

The Framework for Political Dialogue

Preamble

The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Ethnic Armed Organizations signed Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) on October 15, 2015. It was ratified unanimously by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on December 8, 2015. In line with the agreement, The Framework for Political Dialogue was deliberated and written by the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) comprising representatives of the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Hluttaw, the Tatmadaw (military), representatives of ethnic armed organizations and representatives of registered political parties.

The Framework for Political Dialogue was written with the objective of building a democratic federal union in line with the result of a political dialogue aiming at the non-disintegration of the union, the non-disintegration of national solidarity and the perpetuation of sovereignty based on liberty, equality and justice in conformity with the Panglong Spirit, fully ensuring the right to democracy, national equality and self-determination.

Chapter One

Objective

1. The objectives of the political dialogue are:
 - (a) To hold an all-inclusive political dialogue in order not to settle political problems through military means but by means of politics for the attainment of long lasting peace.
 - (b) To peacefully seek solutions to political, economic and security reforms
 - (c) To seek solution to internal peace, national reconciliation and ethnic harmony for equal co-existence
 - (d) Based on the resolution of union peace conference, amendment, addition and repeal of laws including the constitution will be done as necessary according to procedure
 - (e) To establish in conformity with the political dialogue a union based on federalism fully ensuring the rights to national equality and self-determination.
 - (f) To establish a democratic nation based on liberty, equality and justice

Chapter Two

Basic Principles

2. The basic principles of political dialogues at different levels based on the framework are:
 - (a) To establish in accordance with the result of the political dialogue a union based on democracy and federalism fully ensuring the rights to democracy, national equality and self-determination based on liberty, equality and justice in conformity with the Panglong Spirit aiming at the non-disintegration of the union, the non-disintegration of national solidarity and the perpetuation of sovereignty.
 - (b) To establish an enduring peace in the union by employing a political culture of seeking a solution not through military means but by political means to end armed conflicts that had been raging for a long time in the history of Myanmar.
 - (c) To include the matter of a federal army consisting of all ethnic peoples in the political dialogue.
 - (d) To give equal rights to all the citizens residing in the union without discrimination regardless of race, religion, culture and sex.
 - (e) To establish a secular state where there is separation of church and state without misusing religion for political advantage.
 - (f) For all citizens to form a multi-racial and multi-religious union identity accepting the different background histories, traditional customs, literatures, languages and national identities of ethnic peoples residing in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.
 - (g) To conduct a political dialogue with people comprising all those who should participate based on the aspirations and wishes of the ethnic peoples with the objective for achieving long lasting peace.
 - (h) Differences of opinions among the participants in the peace talks will be deliberated with sincerity and honesty and settled for obtaining long lasting and stable peace.
 - (i) To strive to raise the living standard and securing the lives, homes and properties of all the people living in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.
 - (j) To try to let women participate in the political dialogue 30% of the number of participants.
 - (k) Not to engage in deeds or writings or speeches that would harm national reconciliation or lessen mutual respect and trust that have been achieved.

Chapter Three

The Process for Political Dialogue

3. As agreed on in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA), political dialogue would be held according to the following process.
 - (a) To write and agreed on the Framework for Political Dialogue
 - (b) To hold national level political dialogues and union peace conference
 - (c) To sign the Pyidaungsu Accord
 - (d) To submit the accord to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw for ratification
 - (e) To implement the agreements of the Pyidaungsu Accord.

Chapter Four

National Level Political Dialogues and Union Peace Conference

4. In conformity with Section 20 (c) of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA), the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) would take the leading role and hold the national level political dialogues and union peace conference in the following way.

4.1. National Level Political Dialogue

- 4.1.1. In line with the basic guidelines laid down by the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC), the working committees may hold the national level political dialogues in groups or in single group of governments, ethnic armed groups and civil society organizations from states and regions.
- 4.1.2. Representatives from the Union Government, the Hluttaw, the Tatmadaw, the Ethnic Armed Organizations, registered political parties, ethnic representatives (for group that have no representative in any key stakeholders) and civil society organizations and others who should take part may participate in the national level political dialogues.
- 4.1.3. The major six sectors to be discussed in the national level political dialogues may include matters related to ethnic representatives, regions and majority citizens at state and region level and also at nationwide level.
- 4.1.4. The proposals and suggestions laid down at the dialogues shall be submitted to the union peace conference through the working committees concerned.

