



Parliamentary Centre
Le Centre parlementaire

Project Report

Name of Activities:

- **Peace and Governance Workshop for Leaders of Ethnic Armed Organisations**
November 23-26, 2016
- **Peace Forum**
November 25, 2016

Project Start Date – End Date: September 2016 – January 2017

Summary

Since its independence in 1948, Myanmar has been suffering under one of the longest running civil wars among the country's numerous ethnic groups, fueled by the lack of agreement on the constitutional fundamentals and the country's model of governance. Following rounds of negotiations, a National Ceasefire Agreement was signed on October 15, 2015 between the Myanmar Government and eight ethnic organizations. While hostilities have not ended completely, this is the first single, nationwide peace agreement of any kind that Myanmar has achieved since the conflicts began making possible further progress in implementing a roadmap for peace. While there is a general agreement that Myanmar is in need of some sort of federal democratic system of governance, the sides have yet to elaborate and reconcile their concrete views on the nature of this system. The leaders of ethnic armed groups, who play an essential part in the peace process, are not equipped with adequate knowledge and skills neither to formulate and negotiate well-informed positions as part of the peace dialogue, nor to steer the transition from armed conflict to governing their areas within a peaceful democratic system.

Responding to these needs, The Centre for Development and Ethnic Studies – CDES (Myanmar) and the Parliamentary Centre (Canada) cooperated in implementing a Workshop on Peace and Governance in Yangon from November 23-26, 2016 that targeted an audience comprising leaders of ethnic armed organisations, ethnic political parties and civil society organisations (CSOs). This workshop was complemented by a half-day Peace Forum held on November 25, 2016 that targeted a wider audience representing all stakeholders in the peace process, the development community and media.

The workshop was a highly interactive event combining presentations with facilitated group working sessions allowing the participants to formulate their own views and positions on the models of governance adequate for Myanmar and the way the peace process should progress. The partnership between the two Myanmar and Canadian organisations, in combination with other international expertise, enabled a balance between international best practices and a good understanding of the local context. Participants were hence offered an exposure to the combined expertise of local experts who are intimately familiar with the country and have played a direct role in the peace process, in addition to the direct experience of international practitioners from peace negotiations in Colombia and the functioning of a federal system of governance in Canada. In sharing comparative international experience, every effort was made to offer a most candid exchange focused on both the achievements and challenges of other countries.

The Peace Forum provided an update on the progress of the peace process in Myanmar and the perspectives of all sides on the negotiation table, along with exposure to international experience from peace negotiations in Colombia and the functioning of Canada's federal system of governance. In addition to attracting an audience of some 225 people, it was covered by major newspapers in Myanmar and several TV channels.

The two events were made possible with the financial support of the DeFehr Foundation.

A summary of the achieved results is presented below:

- The Peace and Governance Workshop and the Peace Forum had a combined audience of over 215 participants who were exposed to the updates on the progress of the peace process and its challenges, to experience and lessons learned from the peace process in Colombia and to several aspects of Canada's federal model of governance. This audience included leaders of the Myanmar Peace and National Reconciliation Centre, more than 60 leaders of Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs), leaders of ethnic political parties in Myanmar, of the National League for Democracy, and the Union Solidarity and Development Party, leaders of the Civil Society Forum and leaders of All Gender Inclusion in Peace Process (AGIPP), as well as more than 20 media groups;
- The Peace and Governance Workshop involved 61 ethnic leaders from 8 ethnic groups to get an enhanced understanding of the fundamental aspects of Canada's federal model of governance, including asymmetrical federalism, language rights, revenue sharing and revenue generation.
- The facilitated group exercises provided the participants in the Peace and Governance Workshop with an opportunity to discuss and formulate their own views and positions on key aspects of a federal governance model adequate for Myanmar;
- This Peace and Governance Workshop was the first instance where the participating leaders of ethnic armed organisations, ethnic political parties and civil society organisations were part of a joint activity of this kind: this helped them to develop a better understanding of each other's views and positions and engage in discussions on how the differences in their views can be reconciled;
- By being exposed to lessons learned from Colombia's peace process, including a detailed account of the costs of peace versus the costs of conflict, in the participants of the Workshop on Peace and Governance had an opportunity to develop an enhanced knowledge and skills to participate in the peace dialogue and subsequent stages of the peace process in their own country;
- The workshop allowed for CDES to engage the participants in a discussion of a draft EAOs position paper on Myanmar's model of federalism that was developed by the Political Sector Working Group of NCA-S EAOs.

