

The Framework for Political Dialogue

Preamble

The Framework for Political Dialogue was negotiated and drafted by the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC), comprising of representatives of the Government, Parliament, Tatmadaw, Ethnic Armed Organizations, and political parties, in accordance with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA), signed between the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Ethnic Armed Organizations on October 15th, 2015, and unanimously ratified by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on December 8th, 2015.

The Framework for Political Dialogue is drafted with the objective of establishing a Union based on the principles of democracy and federalism in accordance with the outcomes of political dialogue; in the spirit of Panglong, which fully guarantees democratic rights, national equality and the right to self-determination; on the basis of liberty, equality and justice; and upholding the principles of non-disintegration of the union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of national sovereignty.

Chapter 1

Aims and Objectives

1. The aims and objectives of the Framework for Political Dialogue are:
 - a. Hold inclusive political dialogue attended by all relevant stakeholders to resolve political conflicts through political dialogue instead of force of arms in order to achieve lasting and sustainable peace.
 - b. Negotiate to peacefully resolve any political, economic, social and security-related developments.
 - c. Negotiate to find answers to achieving internal peace, national reconciliation, and to ensuring all ethnic nationalities are able to live together in harmony and equality.
 - d. All decisions adopted by the Union Peace Conference shall be the basis for amending, repealing and adding provisions to the Constitution and laws, in line with procedures.
 - e. Establish a Union based on the federal principle, which fully guarantees national equality and the right to self-determination, in accordance with the outcomes of political dialogue.
 - f. Establish a democratic Union on the basis of liberty, equality and justice.

Chapter 2

Basic Principles

2. The basic principles for all stages of political dialogue based on this Framework for Political Dialogue are:
 - a. Establish a Union based on the principles of democracy and federalism in accordance with the outcomes of the political dialogue; in the spirit of Panglong, which fully guarantees democratic rights, national equality and the right to self-determination; on the basis of liberty, equality and justice; and upholding the principles of non-disintegration of the union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of national sovereignty.
 - b. Reach a negotiated settlement to end protracted armed conflict in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, and establish a new political culture of resolving political conflicts through political dialogue instead of force of arms.
 - c. Discuss matters concerning the Pyidaungsu Tatmadaw made up of all ethnic nationalities during political dialogue.
 - d. Guarantee equal rights to all citizens who live within the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, and ensure that no citizen shall be discriminated against on the basis of ethnicity, religion, culture, or gender.
 - e. Establish a secular state based on the principle of the separation of religion and state in order to avoid abuse of religion for political interests.
 - f. Collectively establish a national identity that embraces the diverse ethnicities and languages by recognizing the distinctive history, cultural practices, literature, language and national characteristics of all ethnic nationalities living within the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.
 - g. Hold inclusive political dialogue, attended by all relevant stakeholders, in accordance with the aspirations and desires of all ethnic nationalities in order to achieve lasting and sustainable peace.
 - h. Negotiate in good faith any issues that may arise between and among the dialogue partners in order to achieve lasting and sustainable peace.
 - i. Undertake efforts to protect lives and property and improve the livelihoods of all persons living within the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.
 - j. Strive to achieve 30 percent women's participation in political dialogue.

- k. Avoid subjects that damage national reconciliation, and acts, writings, and speech that undermine mutual respect that is gained.

Chapter 3

Agenda for Political Dialogue

- 3. In accordance with the agreed provisions of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, the agenda for political dialogue is as follows:
 - a. Drafting and adopting the Framework for Political Dialogue.
 - b. Holding national political dialogue and Union Peace Conference.
 - c. Signing the Pyidaungsu Accord.
 - d. Submitting the Pyidaungsu Accord to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw for ratification.
 - e. Implementing all provisions contained in the Pyidaungsu Accord.

Chapter 4

Holding Of National Political Dialogue and Union Peace Conference

- 4. In accordance with paragraph 20 subparagraphs (c) and (d), the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) shall be responsible for holding the national political dialogue and Union Peace Conference as follows:

4.1. National Political Dialogue

- 4.1.1.** Under the direction of the Working Committees, and in accordance with the roadmap laid out by the UPDJC, state and region governments, ethnic armed organizations, or civil society organizations, either individually or jointly, may hold national political dialogue.
- 4.1.2.** Representatives of the government, parliament, Tatmadaw, ethnic armed organizations, registered political parties, ethnic nationalities, civil society organizations, and relevant stakeholders may participate in national political dialogue.
- 4.1.3.** Issues under the six (6) major topics to be discussed during national political dialogue relating to ethnic nationalities, specific regions, or citizens at large may be discussed at the state and region level, or at the nationwide level.