4.2. The Union Peace Conference

The Union Peace Conference would be held in the following way based on the objectives and principles mentioned in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) and the Framework for Political Dialogue:

- 4.2.1. The Union Peace Conference would be attended by a total of 700 delegates comprising 75 from the Government, 75 from the Hluttaw, 150 from the Tatmadaw, 150 from ethnic armed organizations (EAO), 150 from registered political parties, 50 from ethnic representatives and 50 from others who should participate.
- 4.2.2. In selecting delegates, women participation would be 30% or more.
- 4.2.3. The first meeting of the Union Peace Conference would be held on January (xxx), 2015. The union peace conference would be held once every four months. The day on which the conference would be held may be named as necessary according to the agreement of the conference.
- 4.2.4. Nine members would be selected from each group for the panel of chairmen in the Union Peace Conference. Three members would serve jointly as alternate chairmen, one from each group.
- 4.2.5. The Union Peace Conference would take decisions on the proposals and suggestions submitted by the working committee concerned. If necessary, the suggestions may be sent back to the working committee for further discussions.

- 4.2.6. Should there are issues on which no decisions could be arrived at, the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) would hold separate meetings and solve them or would give suggestions for decisions.
- 4.2.7. The Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) would write rules and regulations, the form of the meeting and methods of doing work to be adhered to by the delegates to the Union Peace Conference and would be confirmed by the Union Peace Conference.
- 4.2.8. The Union Peace Conference would be in order if at least 60% of the delegates who have the right to attend from each group are present at the conference.
- 4.2.9. If it is necessary to substitute delegates from the various groups, the delegates selected by the group concerned would be accepted and confirmed by UPDJC.
- 4.2.10. The 50 ethnic delegates and the 50 others who should participate in the Union Peace Conference will be chosen by the government, ethnic armed groups and registered political parties in equal ratio. If it is necessary to substitute these delegates, the new delegates submitted by the group concerned shall be accepted and confirmed by the UPDJC.

Chapter Five

The Agendas for Political Dialogue

- 5. The details of the following agendas to be deliberated in the Union Peace Conference will be based on the principles mentioned in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) and the Framework for Political Dialogue.

The agendas for political dialogue are:

(a) Politics

- (1) Constitutional matters based on democracy and federalism
- (2) Collective rights that should be enjoyed by each ethnic group
- (3) Separation of powers and checks and balances as far as possible among the three branches of sovereignty such as legislative power, executive power and judicial power and matters relating to reforms
- (4) Matters relating to reformation of the general administration of the union
- (5) Matters relating to the right to stand for election
- (6) Matters relating to the rule of law

(b) Social

- (1) Matters relating to the research and study of history, matters relating to literature, culture, language and customs and education and health of ethnic tribes
- (2) Matters relating to faiths and religions
- (3) Matters relating to resettlements, reconstructions and social developments

- (4) Matters relating to human rights, gender equality and humanitarian assistance
- (5) Matters relating to the prevention of and education about narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances

(c) Economy

- (1) Matters relating to national economic policy
- (2) Matters relating to foreign investments
- (3) Taxation and redistribution
- (4) Matters relating to regional developments
- (5) Financial and monetary policy

(d) Security

- (1) Matters relating to national defence
- (2) Security and integration matters

(e) Matters relating to management of land and natural resources policy

- (1) Matters relating to management and distribution of land and natural resources
- (2) Matters relating to protection of the environment and natural disasters

(f) General

Chapter Six

Passing Resolution at the Political Dialogue

6.

Differences of opinions in the dialogue among participants will be discussed thoroughly with sincerity and honesty to the full satisfaction of all parties for achieving long lasting peace. This will be done in the following way in line with Section 1 sub-section (h) of the basic principle of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).

- 6.1. All matters to be discussed shall be discussed thoroughly at working committee level to seek solutions.
- 6.2. Out of the matters submitted by various working committees to the Union Peace Conference, important matters including the matter of a union based on federalism, security of the state and the matter of security reintegration shall be supported with the vote of at least above 75% of each group and the vote of at least above 75% of all those who attended the conference.
- 6.3. Except the matters mentioned in Sub-section 6.2 submitted by the various working committees to the Union Peace Conference, other matters shall be supported by the vote of at least above 50% of each group and the vote of at least above 65% of all those who attended the conference.

