace process, Aung Min said that now is the time to step into the next level, National Dialogue, as some positive outcomes have emerged. He also added that the formulation of a political dialogue framework would be carried out in November or December with the participation of the government, the Tatmadaw, the Parliament, the ethnic groups, and the armed groups that had agreed a ceasefire and political parties. The Chairman Conference Dr Min Kyi Win also explained the

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<sup>3</sup> I will continue to do everything in my power to institute an all-inclusive political process and a new democratic political culture –

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-10-02-red.pdf> (NLM) 2 October 2013 (p. 1 & 6)

<sup>4</sup> Press release on seeking advice and measures taken for the Constitution (2008) –

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-10-04-red.pdf> (NLM) 4 October 2013 (p. 8)

aims of the conference and follow-up tasks including the convening of the Mon National Convention in 2014.<sup>5</sup>

## HLUTTAW SESSIONS – Highlights

### Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) sessions

The 8<sup>th</sup> Regular Session of the First Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) held its 2<sup>nd</sup> day meeting on 2 October. At the session, the following questions were raised and answered;

- U Sai Hla Kyaw from Langkho Constituency asked **“whether there is a plan to conserve Inlay region enacting a particular law and how the authorities concerned to monitor local and foreign NGOs activities at Inlay region.** Deputy Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry U Aye Myint Maung said that UNDP and NGOs are working under the terms of the contract and their respective work proposals of local NGOs are to be selected by the technical advisory team of a project. He continued that there are 12 local NGOs working in the region that cooperated with the UNDP in 2012-2013 FY and 8 local environmental conservation and social organizations were added in 2013-2014 FY. Under the supervision of UNDP, Inlay Lake conservation and rehabilitation tasks are carried out with the use of budgets directly allocated by local NGOs, without the Union Government allocating budgets. The Deputy Minister continued by saying that long-term plans to restore Inlay Lake are being implemented with Australia based International Development Convention Centre and UN-HABITAT’s Urban and Housing Rehabilitation Programmes, and efforts are being made for planning Inlay region socioeconomic development project in collaboration with the International Hilly Region Comprehensive Development Convention Centre. He also said that existing laws on conservation of the region are currently in place and therefore there is no need to enact new laws.<sup>6</sup>

### Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House) sessions

The 8<sup>th</sup> Regular Session of the First Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House) held its 2<sup>nd</sup> day meeting on 2 October. The following issues were raised and answered during the session;

- Deputy Minister for Construction Soe Tint replied to **the question on upgrading of Moegaung-Phakant motorway** raised by U San Pyae of Constituency No (7).<sup>7</sup>

### Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (Union Parliament) sessions

The 8<sup>th</sup> Regular Session of the First Pyidaungsu Hluttaw convened its 1<sup>st</sup> day session on 1<sup>st</sup> October. Speaker Thura Shwe Mann urged parliamentarians to enforce the Constitution and existing laws, stressing the need to make strenuous efforts for promotion of democracy in accord with laws and bylaws of the parliament. He highlighted the eighth regular session of the first Pyidaungsu Hluttaw in which important laws including the additional budget bill will be discussed and promulgated. He called on lawmakers to submit proposals and enact laws with goodwill and based on experience. The session also discussed the following issues:

- Union-level members of the Farmland-Grab Commission made clarifications of the report commission. Deputy Minister for Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development U Khin Maung Aye **assured that coordination will be made with region/state governments in accord with laws, rules and regulations in order to return unused farmlands to farmers.** Deputy Minister for

<sup>5</sup> Lasting peace will be achieved only through political dialogue –

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-09-29-red.pdf> (NLM) 28 September 2013 (p. 8)

<sup>6</sup> No plan to enact law for conservation of Inlay region –

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-10-03-red.pdf> (NLM) 3 October 2013 (p. 16 & 9)

<sup>7</sup> Amyotha Hluttaw session continues –

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-10-03-red.pdf> (NLM) 3 October 2013 (p. 16 & 9)

Commerce Dr Pwint Hsan and Deputy Minister for Construction U Soe Tint also **made explanations regarding the report, vowing more cooperation and coordination to ease farmland matters that still remain unsettled.** Daw Khin Saw Wai of Yathedaung Constituency **endorsed and welcomed the government's decision to return unused farmlands to its owners.**<sup>8</sup>