Background

Since its independence in 1948, Myanmar has been suffering under one of the longest running civil wars among the country's numerous ethnic groups, fueled by the lack of agreement on the constitutional fundamentals and the country's model of governance. From 1962 to 2011, the country was under military rule. The military junta was officially dissolved in 2011 following a general election in 2010. The nominally civilian government of President Thein Sein initiated peace talks: a Union Peace-making Work Committee (UPWC) – comprising of representatives from the Army, the national Parliament, and the executive branch was formed to represent the Government. On the other hand, ethnic armed organizations also formed a collective negotiating team called Nationwide Ceasefire Negotiating Team (NCCT), comprising of 16 ethnic

armed organizations. Through many rounds of negotiations the NCCT and UPWC agreed to a political road-map outlining seven steps to achieve enduring peace:

- (1) Signing of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA);
- (2) Drafting and adopting a framework for political dialogue by ethnic armed organizations and representatives of the government;
- (3) Holding a national political dialogue based on the adopted framework for political dialogue, and negotiating and undertaking those programs related to security reintegration matters and other necessary works which both parties agree can be carried out in advance;
- (4) Holding the Union Peace Conference;
- (5) Signing the Union Accord (Pyidaungsu Accord);
- (6) Submitting the Union Accord to the Union Parliament (Pyidaungsu Hluttaw) for ratification;
- (7) Actual implementation of all provisions contained in the Union Accord, and carrying out responsibilities regarding security reintegration.

A National Ceasefire Agreement was signed on October 15, 2015 between the Myanmar Government and eight ethnic organizations. While hostilities have not ended completely, this is the first single, nationwide peace agreement of any kind that Myanmar has achieved since the conflicts began in 1948 making possible further progress in implementing the roadmap for peace. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, whose party, the National League for Democracy (NLD), won the general election on November 8, 2015 has expressed its commitment to continuing the peace process. The Framework for Political Dialogue has been revised in the fall of 2016 and a national political dialogue is progressing through several mechanisms including a Union Peace Dialogue Committee. While there is a general agreement that Myanmar is in need of some sort of federal democratic system of governance, the sides have yet to elaborate and reconcile their concrete views on the nature of this system.

Problem/Rationale

The leaders of ethnic armed groups, who play an essential part in the peace process, are not equipped with adequate knowledge and skills neither to (1) formulate and negotiate well-informed positions as part of the peace dialogue, nor to (2) steer the transition from armed conflict to governing their areas within a peaceful democratic system. There is urgent need to help them develop this knowledge and skills to ensure a balanced dialogue between all stakeholders for a sustained peace.

Main Objectives of the Project

The Centre for Development and Ethnic Studies (Myanmar) and the Parliamentary Centre (Canada) cooperated in implementing a Workshop on Peace and Governance in Yangon from November 23-26, 2016 that targeted an audience comprising leaders of ethnic armed organisations, ethnic political parties and civil society organisations (CSOs). This included a half-day Peace Forum held on November 25, 2016. The event was made possible with the financial support of the DeFehr Foundation.

The intended results of the project were:

- At least 80 ethnic leaders from at least 8 ethnic groups have enhanced understanding of the fundamentals of democratic governance within a federal system;
- At least 80 ethnic leaders from at least 8 ethnic groups have enhanced knowledge and skills to participate in the peace dialogue and subsequent stages of the peace process.

