

POLITICAL MONITOR No. 22

OFFICIAL MEDIA

SPECIAL MEETING ON NATIONAL DEFENCE AND SECURITY

A special meeting was held at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw on 14 October focusing on current issues relating to national defence and security. It was attended by President Htin Kyaw, State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior-General Min Aung Hlaing, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice-Senior-General Soe Win, Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Union Minister for Defence Lt-Gen Sein Win and Union Minister for the Office of the State Counsellor Kyaw Tint Swe. At the meeting, they discussed recent violent armed attacks on border posts in Maungtau Township, Rakhine State, movements of the violent attackers and their background, current activities of the authorities and future plans for the state. In addition, the participants of the meeting discussed armed conflicts in Kachin State and northern Shan State, activities of RCSS which has already signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, issues in Wa Special Region-1 and Mongla Special Region-4 and arrangements for enhancing combat skills of members of the Myanmar Police Force.¹

STATE COUNSELLOR RESPONDS TO ATTACKS IN RAKHINE STATE

At a Joint Press Conference with Dutch Foreign Minister Bert Koenders, State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi said that no accusations will be made at the present time regarding the recent armed attacks in Rakhine State since the government had yet to ascertain the causes. If there is relevant evidence, the government will take it to trial. Aung San Suu Kyi also sent a message to all countries “the government is dealing with the current issue in Rakhine State exercising the rule of law so that the government can reach the best and most just settlement”, said the State Counsellor. She also said the Myanmar government is dealing with human rights issues, investigating complaints over rights violations. Every country is being faced with human rights issues, she said. The State Counsellor called on every individual to understand the meaning of human rights. “In dealing with human rights issues, the government alone cannot solve this issue” she said. “It also requires the cooperation of the people”. The government is performing its duties for peace and stability of the country to the best of its ability, she added. Dutch Foreign Minister replied that the official visit to the western part of Myanmar is of benefit to all civil society organisations. He added that the Union Government was solving the complicated issues as best as it can and also stressed the need to take adjustable and systematic approaches to solving ethnic issues and complicated disputes. During its visit to northern Rakhine State on 11 October, the visiting Dutch delegation held constructive discussions with locals, CSOs and responsible officials, he said. “It is of great importance for humanitarian aid to reach people in trouble,” Koenders said.²

NINE POLICEMEN KILLED, FIVE INJURED, ONE MISSING IN RAKHINE STATE

According to Myanmar Police Chief Police Maj-Gen Zaw Win, three border guard posts in Rakhine State were attacked on 9 October leaving 9 policemen dead and injuring 5 said. In the aftermath 8 attackers were also killed. At a press conference held in Nay Pyi Taw on 9 October, the government said that 62 assorted arms, 10,130 rounds of ammunition, one bayonet and 27 magazines of bullets were taken by the attackers. As the surviving attackers retreated, police and troops from the local battalion found 13 more weapons that the attackers apparently discarded. At the Kyikanpyin Border

¹ Special Meeting on National Defence and Security –

file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/15_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 15 October 2016 (p. 1)

² Rakhine: No accusation yet: State Counsellor responds to violent armed attacks in Rakhine State –

file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/13_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 13 October 2016 (p. 1)

Post Headquarters in Maungtaw Township 10 men attacked the outpost. Six policemen fought back and seized one home-made pistol, two bullets and one magazine. After the first incident, another attack occurred at the Central Outpost of the headquarters around 1.50 am. Police at the outpost fought against approximately 90 attackers for about an hour. After the attackers withdrew, police found six dead policemen who had been stationed at hill No. 4. Their weapons had been taken by the attackers. In addition, six police were killed and two injured and 51 arms and 10,140 bullets, one bayonet and 28 magazines of bullets were taken away by the attackers. The 2nd attack on Kotankauk Outpost in Rathedaung Township at 3 am, about 30 attackers jumped over the fence and attacked police with swords and spears. Ten policemen fought back, killing one attacker and capturing two. One policeman was killed and two injured. Two weapons were taken away by the attackers. The 3rd attack on Ngakhuya Office as officers from the Ngakhuya Office reinforced police at the Kyikanpyin Headquarters to repel an attack earlier in the morning, about 50 men attacked the Ngakhuya office with swords, spears and home-made weapons. After the fighting, seven bodies of the attackers were found. Two policemen were killed, one injured and one policeman remains missing. (*Please see Appendix A for full text of Press Release regarding the attacks in Rakhine State*).³

GOVERNMENT DEALS WITH AFTERMATH OF ATTACKS WITH CAUTION

Information Minister Dr Pe Myint said that the Government is dealing with issues related to the recent attacks in Rakhine State seeking a long-term solution, because the issues seem to be rooted in long-simmering controversies, he said. At a meeting with local authorities in Sittwe, Rakhine State, Minister Dr Pe Myint stressed the need to find ways to solve such a “deep, sober and vulnerable issue”. “Generally, it can be assumed that such an occasional instability was attributed to subversive efforts of destructive elements”, said Dr Pe Myint, who heads the governmental mission that arrived in Sittwe yesterday to inform residents of the essential facts about the attacks as part of an effort to maintain peace and stability. The minister said that the Union Government responded effectively and promptly to carry out security matters, considering the current situation to be a national concern. The government also took a cautious approach not to cause panic among the people and to prevent viral rumours and exaggeration over the issue by individuals and organisations who do not want to see stability in Rakhine State, he said. Minister for Immigration Thein Swe said the government would release news and information coverage in the coming days and take legal action against law violators. Rakhine State Chief Minister Nyi Pu clarified matters to lessen public anxiety and said the Union Government is cooperating with the Rakhine State cabinet to make arrangements in achieving tranquility in the State by the newly formed Central Committee for the Rakhine State’s Peace and Development. Police Brig-Gen Thura San Lwin of the Myanmar Police Force clarified that the attacks