The 8<sup>th</sup> Regular Session of the First Pyidaungsu Hluttaw convened its 2<sup>nd</sup> day session on 3<sup>rd</sup> October. At the session, the following reports and bills were discussed:

- Vice-Chairman of Joint Bill Committee U T Khun Myat **read the findings of the committee and the report on the Bill Amending the Union Judicial Law. The report was approved by the session;**
- **The Communications Bill report** was read out by the Secretary of the Joint Bill Committee U Saw Hla Tun. **The report was approved by the Hluttaw;**
- Member of the Joint Bill Committee Dr Myat Nyana Soe **read the findings of the report and remarks on the Farmers Rights Protection and Raising Interest Bill, and the Hluttaw approved it.**<sup>9</sup>

## UNOFFICIAL MEDIA

### BRITAIN PREPARING 'POLITICAL' TRAINING FOR BURMA ARMY

Britain is finalizing the details of military assistance that will see 30 high-ranking officers in the Myanmar/Burmese Army to receive specially tailored training, including instruction on how to operate within the rule of law, the head of a UK training centre said. During an official visit to London by President Thein Sein in July, British Foreign Secretary William Hague said the country would begin engaging with the Burma Army. The aim of cooperation, Hague said at the time, was to try to foster accountability and respect for human rights in the Burmese military, which only handed power to a quasi-civilian government in 2011 but remains influential.

The 30 officers of the Burma Army, known as the Tatmadaw, are set to attend a course in January 2014. The training is jointly run by Cranfield University and the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, and will take place in Burma. The course for the Tatmadaw will be made up of two-weeks of bespoke training for the officers, taught through Burmese-speaking translators and is designed for decision-makers ranging from the ranks of lieutenant colonel and brigadier or equivalent. The soldiers will be taught by a team of four consisting of academics and serving British Army officers. Laura Cleary, the head of the Centre of International Security and Resilience at Cranfield University, said the course would contain no offensive military content and the purpose is to encourage the Burmese military to normalize their role within society to improve the respect for human rights and enhance the governance of those security forces.<sup>10</sup>

### KNU MEETS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF BURMESE ARMY

Army Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing met Karen National Union (KNU) Chairman Saw Mutu Sae Poe in Naypyitaw to discuss their joint ceasefire. The meeting is seen by ethnic leaders as a move by the government to acknowledge the KNU as a necessary component in the country's political future. The discussions focussed on how to finalize a cease-fire code-of-

<sup>8</sup> More cooperation and coordination will be made to ease matters that remain unsettled – <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-10-02-red.pdf> (NLM) 2 October 2013 (p. 16 & 9)

<sup>9</sup> Pyidaungsu Hluttaw discusses three bills sent back by President with amendments – <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-10-04-red.pdf> (NLM) 4 October 2013 (p. 16 & 9)

<sup>10</sup> Britain preparing 'Political' training for Burma Army – <http://www.irrawaddy.org/burma/britain-preparing-political-training-burma-army.html> (Irrawaddy) 2 October 2013

conduct, a nationwide cease-fire agreement and a political frame work for future peace talks. The KNU's general secretary P'doh Saw Kwe Htoo Win said despite the talks being informal there was a lot of common ground at the meeting. "All involved parties need to sign, such as the ethnic armed groups, government, the parliaments and government leaders in charge of the country's in security sectors." He also indicated that there is still much to be achieved before a nationwide ceasefire is a reality and for the political dialogue to happen it needed more meetings and discussions and map out a framework. The KNU needs to discuss this, as do the other ethnic groups, the government, and the army – it needs to be inclusive to all for the peace building process."<sup>11</sup>

### **KIO SAYS SIGNING CEASEFIRE IS 'BY NO MEANS CERTAIN'**

The Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO) said that it is by no means certain it will sign the nationwide ceasefire agreement which the government is aiming to secure by the end of this year. At the conclusion of preliminary talks with a government delegation in Myitkyina on 3 October, a KIO spokesman said that the Kachin army is ready to sit down again at the table for negotiations on 8 October, but it could not commit itself on the signing of a ceasefire agreement.