Activity Beneficiaries

Participants	Male	Female	Total
Target Audience as per project proposal (by category)			
I) Ethnic Leaders	Not specified	Not specified	80
Actual Audience and Participants: Peace and Governance Workshop			
I) Ethnic Leaders: Ethnic Armed Organisations, Ethnic Political Parties and CSOs	52	9	61
II) CDES Team	1	5	6
III) Parliamentary Centre Team	4		4
IV) Funder: DeFehr Foundation	1		1
V) Observers: Menonite Central Committee, USIP, CT Office	3	2	5
Total Workshop	61	16	77
Actual Audience: Peace Forum			
VI) Presenters: CDES, PC, Myanmar Government, Military, Ethnic Armed Organisations, Joint Peace Fund	9	1	10
VII) Audience: Ethnic leaders, diplomatic community, local and international NGOs, experts, media	159	56	215
Total Peace Forum	168	57	225
TOTAL (Workshop and Peace Forum)*	168	57	225

*the participants in the Workshop attended the Peace Forum.

The Peace and Governance Workshop was attended by a total of 61 ethnic leaders representing eight Ethnic Armed Organisations (PNLO, ALP, CNF, KNU, DKBA, KNU- KNLA-PC, RCSS, ABSDF), leaders of ethnic political parties (Arakan National Party, Zomi Congress for Democracy, Lisu National Development Party, Mon National Party, Ta-ang National Party, Pa-O National Organization, Kachin State Democratic Party) and CSOs representatives, including the Women`s League of Burma and of All Gender Inclusion in Peace Process (AGIPP).

The Peace Forum gathered a wide audience of 215 people including leaders of the Myanmar Peace and National Reconciliation Centre; in addition to the 61 leaders of Ethnic Armed Organizations that took part in the workshop, leaders of ethnic political parties in Myanmar, of the National League for Democracy, and the Union Solidarity and Development Party, leaders of the Civil Society Forum and leaders of All Gender Inclusion in Peace Process (AGIPP), and more than 20 media groups.

Compared to the initial target of covering 80 ethnic leaders from 8 ethnic groups, the project activities eventually attracted 61 as direct participants which is still a substantial number: while a wide range of ethnic leaders were reached and invited to the event, this could be explained by some leaders` availability at the time of workshop. Nevertheless, the smaller than initially anticipated number did not affect the results of the event as high caliber participants from all targeted eight ethnic groups participated in the

workshop. The type of stakeholders represented among the wider audience at the Peace Forum, on the other hand, exceeded the initial target of covering just ethnic leaders. The wide media coverage should also be noted here, meaning that an additional number of people that is difficult to track precisely was also reached.

Methodology

Planned Methodology:

The workshop was intended to offer to the participants an exposure to the combined expertise of local Myanmar experts who are intimately familiar with the country and have played a direct role in the peace process, along with the expertise of international practitioners who have direct experience from peace negotiations in other countries undergoing a peace process (Colombia), as well as the functioning of a federal system of governance (Canada). In sharing comparative international experience, every effort was made to offer a most candid exchange focused on both the achievements and challenges of other countries. The sessions of the workshop were designed to be as interactive as possible. Throughout the workshop, the participants were exposed to international experience in areas they had communicated specific interest in with ample time for questions and answers. This was then followed by facilitated group working sessions aimed at formulating their own views and positions on the models of governance adequate for Myanmar and the way the peace process should progress.

The training approach was tailored to the specific needs of the expected participants. Since the prior knowledge was expected to vary, every effort was made to keep all terms and concepts simple and presented in an accessible way, while not under estimating the intelligence and important roles of the participants.