³ Nine Policemen Killed, five injured, one missing in border attacks –
file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/10_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 10 October 2016 (p. 1&3)/
Troops fight back violent armed attackers, kill four –
file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/11_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 11 October 2016 (p. 1)/
Governmental mission to clarify local people in Rakhine State about deadly attacks on border posts –
file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/11_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 11 October 2016 (p. 1)/
Tatmadaw attacked by 300 armed men, four soldiers killed –
file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/12_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 12 October 2016 (p. 1)/
Tatmadaw troops capture four suspected attackers during area clearance operation in Maungtaw –
file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/12_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 12 October 2016 (p. 1)//
Troops kills 10 violent armed attackers in area clearance operation in Maungtaw Tsp –
file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/13_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 13 October 2016 (p. 3)/
Armed men violently attack Kyikanpyin border outpost, set fire to 25 houses in Warpaik Village –
file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/13_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 13 October 2016 (p. 3)/
Tatmadaw, police repel multiple raids in Maungtaw –
file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/14_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 14 October 2016 (p. 9)/
Press Release regarding the attacks on the Border Guard Police posts in Maungtaw Township – 14th October –
file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/15_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 15 October 2016 (p. 1 &3)

happened on 9 October. The Ministers for Information, Minister for Immigration and Rakhine State Chief Minister visited the attacked police headquarters in Kyikanpyin, Maungtaw Township and met the families of the bereaved families of the policemen who had lost their lives during the attacks. They also separately met with representatives from political parties and Islam religious organisations at the office of the Rakhine State Government in Sittway, Rakhine State on 11 October.⁴

STATE COUNSELLOR AUNG SAN SUU KYI DELIVERS SPEECH TO UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi in speaking to the UN General Assembly on 22 September said that the same spirit and goals that inspired the founding of the United Nations 70 years ago have influenced the country's new administration. "The strength of this organisation lies in its universality and legitimacy, anchored in the Charter and in the fundamental principles of international law. For all its imperfections and limitations, the United Nations remain a receptacle of our hopes for a more peaceful and prosperous world, a kinder, more compassionate home for all mankind," she told the annual general debate on its second day. The State Counsellor noted that Myanmar joined the UN as the newly independent Union of Burma in 1948, in an "era of determined hope, when the peoples of the world rose out of the ravages of war to build anew their countries and their faith in the human capacity for achieving peace with equality, prosperity with justice. "Now, once again, it is a time of determined hope for Myanmar," she said, citing the overwhelming majority her national League for Democracy won in elections last November as voters demonstrated support for a political culture founded on a belief in their right to fashion the future of their country in the shape of their dreams and aspirations. Aung San Suu Kyi stressed that for a country that has experienced over six decades of internal armed conflict, nothing is more important than lasting peace and national reconciliation, noting her efforts to achieve this through a national peace conference. Turning to the situation in Rakhine state, where local communities have been living in squalid camps after a communal conflict, she said Myanmar does not fear international scrutiny. "We are committed to a sustainable solution that will lead to peace, stability and development for all communities within the state. Our Government is taking a holistic approach that makes development central to both short and long-term programmes aimed at promoting understanding and trust," she stressed, noting that she had appointed former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to chair a commission to foster these efforts. Aung San Suu Kyi said the issue of migration can only be solved by tackling its root causes, the two most important of which are lack of peace and lack of development. On terrorism, she stressed that lack of social and economic security are doubtless important factors, "but we also need to consider the possibility that lack of purpose, of a sense of direction in life, could also be a force that drives many, especially the young into the snare of ideologies that appear to offer certainty." (*Please see Appendix B for full statement of State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi to the UN General Assembly*).⁵

⁴ Government deals with aftermath of violent attacks in Rakhine State with caution –

file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/12_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 12 October 2016 (p. 1)/

Union ministers visit Kyikanpyin Police Headquarters –

file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/14_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 14 October 2016 (p. 1 &9)/

Tatmadaw troops evacuated teachers, staff and locals to places of safety –

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Residents in Maungtaw urged to restrain, not to believe false information –

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Governmental mission holds talks with representatives from political parties, leaders of Islam religious organizations –

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⁵ Daw Aung San Suu Kyi speech to Assembly Cites UN as inspiration

file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/23_Sept_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 23 September 2016 (p. 1)/

State Counsellor Attends UN General Assembly in New York –

file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/22_Sept_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 22 September 2016 (p. 1)

MYANMAR HOSTS 37th ASEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY (AIPA)

The 37th General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) was opened with the opening speech by State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi at Myanmar International Convention Centre-1 in Nay Pyi Taw on 30 September. In her speech, State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi said that her government is focusing on national reconciliation and harmony while striving for sustainable economic development. “Today marks exactly 6 months in office. I would like to take this opportunity to very briefly outline some of our main areas at work,” Aung San Suu Kyi said. She said the first priority of her new government is to “bring about the national reconciliation and harmony” between all parts of the society, further explaining that it is taking steps “towards establishing a genuine federal democratic union.” She added that her administration is aiming to bring an end to decades of conflict, which had blighted the country since independence in 1948, by building on the work of the previous government, despite being aware of the “complexity of the challenges that lie ahead”. She said “through political negotiations held in the spirit of cooperation and compromise” she believes Myanmar can finally realize a peaceful, secure and prosperous future, which is “the collective aspiration” of the people, despite having many diverse ethnic groups and a legacy of decades of mistrust. On the economy, the State Counsellor said her government is “striving to bring about sustainable economic development for the benefit of all people in Myanmar.” “For reasons of history our country has never realized its economic potential. Today, (thanks to) to the hard work of our government and people, and support and collaboration of our friends in this region, we have an unprecedented opportunity to build a better future,” she said. “We have launched an economic policy that aims to support national reconciliation, alleviate poverty, develop much-needed infrastructure, encourage responsible foreign investment and job creation,” Aung San Suu Kyi said. “The economic development of Myanmar will, I believe, support the growing prosperity as a whole and contribute to the future success of the ASEAN community,” she added. Regarding the situation in Rakhine State, the State Counsellor said that the government is striving to bring harmony to the different communities there. “The situation in Rakhine is complex and it is the subject of close attention and concern outside our borders in the ASEAN region and beyond. Since forming the new government we have taken new measures to begin to address these challenges,” she said, adding that her government is working to build understanding, trust, and harmony between communities, while standing firm against prejudice, intolerance and extremism. Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than, who chairs the 37th AIPA, said he felt a glow of pride on behalf of the representatives as the country hosted the regional event for the very first time. The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw was recognised as a full-fledged member to the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly at the 32nd AIPA hosted by Cambodia in 2011. Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than pledged that the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, despite its capacity as the most recent member, would make strenuous efforts to secure the success of the assembly.