4.1.4. The relevant Working Committees shall submit recommendations and proposals from these meetings to the Union Peace Conference for discussion and decision-making.

4.2. Union Peace Conference

Based on the aims and objectives, and basic principles of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement and the Framework for Political Dialogue, the Union Peace Conference shall held as follows:

- 4.2.1. There shall be (700) total participants in the Union Peace Conference comprising: (75) representatives of the government, (75) representatives of parliament, (150) representatives of the Tatmadaw, (150) representatives of the ethnic armed organizations, (150) representatives of registered political parties, (50) ethnic representatives, and (50) relevant stakeholders.
- 4.2.2. The selection process of the representatives shall strive to achieve 30 percent women's participation.
- 4.2.3. The first session of the Union Peace Conference shall be held on January 12th, 2016. Subsequent sessions of the Union Peace Conference shall be held every (4) months. With agreement of the Union Peace Conference, the exact dates of the sessions may be determined as needed.
- 4.2.4. The chairing group of the Union Peace Conference shall comprise of (9) representatives from each participant group, and (3) representatives from each participant group shall be assigned duties to in turn jointly chair the Union Peace Conference.
- 4.2.5. The Union Peace Conference shall decide on the recommendations and proposals submitted by the relevant Working Committees. If needed, the submissions may be returned from the Union Peace Conference to the relevant Working Committee for further discussion.
- 4.2.6. If a decision cannot be reached at the Union Peace Conference, the UPDJC and the relevant Working Committee shall discuss separately to either resolve (or) make recommendations to resolve the matter.
- 4.2.7. The UPDJC shall draft and submit to the Union Peace Conference for approval, rules and regulations to be followed by Union Peace

Conference participants, structure of the meetings, and procedures for carrying out tasks.

- 4.2.8. A quorum for the Union Peace Conference is achieved if at least 60 percent of participants from each group are in attendance.
- 4.2.9. If a group needs to replace a representative, the replacement must be approved by the UPDJC.
- 4.2.10. The government, ethnic armed organizations and registered political parties shall select in equal numbers, the 50 representatives of ethnic nationalities and 50 representatives of relevant stakeholders to participate in the Union Peace Conference. If one of these groups needs to replace a representative, the replacement must be approved by the UPDJC.

Chapter 5

Topics To Be Discussed In Political Dialogue

5. Based on the provisions of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement and the Framework for Political Dialogue, the following detailed list of topics shall be discussed during the Union Peace Conference.

The topics are:

a. Political

1. Matters relating to a democratic and federal based constitution.
2. Matters relating to the ethnic collective rights of every ethnic nationality.
3. Matters relating to the practical division of judicial, executive and legislative powers of government, mutual restraint, and reforms.
4. Reforms of Union general administration.
5. Matters related to participation in elections.
6. Law and order matters.

b. Social

1. Matters relating to the promotion and teaching of ethnic nationalities' history; matters relating to ethnic literature, culture, language, and customs; and education and health matters.
 2. Matters relating to worship and religion.
 3. Matters relating to resettlement, rehabilitation, and development of livelihoods.
 4. Matters relating to human rights, gender equality, and humanitarian issues.
 5. Matters relating to narcotics and mind altering drugs prevention and education.
- c. Economic**
1. Matters relating to national economic policy.
 2. Matters relating to foreign investment.
 3. Taxation and sharing of tax revenues.
 4. Matters related to regional development.
 5. Matters related to banking and monetary policies.
- d. Security**
1. Matters related to national security.
 2. Matters related to security reintegration.
- e. Land and Environmental Policies**
1. Matters relating to the management and sharing of land and natural resources.
 2. Matters relating to the protection against environmental and natural hazards.
- f. General**

Chapter (6)

Decision Making in Political Dialogue

6. To negotiate and decide in good faith any issues that may arise between and among the dialogue partners in order to achieve lasting and sustainable peace, the following will be undertaken in accordance with paragraph 1 subparagraph (h) of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.
 - 6.1. All matters shall be resolutely discussed at the Working Committee level.
 - 6.2. Important matters submitted to the Union Peace Conference by the Working Committees including those related to the establishment of a Union based on federal principles, national security, and security reintegration must be approved by at least 75 percent of the attendees from each group, and by at least 75 percent of all the attendees.
 - 6.3. Except for the matters of subparagraph 6.2, all other matters submitted to the Union Peace Conference by the Working Committees must be approved by at least 50 percent of the attendees from each group, and by at least 65 percent of all the attendees.

