



# PRESS RELEASE

U . S . E M B A S S Y R A N G O O N

110 University Avenue, Kamayut Township, Rangoon, Burma

January 16, 2015

## **Myanmar and the United States Conclude Successful Second Human Rights Dialogue**

1. Myanmar and the United States held the second Myanmar-U.S. Human Rights Dialogue in Nay Pyi Taw January 14-15 to discuss and exchange best practices in the field of human rights of both parties, and also on ongoing efforts to further promote and protect human rights in Myanmar.
2. The two delegations reviewed progress on current human rights challenges. The United States recognized the Myanmar government's positive efforts to date and the two delegations discussed ways in which the United States could further assist Myanmar's efforts to advance democratic transition and further promote and protect human rights.
3. Myanmar committed to continue its work on reviewing political prisoner cases, through the Political Prisoner Scrutinizing Committee. The United States expressed the need to adopt consensus definitions of "prisoner of conscience" and "political prisoner" as a basis to review cases. Both countries acknowledged the positive role that can be played by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the promotion and protection of human rights. The United States welcomed Myanmar's ongoing cooperation with the OHCHR in the field of human rights and its continued negotiation for a mutually acceptable agreement with the OHCHR that would allow to open an office in Myanmar. The United States encouraged Myanmar to allow the opening of such an office as soon as possible.
4. The United States recognized the efforts of the Myanmar Government to hold public consultations on the National Land Use Policy and allow for more time for feedback. Both sides discussed the need for inclusive consultation with all stakeholders to inform the development of the final policy and a national land law. The United States expressed its readiness to continue to support Myanmar in the development and elaboration of a policy and legal framework that gives increased land access and security of tenure to small holder farmers and recognizes customary land tenure.

5. The two governments continued productive dialogue on labor rights, reinforcing their engagement with each other, as well as the International Labor Organization (ILO) and other governments, under the Initiative to Promote Fundamental Labor Rights and Practices announced in November 2014.
6. The United States recognized the Myanmar government's efforts to work with the Union Parliament to review and amend the constitution and laws. Both governments agreed that such amendments should be in conformity with national interests and international human rights obligations. Both governments agreed on the importance of embracing and promoting Myanmar's cultural and religious diversity, inter-ethnic and interfaith harmony and understanding.
7. The United States government expressed its willingness to help Myanmar build capacity on early warning and other response systems in order to anticipate and mitigate potential violence.
8. In accordance with international humanitarian principles, the United States and Myanmar governments agreed that humanitarian agencies should have unhindered access to Internally Displaced Persons. Both countries agreed on the need and importance of implementing a comprehensive, transparent, and inclusive process of reconciliation in Rakhine State that prioritizes unfettered humanitarian access to all vulnerable populations, protects human rights, ensures equal protection for all under domestic laws and international standards, and promotes economic and social development.
9. The United States welcomed Myanmar's commitment to hold credible, transparent, and inclusive parliamentary elections in 2015, and Myanmar welcomed United States elections assistance.
10. Myanmar and the United States discussed and agreed that adherence to international humanitarian law is essential to a strong professional military that maintains the trust of the people.
11. Both governments reaffirmed their obligations under the Geneva Conventions to protect civilian populations at all times and all places. Both governments discussed ways to work together to support security sector cooperation and reform.
12. Myanmar and the United States agreed that respect for human rights, transparent, credible, and inclusive elections, democratic government, and equal protection for all under the law, and broad-based economic development are the bases for strong, stable, peaceful, and prosperous nations. On its part, the United States committed to continue working to end all remaining restrictions on economic, political and military cooperation as Myanmar continues its work to realize this shared vision.

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