The objective of the Peace Forum was to inform the wider community about the progress of the Myanmar peace process, allow for exchanges on the perspectives of the key actors on the negotiation table. In addition, the Forum was another opportunity for the participants to hear the international panelists' experiences from the ongoing peace process in Colombia and to share some examples from the Canadian model of a federal system, with a view to provide inspiration on how this could be relevant in the context of Myanmar. Given the above, the event was conducted in a seminar style with Q&A sessions allowing the audience to interact with the panelists.

Variance Explanation:

The activities were implemented without major variances of the planned methodology. Minor adjustments were made during the workshop by bridging some of the international presentations and following them up with joint Q&A in order to allow for more focused discussions with less chance of repetition.

There was a variation in the timing of the Peace Forum. Initially it was planned to take place on Saturday, November 26th after the Workshop is concluded. However, it had to be moved to the afternoon of Friday, November 25th in order to accommodate the high level speakers from the Government and the Military who otherwise would not have been available due to travel commitments.

Detailed Activity Description

Workshop Day I, November 23rd, 2016

The workshop started by an opening session: workshop participants and facilitators were introduced and the program and objectives for the week were reviewed. Following this the workshop proceeded to the first presentation on international experience: Mr. Juan Fernando Londoño provided an overview of the conflict in Colombia and its roots, the peace process (the positions and roles of the government and FARC) its evolution, challenges and achievements and lessons learned. This included an outline and comparison of the costs of continuous conflict versus the costs of negotiating peace. The ensuing discussion allowed for key similarities and differences between the peace processes in Colombia and Myanmar to be identified along with lessons from Colombia learned that could be of use to Myanmar. It became clear that the topics discussed as part of the Columbia peace process were similar to the ones in Myanmar. Also, in the case of both countries each setback in the peace negotiation process brought an intensification of hostilities. A key difference in the case of Colombia is that the army is not an official side on the peace negotiation table but is rather represented by the Government.

The audience was interested in the role of CSOs in the peace process in Colombia. The presenter shared that consulting CSOs is key: while CSOs were not at the peace negotiation table, public consultations were held at the onset of the discussion of each of the six points of the peace agreement in order to get people's inputs; additionally some CSOs were invited to testify at the negotiation table. It was also stressed that the peace agreement has a gender perspective, recognizing that women were particularly affected by the conflict. The audience was also interested in an analysis of the outcome of the recent referendum on the peace agreement: the presenter shared his views on the factors that affected the results.

During the afternoon of the first day of the workshop CDES took the lead in a discussion with the participants of a draft EAOs position paper on Myanmar's model of federalism that was developed by the Political Sector Working Group of NCA-S EAOs led by Dr. Lian Sakhong. The purpose of the paper, which was drafted in a simple language accessible for wide audiences, is to help the leaders of the EAOs in consultations with people from their own ethnic groups.

Workshop Day II, November 24th, 2016

The first half of the day was dedicated to the first two presentations focused on Canada's experience. An introduction to Canada and its system of governance was delivered by Ivo Balinov, Director of Program Development and Partnerships at the Parliamentary Centre: the presentation introduced participants to basic facts about Canada and its model of governance: the Constitution and the Charter of Rights, branches of power and their roles (the crown, the executive, the legislative and the judiciary), federal and provincial levels of government, their jurisdictions and how they relate to each other. This was followed by a presentation on Canadian federalism by Dr. Fernand DeVarennnes, Dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of Moncton: he covered the history and evolution of Canada's federal model. A key focus was the situation of Quebec compared to that of other Canadian provinces and territories, such as New Brunswick; key issues in the development of the Canadian federal model (bilingualism, immigration, Canada's federal Constitution and Quebec) and mechanisms through which they were dealt with and lessons learned were shared.