"We typically sign a list of agreements at the end of every meeting, but not on the issue of a ceasefire," said the spokesperson for the KIO's Work Committee Daung Kha. "We will probably discuss the ceasefire issue during next week's talks, but whether to sign the agreement or not is another question. Ideally, we would like to wait until every ethnic group is involved, just as the government had originally planned," he said. He added that during the preliminary talks in Myitkyina on 2-3 October, the following issues were discussed: Kachin IDPs, the demarcation of troops, and various political affairs. "Whether the government's effort to achieve a nationwide ceasefire is successful or not depends on how much trust can be built between the government and ethnic armed groups," said Daung Kha. "But it also depends on the extent of transparency in the political process. However, as we all share the same ambition – to bring about peace via political solutions – a ceasefire will come sooner or later."<sup>12</sup>

### **NLD TO CONDUCT A POLL TO ASSESS CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM**

The National League for Democracy (NLD) together with other ethnic parties will conduct public surveys across Burma to assess whether to amend or completely rewrite the 2008 constitution. "The poll is not aimed to collect a signature from the public, but gather the voices of the people. It is not a nationwide campaign. Chairperson Aung San Suu Kyi instructed to do this to reach out to the grassroots within two months," said NLD spokesperson Nyan Win. "We will discuss the constitutional matters with the people and they will question what they want to know. All of us will share knowledge," he said, adding that the NLD would form seven groups to conduct the poll and it would organise gatherings at NLD offices in various villages and townships.

Political parties representing Burma's minority ethnic groups share common ground with the NLD in seeking constitutional reform and have voiced hopes of involving citizens in a nation-wide debate. "The ethnic [groups] agreed on this poll and would join the movement. Our common purpose was to amend the constitution or write a new draft," said Aye Tha Aung, the chairman of the Rakhine League for Democracy.

In response to questions over how to organise the Tatmadaw (Myanmar Armed Forces: army, navy and air force) Ko Ni, who is a member of the NLD's Constitution Amendment Committee, replied

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<sup>11</sup> KNU delegates talk peace to Burma's commander-in-chief – <http://karennews.org/2013/10/knu-delegates-talk-peace-to-burmas-commander-in-chief.html/> (Karen News) 4 October 2013

<sup>12</sup> KIO says signing ceasefire is 'by no means certain' – <http://english.dvb.no/news/kio-remains-says-signing-ceasefire-is-by-no-means-certain-burma-myanmar/33103> (DVB) 3 October 2013

that they would explain facts about the constitution through constructive means. The participation of Tatmadaw was not up to them. The Tatmadaw would hear the voices of the people and it would itself make decision on the people's desire.<sup>13</sup>

## ANALYSIS

The latest outbreak of sectarian violence in Thandwe, Rakhine State is yet another stark reminder that Burma's reform process is riddled with issues left unattended by previous successive governments. Since coming to power, President Thein Sein has embarked on a path to national reconciliation and nation-building while, at the same time, promoting democratic norms. However, communal unrests have now become a series of episodes where individuals from the Buddhist community have reportedly been aggrieved by a Muslim, which in turn has ignited mobs rampaging Muslim neighbourhoods. And each unrest has left hundreds dead and thousands displaced but failed to root out the causes of the violence. While the President has stated openly and announced a 'zero-tolerance approach' of the issue, his government has been unable to prevent communal unrests during the past two years. That indeed has raised questions on the government's ability to handle the issue and, more importantly, to adopt more practical and result-oriented measures. While the government has adopted a more hands on approach in responding to the communal riots, it has once again overlooked the functions and use of civil society and local communities. A viable and more practical solution would be the creation of space for civil society and community organisations to help ease tensions and build trust. In order to achieve these goals, all initiatives and measures to end the grievances and rifts must come from within the communities concerned and the authorities should assume the role of providing assistance where needed. However, much more needs to be done to avoid such communal unrests. The government must act immediately and more responsively to crack down on religious intolerance and failure to do so, could indeed jeopardize not only the national reconciliation process but also the democratic reforms in Burma.