Chapter Seven

Management of the Political Dialogues

7. Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC)

The Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) was formed under the agreement of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) with the purpose of the successful holding of the political dialogue.

7.1. Composition

The Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) is composed of the Government, the Hluttaw, Tatmadaw representatives, representatives from signatories of ethnic armed organizations of NCA and registered political parties in equal ratio.

7.2. Terms of Reference

- 7.2.1. The Union Peace Dialogues Joint Committee (UPDJC) would supervise and guide the political dialogues at different levels and be responsible for them.
- 7.2.2. The Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) would hold political dialogues within 90 days after the signing of Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).
- 7.2.3. The Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) would submit the resolutions that emerged out of the political dialogues according to procedure to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw for ratification.
- 7.2.4. The Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) would form necessary working committees, sub-committees and technical assistance teams and specify their duties and responsibilities.

8. Secretariat

The secretariat would be formed with no more than 15 representatives from the government, Hluttaw, Tatmadaw, ethnic armed organizations and registered political parties. Its duties and responsibilities would be specified by the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC).

9. Office Staff

The secretariat comprising the Director, Assistant Director and other necessary staff will be formed with the confirmation of Union Peace Dialogues Joint Committee (UPDJC). The duties and responsibilities of the office staff would be written by the secretariat and be confirmed by UPDJC.

10. Working Committees Formed Based on Agendas for the Dialogues

- 10.1. Working committees would be formed with equal ratio from groups that have the right to attend the conference.
- 10.2. Attempt would be made to let women representatives participate up to 30% of the total number.

- 10.3. The working committees would submit their suggestions and proposals on the agenda they are assigned to the union peace conference for deliberation and resolution.
- 10.4. The working committees would draw policy proposals on the suggestions and proposals presented by the national level political dialogue and send it to the secretariat for deliberation and resolution by the union peace conference.
- 10.5. Working committees may cooperate with each other if necessary.
- 10.6. Should there arise differences of opinion within a committee or among the committees that could not be solved, they shall submit it to the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) and acquire a decision.

11. Technical Assistance Teams for Groups

The groups that will attend the Union Peace Conference may form technical assistance teams. They shall present the technical teams to the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) for accreditation.

12. Observers

The Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) may invite foreign observers to attend the union peace conference. The observers shall abide by the rules and regulations laid down by the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC).

Chapter Eight

Processes for Signing, Ratification and Implementation of the Union Accord

13. Signing the Union Accord

Based on the result of the political dialogues at different levels, the Union Accord would be signed aiming at the non-disintegration of the union, the non-disintegration of national solidarity and the perpetuation of sovereignty. It will be with the Panglong spirit based on liberty, equality and justice. A union based on democracy and federalism fully ensuring the rights to democracy, national unity and self-determination would be established.

12.1. The agreement reached as a result of every time the union peace conference is held shall be signed as a part of the Union Accord.

12.2. Various group leaders who participated in the union peace conference and witnesses would also sign the Union Accord so signed.

12.3. After all the agendas are discussed, all the agreements reached at different levels would be compiled and signed as the Union Accord by various group leaders and witnesses.

13. Ratification

Part of the agreements of the Union Accord or all of the agreements of the Union Accord would be submitted to and ratified by the nearest session of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw according to procedure.

14. Implementation

- 14.1. The Hluttaw, the Tatmadaw and the government shall make new laws, amend/repeal existing laws and implement them by sectors to be in line with the agreements of the Union Accord.

- 14.2. The government shall implement the Union Accord. In doing so, the participation of the people and civil society organizations would be promoted.
- 14.3. If a government could not finish implementing the provisions of the Union Accord in its term, successive governments would continue to implement them.

Chapter Nine General

15. Transparency

The results of the national level political dialogues and the Union Peace Conference would be released just as they come.

16. Financial Matters Concerning Political Dialogues

The union government shall pay for the expenses of the political dialogues of Union Peace Conference, Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC), working committees and the national level political dialogues held by these committees. Moreover, financial and technical assistances without strings from home or abroad may be accepted. The money provided by the union government and the assistance given by international donors would be spent with transparency and accountability.

17. Amendment of the Framework for Political Dialogue

The Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) after discussion may amend, add and confirm the provisions in the framework for political dialogue that are necessary for change. The change or addition shall not be in contradiction to the agreements in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).