The lively discussion session that followed the two presentations confirmed the participants' interest in the experience of Canada. Of particularly high interest were several issues: (1) language policies, including the costs of bi and multi-lingualism and the protection of indigenous languages, (2) the evolution of separatist sentiments in Quebec and the factors that have affected them and (3) the constitutional fundamentals of the powers of the provinces and the process for constitutional changes. It should be noted here that some participants were interested to know whether Canadian provinces have their separate constitutions as this is an approach that some ethnic armed organizations appear to favour for

Myanmar as way for guaranteeing the rights of ethnic minorities. It was clarified that this is not a feature of the Canadian federal model but the jurisdictions of the federal and provincial levels are rather spelled out in the federal Constitution.

In the afternoon, the participants were divided in three working groups covering (1) language policy at different levels of government, (2) division of powers between levels of government and (3) fundamental rights of ethnic minorities. Each group was given an hour to discuss and formulate their own views and positions on the models appropriate for a future federal Myanmar after which they presented their views to the full plenary. Each group included a mix of representatives of ethnic armed groups, political parties and CSOs. This provided these actors, especially the political parties and the EAOs who had not participated in such an event together before, with a first of its-kind opportunity to work as a group. Women were represented in each group and participated very actively. In addition most of the presenters, including group work on the next two days of the event, chosen by each group to share its findings with the plenary were women.

The results of the deliberations of each group could be summarised as follows, with the caveat that this was simply a group exercise intended to stimulate group work and thinking on certain issues and was not intended to lead to the formulation of any official positions:

- I. **Language policy.** Myanmar/Burmese should remain the official language of the Union with English added as a second language at this level of government. State level government should protect and guarantee the languages spoken in each state, which should be made a constitutional provision. Special areas should be allowed to choose their official language.
- II. **Division of powers.** The federal (Union) level should be in charge of national defence, monetary policy, education, foreign policy and citizenship. The state level should be in charge of police, small and medium enterprises, protecting culture and traditions and should have taxation powers for economic activities within the states. Healthcare, immigration and education should be shared powers.
- III. **Fundamental rights of ethnic groups.** This working group divided the rights of ethnic groups in three sections: political, social and economic rights. Political rights, which are to be responsibility of the state level governments, include the right to vote, non-discrimination and equality, access to justice, cross-border issues (groups living on both sides of the border should have the freedom to cross freely for cultural activities). Social rights include literature and culture rights, protection of traditional languages, rights to traditional customs, freedom of religion, gender equality. Economic rights cover the exploration of natural resources, taxation of economic activity taking place on the territory of respective states.

Following the presentations of the results of the work of each group, the full plenary engaged in a discussion, including feedback from the international team of experts. It was clear from the discussion that participants believed that the rights of ethnic groups in Myanmar are not adequately protected by the current Union Constitution which is a key reason why a new federal arrangement is necessary.

Workshop Day III, November 25th, 2016

The morning of the third day of the workshop was dedicated to two presentations by Dr. Greg Marchildon, Former Deputy Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Former Cabinet Secretary and Deputy Minister to the Premier of the Province of Saskatchewan. He covered revenue generation and revenue sharing in Canada. The presentations introduced Canada's model of generating government revenues through taxation and other means at the federal and provincial level as well as Canada's fiscal equalization formula and other means of redistribution of government revenue between the federal and provincial levels.

The discussion session that followed the two presentations confirmed the participant high interest in the topics. Questions asked ranged from details on how provinces generate revenue from natural resources, how provinces contribute to and benefit from the federal budget to the ways the healthcare transfers and the equalization payment formula works. An important issue of interest to the participants were the options of the different levels of government generating sufficient levels of taxation revenues in a country where individual income levels are very low. It was clear that revenue generation and sharing are areas of very high interest and importance for the negotiations on Myanmar's federal model that would require continued and more in-depth study in the future given its many complexities.