Chapter 7

Organization of Political Dialogue

7. Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC)

The Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) is formed in accordance with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) with the aim of successfully holding political dialogue.

7.1. Formation

The UPDJC is formed with equal numbers of the representatives of the government, parliament, and Tatmadaw, ethnic armed organizations that are signatories to the NCA, and registered political parties.

7.2. Rights and Responsibilities

7.2.1. The UPDJC shall be responsible for overseeing all stages of political dialogue.

7.2.2. The UPDJC shall be responsible for holding political dialogue within (90) days of the signing of the NCA.

7.2.3. The UPDJC shall undertake to submit the decisions made during political dialogue to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw for ratification in accordance with procedures.

7.2.4. The UPDJC shall form the necessary Working Committees, sub-committees, technical teams, and prescribe rules and regulations needed for political dialogue.

8. Secretariat

The Secretariat shall be formed with representatives of the government, parliament, Tatmadaw, ethnic armed organizations, and at most (15) representatives of registered political parties. The UPDJC shall prescribe the duties and responsibilities of the Secretariat.

9. Office

The Secretariat shall form the Office with a director, deputy director, and other needed staff by approval of the UPDJC. The duties and responsibilities of the Office shall be drafted by the Secretariat, and must be approved by the UPDJC.

10. Topics-based Working Committees

- 10.1. Working Committees shall be formed with equal numbers of representatives of the groups that are participating in the Union Peace Conference.
- 10.2. Efforts shall be made to achieve 30 percent women's participation in the Working Committees.
- 10.3. The Working Committees shall submit recommendations and proposals related to the issues assigned to them to the Union Peace Conference for discussion and decision-making.
- 10.4. The Working Committees shall draft and submit to the Secretariat policy recommendations based on the recommendations and proposals submitted by the national political dialogue for discussion and decision-making by the Union Peace Conference.
- 10.5. Working Committees may cooperate with each other if needed.
- 10.6. Issues that are unresolved within a Working Committee or between Working Committees shall be submitted to the UPDJC for decision-making.

11. Technical Teams

The groups participating in the Union Peace Conference may form Technical Teams. The UPDJC must be informed of the formation of each Technical Team for it to be duly recognized.

12. Observers

The UPDJC may invite observers to the Union Peace Conference. Observers must adhere to the rules and regulations prescribed by the UPDJC.

Chapter 8

Ratification and Implementation of the Pyidaungsu Accord

13. Signing of the Pyidaungsu Accord

The Pyidaungsu Accord, that is based on the outcome of the various stages of political dialogue, shall be signed in order to establish the Union of the Republic of Myanmar based on the principles of democracy and federalism in accordance with the outcomes of the political dialogue; in the spirit of Panglong, which fully guarantees democratic rights, national equality and the right to self-determination; on the basis of liberty, equality and justice; and upholding the principles of non-disintegration of the union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of national sovereignty.

- 13.1. The agreements reached at each session of the Union Peace Conference shall be binding provisions of the Pyidaungsu Accord.
- 13.2. The Pyidaungsu Accord so incorporated shall be signed by the leaders of the groups participating in the Union Peace Conference, and by witnesses.
- 13.3. After all topics have been discussed, the agreements reached at each stage shall be incorporated as the Pyidaungsu Accord, which must be signed by the leaders of the respective groups and witnesses.

14. Ratification

The Pyidaungsu Accord either in part or in whole shall be submitted to the earliest session of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw for ratification in accordance with procedures.

15. Implementation

- 14.1. To ensure compliance with the provisions of the Pyidaungsu Accord, Parliament, Tamadaw and government ministries shall, in their respective capacities, pass new laws, and amend or repeal existing laws.

- 14.2. The government shall implement the provisions of the Pyidaungsu Accord. In so doing, the joint participation level of the public and civil society organizations must be increased.
- 14.3. If the provisions of the Pyidaungsu Accord are unable to be completely implemented during a term of the government, successive governments shall continue the implementation.

Chapter 9

Miscellaneous

16. Transparency

The outcomes of national political dialogue and the Union Peace Conference shall be timely communicated to the public.

17. Funding For Political Dialogue

The Union government shall be responsible for funding the Union Peace Conference, and the national political dialogue organized by the UPDJC, Working Committees and other committees. Additionally, funding and technical assistance that are unconditional may be sought from local and foreign sources. Funding from the government, and assistance received from foreign and other sources shall be used transparently, accountably, and responsibly.

18. Amending the Framework for Political Dialogue

If a provision of the Framework for Political Dialogue requires amending, the UPDJC may amend the provision after discussion. Any amendments to the Framework for Political Dialogue shall not contradict the provisions of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.