The 37th ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly concluded in Nay Pyi Taw on 2 October. The assembly made decisions, numbering 30 or so, and many matters were discussed, including cyber-security in the region, prevention against the Zika virus, creation of job opportunities, better working environments, fortification of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and implementation of projects in the socio-security declaration of ASEAN for the development of business and enterprises in the region. The 38th General Assembly of AIPA will be held in September, 2017, in Manila, the Philippines, to be attended by Georgia and Ukraine as observers.⁶

⁶ Honoured to host the AIPA National Reconciliation, Harmony Stressed: State Counsellor – http://free4reader.com/daily_issue/2016/NewLightMyanmar/pdf/NLM_161001.pdf (GNLM) 1 October 2016 (p. 1 & 9)/ Handover Ceremony of AIPA Chairmanship to Myanmar held in Nay Pyi Taw – http://free4reader.com/daily_issue/2016/NewLightMyanmar/pdf/NLM_161001.pdf (GNLM) 1 October 2016 (p. 2)/ 37th ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly wraps up – http://free4reader.com/daily_issue/2016/NewLightMyanmar/pdf/NLM_161003.pdf (GNLM) 3 October 2016 (p. 1)

BRITISH HOUSE OF COMMONS SPEAKER CALLS ON AUNG SAN SUU KYI AND MYANMAR PARLIAMENTARY LEADERS

State Counsellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs Aung San Suu Kyi received the British parliamentary delegation led by the Speaker of the House of Commons of Britain John Bercow, in Nay Pyi Taw on 4 October. Mr Bercow and party also held meetings with the Speakers of both the Upper and Lower House, the Chairman of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Commission for the Assessment of Legal Affairs and Special Issues. Discussions were focussed on development of the parliament of Myanmar, promoting capacity building for the MPs and staff of the parliament and legislation matters and promotion of friendship between parliaments of the two countries.⁷

EU OPTS NOT TO TABLE MYANMAR RIGHTS MOTION TO UN

The European Union praised Myanmar's progress from the release of political prisoners to the efforts of the government to address the challenges of Rakhine State and to holding the inclusive Union Peace Conference. The EU said that it would not table a human rights resolution on Myanmar at the United Nations for the first time in 25 years. Addressing the Partnership Group on Myanmar at the United Nations General Assembly, EU Foreign Policy Chief Federica Mogherini said that the government has taken bold measures to improve human rights and re-invigorate the peace process. She also praised Aung San Suu Kyi's progress from political prisoner to State Counsellor, saying that the transformation was a "powerful testimony to the incredible change Myanmar is going through." In recognition of Myanmar's progress, Mogherini said "Twenty-five years is the measure of the incredible distance Myanmar has walked, the measure of how much your country has changed." Regarding the Rakhine State issue, Mogherini said "We (the European Union) understand the complexity of the situation in Rakhine State, where the European Union is present as a leading donor and investor. I know that you are working hard to find a sustainable solution for both communities."⁸

BY-ELECTION DATE AND CONSTITUENCIES ANNOUNCED

The Union Election Commission (UEC) issued an announcement dated 11 October, 2016 stating that By-Elections will be held on 1 April 2017 for vacant seats in the Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House), Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House) and in the Region/State Hluttaws respectively. *(Please see Appendix C for full text of the Union Election Commission's Announcement).*⁹

LAW REVOKING EMERGENCY PROVISIONS ACT APPROVED

Myanmar has scrapped the Emergency Provisions act, a law that was often used to quell dissent. The government enacted the Law revoking the Emergency Provisions act, effectively abolishing the 66-year-old law. The law was signed on 4 October by President Htin Kyaw after it was approved by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, the joint-session of the two parliaments. The Emergency Provisions act was enacted in 1950 after Myanmar gained independence from Britain. Under the act, anyone committing

⁷ State Counsellor hosts dinner for Commons Speaker of Britain – file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/5_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 5 October 2016 (p. 3)/
Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker meets Commons Speaker of Great Britain – file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/6_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 6 October 2016 (p. 2)/
Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker meets Commons Speaker of Great Britain – file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/6_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 6 October 2016 (p. 2)/
Coordination Committee on Hluttaw Development holds talks with Commons Speaker of Great Britain – file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/6_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 6 October 2016 (p. 2)/
Legal Affairs and Special Issues Assessment Commission Chairman meets Commons Speaker of Great Britain – file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/6_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 6 October 2016 (p. 2)

⁸ EU opts not to table Myanmar rights motion to UN – file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/25_Sept_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 25 September 2016 (p. 1 & 3)

⁹ Announcement on date and vacant constituencies for by-elections – file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/12_Oct_16_gnlm-1.pdf (GNLM) 12 October 2016 (p. 3)

treason - which ranged from sabotage of railways to damaging telegraph poles - could face life behind bars or even death. Hefty jail terms were also meted out for other crimes, such as spreading false news or disrupting public morality.¹⁰

PEACE COMMISSION, DPN HOLD TALKS IN CHIANG MAI

The government's Peace Commission and the Delegation for Political negotiation (DPN) discussed a proposal submitted by United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC) on 25 September in Chiang Mai, Thailand. During the meeting, the two sides sought ways which can help achieve peace in the country. DPN's leader Khu Oo Ral said both sides felt that the discussion between them are getting more precise. However, fightings happened unexpectedly and were escalating, he added. Speaking at the meeting, U Aung Kyi, Chairman of the advisory committee to the government's Peace Commission, urged peace makers at the meeting to work together and moving forward. Last month, the UNFC made an 8-point proposal at a meeting in Yangon to review the framework for political dialogue, but it did not appear at the next meeting on 16 September.¹¹

LABOUR RIGHTS HIGHLIGHTED AT STAKEHOLDERS' FORUM

The government of Myanmar, the EU, as well as the US, Denmark, Japan and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) participated in the Joint Initiative to Promote Fundamental Labour Rights and Practices in Myanmar. The European Union (EU) is putting into practice its commitments under the 2015 'Trade for All' strategy to make trade policy more responsible and sustainable and to promote decent work, said the statement released by the EU following the Second Stakeholders' Forum held in Nay Pyi Taw. The participants of the forum, which was held on 29 and 30 September, discussed with social partners and other actors the ways forward towards achieving the objectives of the initiative. The Stakeholders' Forum provided the opportunity for discussions among Myanmar's tripartite partners, the other participating international governments, the ILO, development partners, international businesses and investors as well as other civil society representatives, according to a statement released yesterday by the European Union delegation in Myanmar.