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<sup>13</sup> NLD to conduct a poll to assess constitutional reform –

<http://www.elevenmyanmar.com/politics/3576-nld-to-conduct-a-poll-to-assess-constitutional-reform> (Eleven News Media) 30 September 2013



## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix A: PRESIDENT THEIN SEIN'S ADDRESS TO THE NATION**

#### **I will continue to do everything in my power to institute an all inclusive political process and a new democratic political culture**

*Nay Pyi Taw, 1 Oct - The following is the full text of the speech delivered by President U Thein Sein through radio programmes to the entire people on 1 October.*

My Fellow Citizens:

I would like to inform all of you about the recent changes and developments that have taken place in our country during the month of September just as I have done previously on this radio program.

In this month's radio speech, I want to emphasize the peace process which is directly related to the long term plan to realize national reconciliation—a subject that I touched on in last month's radio speech. I will explain the policies and positions of our government with regard to the peace process since the prevailing political and economic developments in the country are intertwined with it.

All successive governments have tried to achieve peace in the country. History will be the judge whether these governments did the right thing or had the right intentions when making peace. One thing which we can all agree on is that we have not achieved genuine peace that will bring an end to all armed conflicts in the country. This is the political reality of our times.

Our history lessons also tell us that ceasefire alone will not lead to lasting peace; we will have to solve the root causes of the problems through political means.

Since the first time our government started making the necessary plans to end all ethnic conflicts and build lasting peace, we have considered the aforesaid political reality. The current peace building plans undertaken by our government came out of the analysis of such political reality.

As you may recall, shortly after assuming office, I invited all ethnic armed groups to come to the peace talks without setting any preconditions other than their genuine will for peace. The ethnic armed groups responded positively to my invitation.

All the stakeholders have tried to do everything they can to overcome the difficulties and challenges with dedication and resolve in order to get to where we are in the peace process. We are also aware of the fact that there still are some minor skirmishes between the government troops and some ethnic armed groups even though ceasefire agreements are in place with many of the ethnic armed groups. At the same time, there is much evidence of potential confrontations being averted because of timely communication and negotiations between officials from the Tatmadaw and the ethnic armed groups. All major confrontations and hostilities were deescalated through negotiations. These events show us that the Tatmadaw, ethnic armed groups and all other stakeholders truly yearn for peace and that they are determined to strive for peace with patience, tolerance and understanding.

Although there are some setbacks, the current state of the peace process unambiguously shows that the achievements outweigh the setbacks. We should also congratulate our dialogue partners including leaders of all ethnic groups, The Tatmadaw and ethnic armed groups for the achievements we have attained thus far.

Of all of the achievements, the one that I value most is the decision by all ethnic groups to not secede from the Union. Such a position indicates that our ethnic brothers and sisters wish to be part of the Union of their own accord.

We are now planning to organize a signing ceremony for a nation-wide ceasefire agreement in order to recall and reaffirm all the achievements and agreements we have attained thus far. This will be part of an attempt to implement the agreements reached at State and Union level meetings. The

nation-wide ceasefire agreement will also acknowledge that ceasefire is not the ultimate goal of the peace process. In addition, it will also initiate the political dialogue process that is designed to solve all the underlying problems associated with armed conflict in the country.

Soon after the nationwide ceasefire agreement is signed, a meeting with stakeholders will be held to discuss the drafting of the framework for political dialogue. Such commitment should serve as a guarantee of political dialogue. Once we have the framework for political dialogue, we will start the political dialogue process that will lead us to the national peace conference. We will hold meetings to discuss and decide how the political dialogues and the national peace conference are to be held, how long they will take, how the delegates will be selected, and how the agenda will be set. We will share what is discussed at the meeting with the public whenever it is appropriate to do so.

Meanwhile, as the President of this country, I would say that political dialogue process will serve as a forum to discuss any issue so long as they constructively contribute to the state-building and national unity and are in line with the principles of non-disintegration of the union, non-disintegration of national unity and the perpetuation of sovereignty.

In an attempt to achieve national reconciliation, I also met with the leaders of the 88 generation peace and open society in the middle of September. I will continue to do everything in my power to institute an all-inclusive political process and a new democratic political culture.

