



## Position Statement on Signing NCA

January 24, 2018

The United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC), in its effort to resolve the fundamental political problem by political means for peace in the country, had designed together the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA), during the time of U Thein Sein government. The UNFC has hoped to step onto meaningful and essential political dialogue by building up stable political environment through the NCA, the formulation of which it has put in much time and effort. As the government side had one-sidedly turned the NCA draft into a final agreement during the time of U Thein Sein government, the situation for most of the stakeholders to sign the agreement had not been reached. Out of the 16 Ethnic Armed Resistance Organizations of the Nationwide Ceasefire Coordination Team (NCCT), only 7 and one non-member, a total of 8, participated in signing the agreement.

As there had been weaknesses in the implementation of the NCA between the said 8 organizations and the government, the UNFC has made an 8-point proposal to strengthen the NCA, and the UNFC Delegation for Political Negotiation (DPN) has been making the effort. Consultations between the NLD government Peace Commission (PC) and the DPN over the 8-point proposal have gone past 17 months, and formal meetings have been held for the 8<sup>th</sup> time. After scheduling for it, the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting had to be cancelled, and consultation was held as a pre-meeting one, and agreement was reached to resolve the last main point at the level of top leaders meeting, regarding the term “Federal Democracy” that has met blockage.

According to the said agreement, the belief that a solution can be found by the meeting of the top leaders regarding definition of the term “Federal Democracy” is as follows.

### ***Clarification on Meaning of the Term “Federal Democracy”***

*To establish the country (nation) in accordance with the federal system, by studying the international norms and standards, and by referencing the historical background of Burma/Myanmar, the Constitution (Basic Law) and the other Laws, the civil war and the current objective conditions, in defining the term the “Federal Democracy”, the basic points given below shall be included without exception.*

- (1) In establishing the nation/country in accordance with the federal system, there shall be full guarantee for national (ethnic) equality and self-determination;*
- (2) The sovereignty of the Federal Union shall be derived from the member states of the Federal Union and the people in those states;*

- (3) *In form, it shall be an association and co-existence, of their own free will, by the independent member republics (states);*
- (4) *Democratic governance must be practiced in the Federal Union, formed in accordance with the federal political system;*
- (5) *The asymmetric overlay on the symmetric structure shall be established;*
- (6) *Demos-constraining shall be practiced in which the member states shall have the right to restrict, through democracy, the powers of the Federal Union;*
- (7) *With the objective of maintaining long-lasting friendship and unity of the various ethnic nationalities, there shall be the fundamental principle safeguarding the rights of the minor ethnic nationalities to obviate dominance and restriction by the major ethnic nationalities.*

As the federal democracy means aspirations of all leaders of the ethnic nationalities, who had reciprocally pledged to establish the Union together, based on national equality, the UNFC upholds the position that it is not a precondition but the revival of the Panglong Spirit.

While the DPN and the PC were endeavoring by various means for the top leaders of the two sides to meet and find a resolution by consultation, as the government Tatmadaw (Myanmar Army) had used the worn-out method of coercion to find result, the essential and meaningful meeting and dialogue have disappeared.

Long-lasting and durable peace cannot be established in the country through coercive means. Holding blindly the NCA approach only and walking in the worn-out path of coercion, it will continue to be stuck in the evil rut. A Union based on the federal and democratic systems can be established only through essential and meaningful political discussion and dialogue.

Accordingly, for signing of the NCA, we on our side will thoroughly discuss within the UNFC for achieving the level of official conclusion on the 8-point proposal by the DPN and PC. Thus, for the achievement of peace in the country, we will continue to strive for the emergence of a Federal Democratic Union, by firmly upholding the principle of resolving the fundamental political problem by political means.

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