Participants agreed on the importance of coordinating their activities as well as fostering dialogue among all stakeholders. Development partners committed to provide support to the labour law reform process through development cooperation and technical assistance. In the medium to long term, the Initiative aims to support public authorities and stakeholders in promoting fundamental labour rights, sound labour relations and responsible business practices in Myanmar. To support Myanmar's efforts, they agreed to hold a third stakeholders' Forum in 2017.¹²

UNOFFICIAL MEDIA

BURMA ARMY PROVOKES FIGHTING WITH SHAN NCA SIGNATORY, SHELLS CIVILIAN AREAS, DISPLACING 2,000 IN MONG KUNG

On October 1, about 40 Burma Army troops from IB 292, based in Nawng Wo, Lawksawk township, arrived without warning in the village of Pang Poi, about 25 miles north of Mong Kung town, and released 24 people being kept in the RCSS's local detention centre for drug offenders. When RCSS troops based nearby came to intervene, fighting broke out from 4 to 7.30 pm.

¹⁰ Law Revoking Emergency Provisions Act Approved –
file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/5_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 5 October 2016 (p. 1)

¹¹ Peace Commission, DPN hold talks in Chiang Mai –
file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/26_Sept_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 26 September 2016 (p. 3)/
DPN to meet in Chiang Mai –
file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/25_Sept_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 25 September 2016 (p. 3)

¹² Labour Rights highlighted at Stakeholder's Forum –
file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/2_Oct_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 2 October 2016 (p. 1 & 3)

The next day, about 200 Burma Army troop reinforcements were sent in from the Na Boi army base in Laikha township, leading to further clashes with RCSS near Koong Sar village, about one mile northeast of Pang Poi. Two Burma Army helicopters also flew over the area. This caused over 700 villagers from Pang Poi (including 15 pregnant women), as well as about 200 villagers from the nearby villages of Nar Loi, Wan Mong, Hoi Jik and Koong Sar to flee to seek shelter in temples in Tong Lao, about 1 ½ miles east of Pang Poi. About 1,000 Tong Lao residents also went to sleep at the temples at night as they were afraid that fighting would spread to their village.

On October 3, the IB 292 troops retreated from Pang Poi village, escorting the 24 detainees and two warders to the LIB 505 base in Namlan, about 20 miles north. The Burma Army troops then fired mortar shells at Pang Poi village, damaging housing and vehicles. The detainees, including six women, were made to walk between the Burma Army troops, apparently as human shields to prevent RCSS attacks.

On October 4, about 180 more Burma Army troops were brought in from Mong Pai (on the Shan-Karenni State border) to Tong Lao, making many of the villagers too afraid to return home.

On October 7, the detainees were all released. However, the two civilian warders of the detention centre -- Sai Kyaw Lu, age 18, and Sai Aung Myint, age 40 - are still being detained at the LIB 505 base in Namlan. On October 9, the Pang Poi headman, the Tong Lao headman, an SNLD MP from Hsipaw, and the Namlan administrative chairman went to request the release of the two warders from Namlan IB 243 base. However, the commander said he could not release the two men without the permission of the regional commander. The families of the two men are extremely worried about what will happen to them.

SHRF calls for the immediate release of the two warders, who have committed no crime and who were serving their community in running the detention centre, and calls on the Burma Army to stop provoking fighting, withdraw its troops from this area and allow the displaced villagers to return home safely.

Background of the Pang Poi Drug Detention Centre

The detention centre in Pang Poi was set up by RCSS at the request of the local community, who were concerned at the increasing availability of drugs and high rates of drug addiction in the Mong Kung and Namlan areas. Methamphetamine (“ya ba”) pills are cheap and easily available, meaning that even children as young as 10 years old are taking them. The cost of a methamphetamine pill is only 150 kyats (about USD 0.12). Adult drug dealers and users have been detained at the centre for 5-6 months.

The list of those who were detained at the Pang Poi centre on October 1 is below. On 9 June 2016, Tun Win, the 21-year-old son of the Burma Army IB 292 commander, had been arrested at an RCSS gate for carrying about 20 methamphetamine pills and placed in the detention centre. However, he had broken out of the centre on September 22, 2016. This appears to have been a reason why the IB 292 commander authorized the raid on the detention centre on October 1, 2016.¹³

EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLINGS AND ABUSES UNDERCUT SECURITY IN RAKHINE STATE

The government of Myanmar should protect civilians and respect human rights in responding to recent deadly attacks against police by unknown assailants near the Myanmar-Bangladesh border, Fortify Rights said today. According to eyewitnesses, Myanmar Army soldiers allegedly killed several

¹³ Burma Army provokes fighting with Shan NCA signatory, shells civilian areas, displacing 2,000 in Mong Kung - <http://www.shanhumanrights.org/index.php/news-updates/255-burma-army-provokes-fighting-with-shan-nca-signatory-shells-civilian-areas> (Shan Human Rights Foundation) 12 October 2016

unarmed ethnic-Rohingya men on October 10, a day after deadly attacks on three police stations in Rakhine State's Maungdaw Township.

Fears of a military offensive and potential indiscriminate killings and other abuses, particularly targeting the Rohingya Muslim population, are mounting in Rakhine State.

"The army has a responsibility to protect civilians regardless of religion or ethnicity," said Matthew Smith, Chief Executive Officer at Fortify Rights. "The authorities can diffuse this situation by upholding law and order while also protecting the rights of Rohingya."

According to Myanmar authorities, a group of Rohingya men attacked three police posts on October 9, killing nine policemen and wounding five before fleeing with police weapons and ammunition.

