

Civil Society Dialogue Network*

Supporting Myanmar's Evolving Peace Processes: What Roles for Civil Society and the EU?

Thursday 7 March 2013, Martin's Central Park, Boulevard Charlemagne 80, 1000 Brussels

Agenda

08h45 to 09h00 **Registration of participants**

09h00 to 09h30 **Introduction**

Malgorzata Wasilewska, EEAS, Head of Division for Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding and Mediation Instruments
Catherine Woollard, EPLO, Executive Director

Introduction to objectives of the meeting, methodology, role of participants, and questions for discussion during the day.

09h30 to 10h45 **Session 1 – Civil society and the peace process in Myanmar**
Moderator: Antonia Potter Prentice, EPLO, Senior Associate

Brief presentation by Charles Petrie, based on the background paper by him and Ashley South to address:

- What are the key features and characteristics of civil society within Myanmar, on the border and in the diaspora today, and what is the relationship between those differently located groups?
- How is civil society currently active in the peace process, and what further aspirations does it have?
- How does government currently view and interact with civil society, and how does this relate to how government interacts with ethnic political groups and ethnic armed groups?
- What is the role of women within civil society peace organisations in Myanmar, and how do they handle and prioritize their gender and ethnic identities?
- What have been the strengths and weaknesses of international civil society support to and collaboration with national civil society?
- What interaction is there between ASEAN and its civil society mechanisms and peacebuilding civil society in Myanmar, and what impacts does this or could it have?

Facilitated interactive discussion

10h45 to 11h00 **Coffee Break**

11h00 to 13h00 **Session 2 – Peace support infrastructures in Myanmar – opportunities and entry points**

Moderator: Malgorzata Wasilewska, EEAS

Brief presentation by Salai Isaac Khen (Gender Development Initiative), Harn Yawng hwe (Euro Burma Office):

- What are the current or planned organisations or structures focusing on peace?
- What level of development have they reached? How do they interact with each other, the government and external actors who are looking to support the process
- What are the risks and opportunities inherent in these structures and their interrelations?
- What are the current mechanisms for coordinating or tracking international support to the process and how might this be optimized?

Facilitated interactive discussion

13h00 to 14h00 **Lunch**

14h00 to 15h15 **Session 3 – Civil Society in Ethnic Conflicts: drawing on experiences from elsewhere**

Moderator: Antonia Potter Prentice, EPLO

Presentation by Sol Iglesias, based on her background paper, to discuss challenges faced and strategies used elsewhere with regard to:

- Supporting civil society in ethnic conflicts when civil society reflects ethnic divides, and is at very mixed stages of development/evolution;
- Mechanisms civil society can use to bridge ethnic and other divides;
- Mechanisms civil society can use to bring that bridging experience into peace processes; civil society consultations in ethnic conflict situations
- Experiences from the region
- Approaches to optimize collaboration between national and international civil society organisations.

Followed by brief inputs from civil society/peace process actors from India (Rita Manchanda, South Asia Forum for Human Rights), Nepal (Dipendra Tamang, Peace and Collaborative Development Network) and the Philippines (Karen Tanada, Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute) to provide or expand on specific examples.

Questions for discussion:

- Can these experiences and examples be adapted and applied in Myanmar?
- What are the risks of inclusion of civil society in peace processes and democratic transition? How can these risks be mitigated in Myanmar?
- What are the roles national civil society envisages for international civil society in terms of support to them and their role in the peace process?

Facilitated interactive discussion

15h15 to 15h30 Coffee Break

15h30 to 16h30 Session 4 – How can the EU best support the current peace processes, peaceful transition and the development of democratic institutions?

Moderator: Ranieri Sabatucci, EEAS, Head of Division for South East Asia

- What is the EU already doing?
- What value added can the EU bring to supporting the peace process?
- What specific collaboration and cooperation between the EU and civil society at both levels would be of most value to the process? How, practically, would this be best achieved?

Facilitated interactive discussion

16h30 to 17h00 Conclusion *EEAS and EPLO*

17h00 to 18h30 Informal reception

The **Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN)** is a three-year project funded by the Instrument for Stability of the European Commission aimed at facilitating dialogue on peacebuilding issues between civil society and EU policymakers. The CSDN contributes to strengthening international and regional capacity for conflict prevention and post-conflict co-operation (for more information please see: www.eplo.org). The CSDN is managed by EPLO, the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office, in cooperation with the EEAS and the EC.