Workshop Day IV, November 26th, 2016

The final session of the workshop took place on the morning of November 26th. It started with a group work session focused on revenue generation and revenue sharing. Once again the participants were divided in three working groups. The topics for group work were (1) What are the financial needs of state/regional governments?, (2) Taxation powers of different levels of government and (3) Revenue sharing. The results of the deliberations of each group could be summarised as follows:

- i. **Financial needs of state/regional governments:** each branch of power would need its share of funding. The executive needs resources for healthcare, education, local development, culture, infrastructure, environmental conservation, police, research and development, protection of women and children.
- ii. **Taxation powers of different levels of government:** international investments should contribute to federal and state/regional levels, natural resources should be taxed by federal and state/regional levels. Land taxes, municipal taxes, social insurance should be for state/regional governments. Hotel and tourism taxes should be collected by both federal and state/regional levels. This group had a challenge with determining to which level should individual and corporate taxes contribute.
- iii. **Revenue sharing.** This group pointed to the need for a clear constitutional division of powers between the federal and state/regional governments. An equalization formula will be necessary for Myanmar and there is a need for baseline data to be collected from all states and regions in order to establish such a formula.

The workshop was concluded by a wrap-up session where CDES, the Parliamentary Centre and the funder Dr. Art De Fehr offered concluding remarks. It is worth making a reference here to the concluding remarks by Colonel Khun Okker, Advisor to the EAOs for the political sector of peace negotiations and one of most senior and respected figures among the leaders of EAOs. He noted that a clear constitutional division of powers between the various levels of government, including taxation powers, should be the starting point of the building of a federal Myanmar. However, while the EAOs favour a decentralised federation with strong states/regions the military and the government are more inclined towards a federal model with a stronger central government. Reconciling the differences and concluding the peace process would be inevitably a long-term process that would take at least another 3-5 years.

Peace Forum, November 25th, 2016

The Peace Forum took part on the afternoon of November 25th. The event was structured in two panels: the first offered perspectives from the key sides participating in the peace process, while the second was focused on feedback based on international experiences. Both panels were moderated by Dr. Lian Sakhong, CDES Executive Director.

The first speaker of Panel I, Dr. Tin Myo Win, Chairman of Government Peace Council, Vice chairman of National Reconciliation and Peace Council (NRPC), and Government Chief Negotiator noted the Government's priorities of national reconciliation and amending the Constitution and that the Government is engaged in an ongoing dialogue with EAO who have not signed the National Ceasefire Agreement. He urged the non-signatories to sign in order to be able to join the next Union Peace Conference. The second speaker Lt. General Khin Zaw Oo (ret'd), General Secretary of Government Peace Commission and Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee, and former representative of the Myanmar Military in the National Ceasefire Negotiation focused on the perspectives of the Tatmadaw and what makes it a challenge for the latter to find a common ground with EAOs. He noted that it is impossible to leave out the National Ceasefire Agreement when talking of the peace process. He stressed the importance of negotiating with the non-signatory EAOs so they can join the NCA: "...to ride the train of peace they need to buy the ticket to enjoy the ride which is the NCA". Lt. General Khin Zaw Oo also pointed out that the Military and the Government have bridged the gap in their views on federalism. He noted that here is a need to analyse peace process experiences from other countries, notably Colombia, to extract lessons learned. The following speaker, Ms. May Sabe Phyu, Director of the Gender Equality Network provided a gender perspective on the peace process pointing to the need to review the peace process and include in the conditions and criteria in the National Ceasefire Agreement, the Constitution and other documents not only aspects on equality among ethnic groups but among men and women. While women's participation in the Union Peace Conference has increased from 7.5 percent to 12.5 percent in the last Union Conference it is still below the adopted target of 30%. The fourth speaker Col. Khun Okker, Adviser to NCA-S EAOs from political sector and patron of Pa-O National Liberation Organization (PNLO) focused on the peace process ultimate goal of establishing a federal state and that sustainable peace would not be guaranteed without such a model of governance. He noted that the EAOs signatories to the NCA have been working actively to convince the non-signatories to join so that the peace process and the elaboration of a federal Myanmar can proceed. Dr. Arthur DeFehr, President of the De Fehr Foundation was the last to speak under this panel. He shared four major comments: (1) there is no military solution to peace in Myanmar, (2) partial peace is not peace. Peace must be all inclusive, (3) there is no magic formula for peace or federalism. Myanmar needs a unique federal Union because Myanmar is unique. Citizenship is the key to every human being having an exercise of equality. (4) Peace is not free and it requires compromise in the negotiation process.