Fortify Rights obtained two amateur videos—one minute and 21 seconds in length and another lasting two minutes and 51 seconds—showing a group of men armed with military-grade assault rifles and handguns, speaking the Rohingya language and calling for volunteers to engage in armed conflict in Rakhine State. "The fighting can start now, today," a Rohingya speaker, flanked by young armed men, says into the camera in one of the films. "The Myanmar Army tried to search for us by helicopter yesterday. They searched for us by helicopters in every part of Rakhine. We do not care about helicopters."

The reference to helicopters suggests the film was created on or around October 9, when, according to state media, the Myanmar Army used helicopters to move troops into the area where the attacks on the police occurred. On the same day, the authorities also banned gatherings of five or more people and imposed a curfew from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. in Maungdaw Township.

Fortify Rights has received reports of possible extrajudicial killings of Rohingya men in Maungdaw Township by Myanmar Army soldiers following the attacks on the police and called on the government, state security forces, and all parties in Rakhine State to respect human rights and uphold the responsibility to protect civilians.

According to information received by Fortify Rights, scores of Myanmar Army soldiers arrived in Myothugyi village, Maungdaw Township at approximately 6:30 a.m. on October 10.

"Ishmael M.," 23, told Fortify Rights that he witnessed a Myanmar Army soldier fatally shoot an unarmed local Rohingya man named Nagu, believed to be around 50 years old, in Myothugyi village at approximately 8 a.m. on October 10. Ishmael looked on from a nearby home as four Myanmar Army soldiers apprehended Nagu, who was reportedly unarmed.

"I was watching from the window," Ishmael told Fortify Rights. "The military man was talking on the phone. After that, he shot him. I saw them shoot him in the bottom of the face and head."

Following the fatal shooting, Myanmar Army soldiers left the body behind.

Fortify Rights received photographs and a short video of the victim's body, showing what appeared to be a gunshot wound to the head, matching descriptions received from two eyewitnesses. At time of writing, the victim's body has not been buried and is located in a local home.

Ishmael also told Fortify Rights that another man, Noor Allam—believed to be approximately 55 years old—was also fatally shot at approximately 10 a.m., nearby Ishmael's location. "We could hear some noises, bullets, and when the army left, we saw the body, and I helped bring the body inside the home," Ishmael told Fortify Rights. "There was blood on his chest. I took a photo of the body myself."

Ishmael said he carried the body of Noor Allam to a nearby home.

Fortify Rights received information of at least three killings of Rohingya men in Myothugyi village on October 10—the third was a 25-year-old Rohingya man named Noor Bashar.

“They took three men...and killed them,” another Rohingya man in Myothugyi said. “They did not arrest the people, they just killed them.”

The New York Times and Reuters reported allegations of seven deaths in Myothugyi village on October 10. Both outlets reported witnesses alleging that army soldiers shot at Rohingya as they ran away. The New York Times quoted a local journalist traveling with security forces in Myothugyi at the time, who claimed, “Three suspects were killed as they ran away when the security forces entered the village.” On Facebook, the journalist who spoke to the New York Times later denied the quote, saying he was “in trouble” because of the article and now alleges that the victims attacked the soldiers “and soldiers shot them back.”

The Government of Myanmar should conduct a thorough, independent investigation into the killings of police officers on October 9 and into the fatal shootings of Rohingya on October 10, Fortify Rights said.

The use of lethal force by state security forces against a civilian is only lawful when necessary to prevent loss of life and serious injury and when proportionate to the threat at hand. The U.N. Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials stipulates that the “intentional lethal use of firearms may only be made when strictly unavoidable in order to protect life.” The U.N. Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials requires officials to “use force only when strictly necessary and to the extent required for the performance of their duty.”

In situations of armed conflict, Article 42 of the Third Geneva Convention stipulates that the use of force “against those who are escaping or attempting to escape, shall constitute an extreme measure, which shall always be preceded by warnings appropriate to the circumstances.

In all situations, under international humanitarian and human rights law, the authorities have a responsibility to protect civilians.¹⁴

DEATH TOLL TOPS 40 IN RAKHINE BORDER RAID AFTERMATH AS SKIRMISHES CONTINUE

According to a security officer who spoke on condition of anonymity, that nearly 40 houses in Pyone Pyke village, Maungdaw township, were burned by militants yesterday. U Min Aung, head of the Rakhine State Information Department, said he could not confirm the reported attack nor the Pyone Pyke village burnings because he had not received any communication from the field in those areas. The military-owned *Myawady* news outlet reported that armed assailants engaged in a firefight with Tatmadaw troops and then withdrew, setting fire to 25 houses in Warpaik village in their retreat. A *Myanmar Times* reporter witnessed several helicopter gunships landing one after another at Sittwe Airport yesterday afternoon, with a military official saying they were returning from Maungdaw township to refuel. A Tatmadaw officer disputed that assertion, however, saying it was not possible to know where the helicopters had come from.

U Min Aung told *The Myanmar Times* the gunships so far had not been used to launch airstrikes on suspected militants and instead were providing logistical support by transporting security personnel and provisions to the conflict zone, as well as evacuating teachers from Maungdaw to Buthidaung township.

More than 400 schools in Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships were closed this week in the wake of the violence.

“The Tatmadaw picked up most of the stranded teachers today and the government is cooperating with them to ensure the safety of all people who are stuck [in the conflict area],” said U Min Aung.

¹⁴Extrajudicial Killings and Abuses Undercut Security in Rakhine State –
<http://www.fortifyrights.org/publication-20161012.html> (Fortify Rights) 12 October 2016

The Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC), meanwhile, became the latest of several groups to call on security forces to exercise restraint as they continue to comb villages and the wilderness in search of the attackers.

“The OIC has received disturbing reports of extra-judicial killings of Rohingya Muslims, burning of houses and arbitrary arrests by security forces in Maungdaw township and other villages in northern Rakhine State,” read a statement yesterday from the grouping of 57 Muslim nations. “The situation has caused many Rohingya to flee their villages and the subsequent blockade in the region has also left many in the area facing acute shortages of food, water and essentials.”¹⁵

ANALYSIS

Myanmar’s democratic transition has once again been thrown under the spotlight after three border posts were reportedly attacked, resulting in nine police officers killed in Maungdaw, Rakhine State. The government’s response to the recent outbreak has been cautious, while the security forces do not seem to be as restrained.