A special development in the peace process is that the people of Yangon, Mandalay, Mawlamyine and Myitkyina celebrated the international peace day wholeheartedly and enthusiastically. I was very impressed with the peoples' longing for peace, especially the activities organized by the youths with resolve to assume the duty of peace building. I am convinced that if the entire population participate in the process it will definitely succeed.

As all of you know, our government has expended political space for the society at large by undertaking the democratic reforms. The media in our country enjoys more freedom than its counterparts in other Southeast Asian countries. Since we are beginning to enjoy more freedom, we must also take on more responsibility. Only then will we be able to create a harmonious society.

I would like to urge the media profession to enforce media ethics, avoid covering unfounded rumours and stop making personal attacks at a time the country is sowing the seeds of media freedom. At a time when the entire country is engaging in historic state-building process, we all must work together to prevent such unethical personal attacks that rise to the level of abuse of recently acquired media freedoms would also like to discuss the people-centred administrative reforms which our government is undertaking. Our government will also carry out people-centered development programs during the remainder of my term. In trying to establish a new democratic country, it is important for the government to integrate peoples' energy in its efforts to meet peoples' needs. In order to ensure such government society synergy, the Union ministers who are in charge of the reform committees have frank discussions in their meetings with township development support committees and township municipal committees that are formed with community leaders. Such meetings not only allowed us to solve the on-going problems in local areas but also helped us gather data about the daily lives of the people. We will have to draw on such data in drafting the budget estimate— one that can meet the needs of both the people and the government—and getting it approved. Since public participation can contribute to the effectiveness and success of the reform process, I would like to encourage the public to actively participate in these aforesaid committees.

I am very happy that I can explain the development of the peace process in this month's speech. I am also convinced that this speech will clear all suspicions and doubts one might have on the peace process. As noted above, the success of the peace process depends on the dedication and resolve of all stakeholders. As such, the peace process will be successful only when the government, Hluttaws,



political parties and other political groups, civil society associations, business associations, social and religious groups, Tatmadaw and the rest of the public participate in the peace process actively and genuinely.

At the present moment, if people come together and form a political force that care about peace, we will be able to achieve the lasting peace which we all long for.

In conclusion, I would like to note that I will try to do everything I can during the remainder of my term to achieve lasting peace, to improve the living standard of the general public, and to create bright and prosperous future for the young people.

May you all have peace of mind and good health.<sup>14</sup>

## **Appendix B: PRESS RELEASE SEEKING ADVICE AND MEASURES TO REVIEW 2008 CONSTITUTION**

**Republic of the Union of Myanmar**  
**Pyidaungsu Hluttaw**  
**Joint Committee for Reviewing the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar**  
**Press Release (1/2013)**  
**3rd October, 2013**  
**14th Waning of Tawthalin, 1375 ME**

1. The Joint Committee for Reviewing the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar held meetings two times on 23 August, 2013 and on 30 September, 2013 respectively.
2. The Joint Committee for Reviewing the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has carried out the following three tasks laid down by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.
  - (a) To ensure the emergence of a constitution which can more guarantee the perpetuation, stability and peace and development of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in accordance with the current age and system
  - (b) To bring eternal peace to all national races and ethnic people through building a national unity among them
  - (c) To carry on democratic reforms for building democracy of the State and people
3. Towards this end, the committee would seek assessment and advice from the Legislative Pillar, Administrative Pillar and Judicial Pillar through Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, and would seek assessment and advice of political parties, organizations and individuals through respective Pyidaungsu Hluttaw representatives or by addressing of assessment and advice to the secretary of the Joint Committee for Reviewing the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar by 15 November, 2013.

Address — Office of the Joint Committee for Reviewing the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Office No. 20, Hluttaw Office, Nay Pyi Taw

Joint Committee<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> I will continue to do everything in my power to institute an all-inclusive political process and a new democratic political culture –

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-10-02-red.pdf> (NLM) 2 October 2013 (p. 1 & 6)

<sup>15</sup> Press release on seeking advice and measures taken for the Constitution (2008) –

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs16/NLM-2013-10-04-red.pdf> (NLM) 4 October 2013 (p. 8)