Under the second panel, Ivo Balinov from the Parliamentary Centre delivered introductory remarks on the Parliamentary Centre, its partnership with CDES and the approach to its work. This was followed by an introduction to the Joint Peace Fund delivered its Executive Director David Haeri. Mr. Juan Fernando Londoño delivered an abbreviated version of his presentation on the peace process in Colombia and lessons learned. Dr. Fernand de Varennes offered remarks on Canada's experience with linguistic rights and official languages at the federal and provincial levels and Dr. Greg Marchildon highlighted some key aspects of revenue generation and revenue sharing in a federal setting.

Each of the panels was followed by a 30 min question and answer session.

The Peace Forum received significant media attention. The event was covered by several TV channels (Mizzima, Myanmar TV, SkyNet, DVB) and featured in virtually all of Myanmar’s main newspapers, including Democracy Today, Mirror Daily and Daily Eleven among others.

Activity Evaluations

As planned, the participants in the Peace and Governance Workshop were given the opportunity to share their feedback through structured evaluation forms that were distributed at the end of the event. Overall, the participants gave the workshop a rating of 3.13 on a scale of 1-4. The summary of evaluation ratings is shown in the table below.

Indicators	Descriptive rating	Descriptive values
Time Management	3.3	G
Relevance of Topic	3.2	G
Mastery of the speakers	2.97	G
Group Discussion and Presentation	3.26	G
Curriculum is timely	2.94	G
Venue	2.97	G
Accommodation and Food	2.67	G
Tea and Lunch Break	2.63	G
Total	3.13	G

Descriptive values 1. Not good (N), 2. Fair (A), 3. Good (G) and 4. Very Good (VG)

What stands out is the particularly high rating that participants gave to group discussions and presentations. This confirms that the methodology chosen by the Parliamentary Centre and CDES to include in the program group working sessions giving the participants an opportunity to discuss and formulate their own views and positions on the models of governance adequate for Myanmar was adequate to the participants’ needs and they also appreciated the way their group work was facilitated by the workshop expert team. The relevance of the workshop topics also received a notably higher evaluation, along with time management at the event.

The respondents who opted to share more detailed feedback recognized that virtually all presentations were of interest. However, there was a visibly higher interest in the fiscal aspects of Canadian federalism including revenue generation and revenue sharing through fiscal transfers and other mechanisms. The usefulness of the experience from the peace process in Colombia was also noted by the respondents.

When asked how they would apply the knowledge gained from the workshop, the largest share (17 persons) of those who provided a response noted that they will share it with their respective mother organizations, societies, women’s groups, local MPs, the public and local organizations. A smaller share of workshop participants (3 persons) noted that they would share the knowledge with the participants in the national level political dialogue at the Union Peace Conference. Others (2 persons) also noted that they would apply the knowledge to support the peace process. Other respondents noted that they will apply the knowledge more widely in the struggle for democracy and federal union as well as in the drafting a new Constitution and state level constitutions.

At the end of the workshop, a working committee composed of one representative from each ethnic armed organization that took part in the workshop was formed in order to review the workshop and

discuss plans for future activities. The working committee was reported to have held a meeting on the 30th of November, 2016 at the Micasa Hotel, Yangon, Myanmar. It was noted that the workshop was a success and the participants were actively engaged and participating. A recommendation made by the Committee to CDES was to explore options of organising the same workshop to discuss the topics of revenues and resource sharing from the perspectives of the USA or other federal countries.