The violence comes weeks after the government appointed a commission, headed by the former UN Chief Kofi Annan to find ways to solve the issue in Rakhine State. The disturbances will not be welcome news for the Commission, but will now be expected to deliver and resolve these sensitive issues in order that its mandate and credibility be put under scrutiny and bring stability to the Rakhine State.

The government must as an urgent priority adopt policies and implement concrete steps to prevent such outbreaks of violence both for the short and long-term. The leadership on its part should take steps in making statements condemning all forms of religious hatred, violence and speech and adopt necessary laws. And if future communal conflicts are to be avoided the authorities should encourage dialogues between community leaders at all levels to improve community relations.

The volatile situation in Rakhine State can only hinder the country’s on-going political, social and economic reforms. And it therefore is crucial for the government to closely monitor the recent events in Maungdaw and to make sure that it does not spread to other parts of the country, as it did in 2012. And if it were to happen could represent a significant threat to the overall success of the transition, and has severely damaged the reputation of the government.

The issue will demand time and commitment and that there will be no easy fixes or quick solutions. However, failure to deal with the situation can have negative impacts for the whole country while at the same time could also jeopardize the on-going national reconciliation process.

The government is now confronted with a major challenge in restoring peace and stability to the Rakhine State and will also need to reconcile the Buddhist and Muslim communities while at the same time to ensure that all people irrespective of race, ethnicity, religion be granted their basic fundamental rights and freedoms.

¹⁵ Death toll tops 40 in Rakhine border raid aftermath as skirmishes continue – <http://www.mmmtimes.com/index.php/national-news/23099-death-toll-tops-40-in-rakhine-border-raid-aftermath-as-skirmishes-continue.html>

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Full text of Press Release regarding the attacks on the police outposts in Rakhin State - 14th October 2016.

1. On the morning of 9th October 2016, armed attackers carried out a surprise attack on Kyikanpyin Border Guard Police (Number One) Headquarters, Kotankauk Police Outpost, and Ngakhuya Local Police Office. As a result of this attack, 9 members of the Myanmar Police Force were killed, and 48 weapons of various types and 6624 rounds of assorted ammunition, 47 bayonets, and 164 magazines were lost. Following the defensive actions of the police, the bodies of 8 attackers were found, and 2 attackers were captured alive. From them, 1 homemade pistol, 2 rounds of ammunition, and 1 magazine were recovered.
2. The armed attackers, with the weapons and ammunition they had seized, continued to move around the Maungtau District and carry out attacks. Tatmadaw infantry units together with members of the Myanmar Police Force have carried out joint combat operations against the attackers. Joint columns of Tatmadaw and police have conducted clearance operations in the areas where the attackers are hiding. During these operations they have had frequently come into armed contact with the attackers. So far, five members of the Tatmadaw have given their lives.
3. According to the initial findings of the interrogations of the two attackers who were captured and two additional attackers whom Bangladesh handed over to Myanmar, the attacks in Maungtau Township were systematically planned in advance over a long period of time, assisted by foreign funding and the support of members of foreign terrorist organisations.
4. According to the findings of the interrogations, the attacks in Maungtau were intended to promote extremist violent ideology among the majority Muslim population in the area. Using Maungtau as a foothold, this was an attempt to take over the areas of Maungtau and Buthitaung. For this, they received significant financial support from extremist individuals in some Middle Eastern countries. This funding was not provided by particular organisations, but was provided secretly through contacts between individuals.
5. Interrogations have revealed that the attacks in Maungtau were carried out by the Aqa Mul Mujahidin organisation which is active in Maungtau, and which is linked to the RSO armed organisation. The leader of this organisation is Havistoohar, a religious and social extremist aged around 45 years, of Kyaukpyinseik village in Maungtau Township. He previously attended a six-month Taliban training course in Pakistan, and he has 4 sisters and 1 brother living in Saudi Arabia. Assuming the identity of a refugee, he frequently went to stay in a village near Teknaf in Bangladesh, from where he received funding from organisations based in the Middle East. Among those he worked with were: a Pakistani citizen called Kalis who came to Ngakhuya village after living in Bangladesh; Ibrahim, Aza, and Ayatullah who lived in Kutabaloun refugee camp in Bangladesh; and 12 men living in Nila refugee camp including individuals called Zubaid and Islam. Kalis previously attended a terrorist training camp in Pakistan, and he speaks Myanmar, Bengali, Arakan, Malay and Pakistani languages fluently. Around five months ago, through the arrangement of Havistoohar, Kalis came to Maungtau and began delivering armed training classes to local extremist youths recruited and mobilised by Havistoohar.
6. The four main instigators in Middle Ngakhuya village, called Abdul Rahman, Munet, Kapiktulah and Akis, had all attended an RSO training course. Havistoohar, Kalis, Mabuya of Maungnama Village (who led the attack on Kyikanpyin), together with 12 attackers who had come from a refugee camp in Bangladesh, had carried out robberies in the villages of Pha Wut Chaung, Ale Than Kyaw and Nga Chaung in Maungtau Township.
7. According to the findings of the interrogations, Havistoohar and his organisation mobilised extremist youths in the Maungtau area. They secretly ran weapons training and self-defence training

in remote locations in the hills and forests, as well as in the compound of Abdul Rahman in the Middle Hgakhuya village, and in the forest near Kyauk Pyin Seik village. Following this, plans were drawn up to carry out violent attacks.

8. Havistoohar had planned for a total of around 400 attackers to simultaneously launch attacks on 6 separate locations: Mabuya would lead around 100 attackers against Kyikanpyin Border Guard Police (Number One) Headquarters; Kalis and Abdul Rahman would lead around 100 attackers against Ngakhuya Police Local Office; Wadif would lead around 50 attackers against Kyain Chaung Local Police Office; Aza would lead around 50 attackers against Kyauk Hlay Kar Local Police Office; Raw Paing would lead around 50 attackers against Ywet Nyo Taung Local Police Office; and Abu Kumar would lead around 12 attackers against Kotankauk Police Outpost. However, on 9th October they were only able to attack three locations: Kyikanpyin, Kotankauk, and Ngakhuya. Havistoohar had instructed that after attacking the bases, the attackers should murder the members of the police, take their weapons and equipment, and use those weapons in further attacks on nearby Tatmadaw and police bases. Before the attacks took place, the organisation leaders systematically explained to the attackers the plan of attack.

9. The Aqa Mul Mujahidin organisation deployed tactics often used in violent armed attacks around the world: receiving foreign funding (from those originally from Maungtau but now in the Middle East); attending terrorist training courses (delivered by the Taliban in Pakistan, and RSO in Bangladesh); and using religion to mobilise extremist youth in Maungtau. According to their plan, they intended to take over the Majority-Muslim areas of Buthitaung and Maungtau, and to spread propaganda through disseminating video files on the internet and via social networks, in line with the methods of terrorist organisations such as the Taleban, Al Qaeda and ISIS, in order to attract greater foreign support and funding and encourage the cooperation and participation of domestic and foreign religious extremists.

10. At present, the small armed organisation led by Havistoohar is still attempting to carry out continued attacks in the Maungtau area with a strength of almost 400 extremist armed attackers. Members of the Myanmar Police Force are taking responsibility for security and rule of law, and Tatmadaw military columns have responsibility for clearance operations. The police and the Tatmadaw are carrying out these responsibilities at full strength. In doing so, they are frequently coming into armed contact with the attackers. At the same time, investigations are continuing into domestic and foreign terrorist links and supporters of terrorism. Further news will continue to be released as it is received, so as to keep the general public informed.

11. The attacks in Maungtau were systematically planned and prepared over a long period of time with the support and assistance of foreign terrorist organisations and supporters of terrorism. These attacks were an attempt to attack and destroy the security of the nation, and the lives, property and security of the citizens of the country. We will take effective action to defend against, respond to and defeat all armed violent attacks and attempted attacks, in accordance with the Constitution, the anti-terrorism law, and other existing laws relating to security and defence. Not only the attacks in Maungtau, but all violent attacks or attempted attacks will be responded to effectively, and defeated. We will continue to investigate and identify those controlling and organising the armed attacks from behind the scenes, those who are secretly providing funding, and all organisations and individuals that support armed attacks, and we will take effective action against them. Furthermore, we will take strong action in line with the law against those who try to take advantage of these attacks by instigating or attempting to instigate religious or social conflicts and unrest between communities.

12. We call on our citizens to understand the actions of the government, and to be aware and pay attention to the danger of violent attacks. We call on our citizens to work together with responsible persons to prevent instigation on religious or social grounds within your communities, and to prevent the spread of conflict to other areas. We ask religious and community leaders to make every effort to

work together to help to prevent the emergence of conflicts. And we ask our citizens to cooperate with the government for the sake of national security and the defence of the Union.

Appendix B: Full text of the Statement by State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi at the 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly.¹⁶

Madame Vice President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the first representative of the new government of Myanmar to speak before this Assembly, it is my duty, and my privilege, to reaffirm our faith and confidence in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The strength of this Organization lies in its universality and legitimacy, anchored in the Charter and in the fundamental principles of international law. For all its imperfections and limitations, the United Nations remain a receptacle of our hopes for a more peaceful and prosperous world, a kinder, more compassionate home for all mankind. My country joined the United Nations as the newly independent Union of Burma in 1948. It was an era of determined hope, when the peoples of the world rose out of the ravages of war to build anew their countries and their faith in the human capacity for achieving peace with equality, prosperity with justice. Now, once again, it is a time of determined hope for Myanmar. When our people cast the overwhelming majority of their votes in favour of the National League for Democracy during the elections last November, they were demonstrating their support not just for a political party but for a political culture founded on a belief in their rights, and their capacity, to fashion the future of their country in the shape of their dreams and aspirations. And these dreams and aspirations echo those that had led to the founding of the United Nations. The dream of turning swords into plough shares, or to use a more modern idiom, converting weapons of destruction into farm machinery, is one that our people, who have long been compelled to sacrifice their sleep and their fields to the exigencies of conflict, understand with their hearts and their minds. To be safe in our own homes, to be confident in our capacity to realize our full potential, to be happy in the promise of progress for our young and security for our elderly, to be strong in our rights and duties as citizens of a peaceful and prosperous Union. These are our simple aspirations. Simple, but, it hardly needs to be said, not easy to achieve. And the only path that will lead us to our goals is the path of peace, the path that we must follow with hope and determination. Madame Vice President, the people of Myanmar have long been deprived of their inherent right to live in peace and security, to fundamental freedom and to development, in the context of our 2030 goals, sustainable development. For a country that has experienced over six decades of internal armed conflict, nothing is more important than the achievement of lasting peace and national reconciliation. It is a difficult and complex task that the new government of Myanmar is taking on as a major challenge and a high priority. Recently, we convened the first session of the Union Peace Conference, also known as the 21st Century Panglong, as it embodies the spirit of Panglong, the conference of 1947 that paved the way to the founding of the independent Union of Burma. Attended by representatives of the Government, the Parliament, the Armed Forces, ethnic armed groups, political parties and civil society organizations, the Union Peace Conference is based on the principle of inclusiveness and embodies the spirit of Union. The Conference is not an end in itself. It is the first vital step on our journey to national reconciliation and lasting peace that will save succeeding generations from the scourge of fraternal strife, which has brought untold sorrow to our peoples. Madame Vice President, Over the last few years, the world has focused its attention on the situation in the Rakhine State of the country. As a responsible member of the community of nations, we do not fear international scrutiny. We are committed to a sustainable solution that will lead to peace, stability and development for all communities within the State. Our Government is taking a holistic approach that makes development central to both short and long term programmes aimed at promoting understanding and trust. The

¹⁶ Statement by H.E. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar at the General Debate of the 71st session of the United Nations General Assembly – file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/23_Sept_16_gnlm.pdf (GNLM) 23 September 2016 (p. 9)