Emerging Results from the Activity

- The Peace and Governance Workshop and the Peace Forum had a combined audience of over 215 participants who were exposed to the updates on the progress of the peace process and its challenges, to experience and lessons learned from the peace process in Colombia and to several aspects of Canada's federal model of governance. This audience included leaders of the Myanmar Peace and National Reconciliation Centre, more than 60 leaders of Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs), leaders of ethnic political parties in Myanmar, of the National League for Democracy, and the Union Solidarity and Development Party, leaders of the Civil Society Forum and leaders of All Gender Inclusion in Peace Process (AGIPP), as well as more than 20 media groups;
- The Peace and Governance Workshop involved 61 ethnic leaders from 8 ethnic groups to get an enhanced understanding of the fundamental aspects of Canada's federal model of governance, including asymmetrical federalism, language rights, revenue sharing and revenue generation.
- The facilitated group exercises provided the participants in the Peace and Governance Workshop with an opportunity to discuss and formulate their own views and positions on key aspects of a federal governance model adequate for Myanmar;
- This Peace and Governance Workshop was the first instance where the participating leaders of ethnic armed organisations, ethnic political parties and civil society organisations were part of a joint activity of this kind: this helped them to develop a better understanding of each other's views and positions and engage in discussions on how the differences in their views can be reconciled;
- By being exposed to lessons learned from Colombia's peace process, including a detailed account of the costs of peace versus the costs of conflict, in the participants of the Workshop on Peace and Governance had an opportunity to develop an enhanced knowledge and skills to participate in the peace dialogue and subsequent stages of the peace process in their own country;
- The workshop allowed for CDES to engage the participants in a discussion of a draft EAOs position paper on Myanmar's model of federalism that was developed by the Political Sector Working Group of NCA-S EAOs.

Recommendations

Recommendations by workshop participants:

When asked to share their feedback on what could be improved, the most respondents (24 of which 8 women and 16 men) noted that the workshop was well implemented and they do not have anything to recommend. Another 14 participants shared various recommendations which are summarised below:

- The next EAOs Political Sector Workshop should be organized in Chaingmai, Thailand;
- While it was appreciated that this workshop had a higher share of women than previous ones, it was recommended to continue increasing the share of women participants in future events;
- It would be useful to include representatives of the government and the army in such workshops;

- The approach to getting together international experts and representatives of ethnic armed organisations should be maintained in future events;
- It would be useful to study in more detail the role of the military and the government in democratic transitions;
- It would be useful to study in more detail countries who have established a federal system through political dialogue;
- The 2008 Constitution of Myanmar and its role in the democratic transition process should be covered;
- The successes of the ongoing peace process in Myanmar should be identified and examined in detail;
- The participants should be accommodated at the same hotel where the event takes place.

Recommendations by the Parliamentary Centre:

- Taking into account the positive evaluation by workshop participants and its experience from other events worldwide, the Parliamentary Centre recommends that the practice of incorporating into future workshops group exercises is maintained. This provides participants with an opportunity to discuss and formulate their own views and positions increasing significantly the level of knowledge retention and the likelihood that the gained knowledge would be adapted to and applied in real life;
- Taking into account the recommendations made by some workshop participants, discussions among the workshop expert team, as well as interaction with other members of the development community, the Parliamentary Centre believes that it would be beneficial if future events bring together ethnic leaders with representatives of the government and the military. Workshops of this kind would be an opportunity to understand better each other's positions and seek mutually acceptable solutions in a less formal setting, prior to formal negotiations where flexibility often becomes more difficult.

Lessons Learned

- While the presentations were shared beforehand, the interpreter did have some challenges with the terminology, especially during the first few workshop sessions. In future events, it may help to make a specific request to the interpreter to study in advance in more detail the terminology of the presentations;
- While the participants were provided Myanmar language handouts of presentations, an even better solution would be to have bilingual Myanmar-English slides projected allowing for both the presenters and the presenter to follow them on the screen.