Central Committee for the Implementation of Peace, Stability and Development in Rakhine State was established soon after our new Government took office. We are undertaking the tasks of establishing security, peace and stability and rule of law; scrutinizing immigration and citizenship; facilitating settlements and implementing socio-economic development; and coordinating and cooperating with the UN Agencies and international organizations for providing humanitarian assistance. To buttress our efforts to address the issue comprehensively and more effectively, we have also established the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State, chaired by Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations. There has been persistent opposition from some quarters to the establishment of the Commission. However, we are determined to persevere in our endeavour to achieve harmony, peace and prosperity in the Rakhine State. Here, I would like to take the opportunity to ask for the understanding and constructive contribution of the international community. By standing firm against the forces of prejudice and intolerance, we are reaffirming our faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person. Madame Vice President, Peace and national reconciliation are prerequisites for the successful implementation of policies and programmes aimed at fulfilling the social and economic needs of our people. Myanmar's 2016 national economic and development policy is designed to meet many of the Sustainable Development Goals, including the enhancement of infrastructure investment, agriculture, private sector, SMEs and, in particular, poverty alleviation. National reconciliation, job creation and preservation of natural resources, capacity building and creating opportunities for the young are the key objectives of our people-centered and inclusive policy. Madame Vice President, many of our shared concerns as members of the United Nations have been discussed comprehensively in this assembly since the general debate opened yesterday. I will therefore touch upon just a few issues, migration, terrorism, nuclear disarmament, mindful of your exhortation to keep within the limits of the time allotted to us. Durable solutions to problems can be found only by investigating their roots. The unprecedented scale of migration in recent years and the consequent sufferings makes it an imperative to address the two most important causes of irregular migration; lack of peace and lack of development. While talking about building peace and development, we cannot neglect the important aspect of enhancing respect for human rights, equality, diversity and tolerance with a balanced implementation of multi-dimensional economic policies. This is a challenging task and there is a need for countries to work in collaboration to seek just and comprehensive solution in compliance with international law. Migrants contribute to the economies of their host countries as well as to the global economy. Therefore, I believe that building cooperation and collaboration between the host country and the country of origin in ensuring the rights of migrant workers will be mutually reinforcing for both. Our planet is a place to be shared by all. Sharing values and wealth will create a better world for all of us. Madame Vice President, we must be united in standing together against all forms and manifestations of violent extremism related to religious, cultural and social intolerance. Having identified extremism as the root of terrorism, we need to explore the causes of extremism. Lack of social and economic security no doubt are important factors but we also need to consider the possibility that lack of purpose, of a sense of direction in life, could also be a force that drives many, especially the young into the snare of ideologies that appear to offer certainty. Madame Vice President, Myanmar advocates a world free of nuclear weapons. The annual resolution tabled by my country on nuclear disarmament aims at achieving peace and security for present and future generations. Establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in different regions of the world contributes to this goal. I am happy to inform this Assembly that we will be depositing our instrument of ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty-CTBT this afternoon. Madame Vice President, we have known the cost of contention and suffered the wound of strife. It is something that we do not wish for anybody or any country in our world. I would like to thank all those who have helped us along our road to build a truly democratic federal Union. It has been a hard road that we have been helped by compassion, by loving kindness and by understanding. We would like to call for more of these factors in facing the problems of our world today. I have seen too much anger and hatred and resentment, demands, not offer of services. We would like our world to be a kinder

world, a world that gives places giving above receiving. Whilst we are taught in Burma that the causes of corruption are greed, anger, fear and ignorance, I am not talking of corruption simply as the taking of bribes, or the offering of bribes, but of the corruption of human nature. Anger, greed, fear and ignorance corrupt human nature and it corrupts our whole world. I would like to call on all to help us in making this world truly a better place for us to live in for our grandchildren and great grandchildren to live in. And where but in this gathering of nations, can I make such an appeal. So, I appeal to you that we all stand up against anger and hatred, against fear and ignorance and find a way to a better world through our capacities for compassion, for loving kindness and for the ability to be happy in the good fortune of others. I thank you, Madame Vice President.

Appendix C: Full text of the Union Election Commission announcement on Date and Vacant Constituencies for By-Elections. 11th October, Nay Pyi Taw.¹⁷

The Union Election Commission will hold by-elections for the following vacant constituencies for respective Hluttaws on 1 April 2017 (Saturday).

Sr.	Vacant Constituencies for Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House)	Townships
1.	Monywa Township Pyithu Hluttaw Constituency	Monywa
2.	Chaungzon Township Pyithu Hluttaw Constituency	Chaungzon
3.	Ann Township Pyithu Hluttaw Constituency	Ann
4.	Hlinethaya Township Pyithu Hluttaw Constituency	Hlinethaya
5.	Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township Pyithu Hluttaw Constituency (Seikkan)	Dagon Myothit (Seikkan)
6.	Dagon Myothit (East) Township Pyithu Hluttaw Constituency (East)	Dagon Myothit (East)
7.	Kawhmu Township Pyithu Hluttaw Constituency	Kawhmu
8.	Kehsi Township Pyithu Hluttaw Constituency	Kehsi
9.	Mongshu Township Pyithu Hluttaw Constituency	Mongshu

Sr.	Vacant Constituencies for Amotha Hluttaw (Upper House)	Townships
1.	Chin State Amyotha Hluttaw Constituency 3	Thantlang
2.	Bago Region Amyotha Hluttaw Constituency 4	Kyauktaga & Nyaunglebin
3.	Yangon Amyotha Hluttaw Constituency 6	Kamayut, Kyimyindine, Seikkan, Latha, Hline, Lanmadaw & Ahlone

Sr.	Vacant Constituencies for Region/State Hluttaws	Townships
1.	Phruso Township State Hluttaw Constituency	Phruso
2.	Kengtung Township State Hluttaw Constituency	Kengtung
3.	Kehsi Township State Hluttaw Constituency 1	Kehsi
4.	Kehsi Township State Hluttaw Constituency 2	Kehsi
5.	Mongshu Township State Hluttaw Constituency 1	Mongshu
6.	Mongshu Township State Hluttaw Constituency 2	Mongshu

¹⁷ Announcement on date and vacant constituencies for by-elections – file:///C:/Users/resea/AppData/Local/Temp/12_Oct_16_gnlm-1.pdf (GNLM) 12 October 2016 (p. 3)