

The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Union Attorney General's Office
Press Release
13th Waning of Pyatho 1381 M.E

(22 January 2020)

Press Release on the Final Report of the Independent Commission of Enquiry

1. The Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICOE) was established by the Office of the President on 30 July 2018 to investigate the allegations of human rights violations in Rakhine during the internal armed conflict between Myanmar's Defence Services and the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) in 2016-2017.

2. The Independent Commission of Enquiry has investigated the allegations of human rights violations and related issues following the attacks. The Union Attorney General's Office has received, from the President, the comprehensive report submitted by
- the Independent Commission of Enquiry to the President with around 450 pages including 31 annexes.

3. The Commission has concluded, based on evidence it has collected, that members and collaborators of ARSA, members of the Myanmar's security forces and civilians committed crimes such as killing of civilians, disproportionate use of force, looting of property, and destruction of abandoned homes of Muslims in Maungdaw, Buthidaung and Rathedaung Townships during the internal conflict in Northern Rakhine, and that the Commission has found particularly serious loss of life in the villages of Min Gyi
- (Tula Toli), Chut Pyin and Maung Nu.

4. The Union Attorney General's Office will coordinate and cooperate with the relevant departments and organizations to ensure further criminal investigations and, where the evidence is compelling, prosecutions.

5. With regard to criminal conduct described in the report, the Union Attorney General's Office will be providing information on the progress of investigations and prosecutions.

Union Attorney General's Office

UEC, USIP co-organize workshop on prevention of hate speech, fake news, wrong information on social media

THE Union Election Commission jointly organized a workshop with the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) on the prevention of hate speech, fake news and misleading information.

Chairman of UEC U Hla Thein made an opening remark on the workshop, saying the important role of social media in modern communications, its advantages and challenges including hate speech, fake news and wrong information.

He remarked on the needs for prevention of these problems in the country where the social media users have amounted to 21 million in 2020, compared with 7 million in 2015.

The UEC Chairman also called for officials concerned with the General Election and the participants

at the workshop to prevent disputes coming out of hate speech and fake news, as well as the enforcement of code of ethics.

While the UEC is publishing its activities and directives on state-owned media and UEC website, the commission will also effectively use its Facebook page to spread information and voter education for 2020 General Election. The UEC is working together with the Ministry of Information, Myanmar Media Council and Facebook Team for prevention of hate speech, fake news and wrong information.

Mr Jason Tower from the USIP extended greeting at the workshop which will be held until 23 January.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



UEC Chairman U Hla Thein delivers the opening speech at the workshop on prevention of hate speech, fake news and misleading information in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

Rakhine IDPs receive 20,000 relief aid bags from India

INDIA government offered 20,000 relief aid bags, totally worth of US\$235,456, to the internally displaced persons in Rakhine State.

Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye attended the donation ceremony held at a jetty warehouse in Sittway, the capital city of Rakhine State, yesterday.

The Union Minister expressed thanks for the donations of India government which signed MoUs to provide the \$25 million worth assistance in five years, including construction of 250 houses in



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye presents appreciation certification to donor at the handing over ceremony of relief materials for IDPs in Rakhine State. PHOTO: MNA

Shwezar, Nantthartaung villages. He added that the 12

project agreements will be signed in this financial year.

Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu also expressed thanks for the donations.

Indian Ambassador to Myanmar then handed over the donation items and explained assistance of India in education, health and agriculture sectors of Myanmar. The government is also working with Singapore-based the Asian Philanthropy Circle (APC) and Mainly I Love Kids (MILK) to help Rakhine people learn skills and vocational education.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs receives Bangladeshi Ambassador

U SOE HAN, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received Mr Manjurul Karim Khan Chowdhury, Ambassador of Bangladesh to Myanmar, at 10:30 am on 21 January 2020 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, the Permanent Secretary and the Bangladeshi Ambassador discussed on matters pertaining to the holding of the Fifth Meeting of Myanmar-Bangladesh Joint Working Group (JWG) on the repatriation of displaced persons in Dhaka, Bangladesh. At the meeting, Permanent Secretary reiterated Myanmar's readiness to receive the verified displaced persons in accordance with the MoU between Myanmar and Bangladesh and apprised him of the government's efforts for creating conducive environment for the returnees in cooperation with the partner countries and ASEAN-ERAT team.—MNA

Make return of IDPs a success through cooperation

STEPS are being taken to shut down the Kyauktalongevi camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Kyaukpyu Township, in accordance with the tasks prescribed in the National Strategy for the closure of nationwide IDP camps and resettlement of IDPs.

The national strategy envisages that all displaced people at IDP camps return home safely and with dignity and rebuild their life without depending on others.

We do believe that the closure of the Kyauktalongevi camp would be successful if all responsible persons of the committees concerned at different levels are on board in implementing the steps for closing the camp.

As we move to close the camp, we can use the experience gained while closing down two other camps at Nidin in Kyauktaw Township and Taungpaw camp in Myebon Township.

The closure of the camps is aimed at enabling all to return to their own places and live peacefully. The main responsibility of those who established the camp, and organizations and entities that supported the camp, including the government, is to enable the people to return to their place of origin and live peacefully and move on.

It is important for everyone to keep in mind that ultimately, they will return to their places of origin and create a stable and development-oriented environment.

The IDPs in Rakhine have been suffering the consequences of conflicts which have also delayed their socio-economic development.

To establish rule of law and bring about socio-economic development in Rakhine State, the state's Stability and Development Committee has carried out tasks through its four working committees since its formation in 2016.

To make the closure of an IDP camp a success, cooperation is required between government departments and committees, local residents, UN agencies, civil society organizations, associate organizations, and residents of the IDP camp.

Security and peaceful coexistence are important issues in Rakhine State, especially when it comes to providing aid to people by building infrastructure in health and education, creating jobs, and allowing freedom of movement. Rule of law and stability are playing an important role in designing projects that would create jobs for displaced people.

All persons and organizations are requested to cooperate in the resettlement of IDPs in the state.

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Commemorating U Thant's 111th and Perez De Cuellar's 100th Birthday

By Dr. Myint Zan

22 JANUARY 2020 is (using historic present tense) the 111th birthday of U Thant, 3rd Secretary-General of the United Nations. U Thant was born in what was then in Pantanaw on 22 January 1909 and passed away in New York, United States on 25 November 1974.

The fifth Secretary-General of the United Nations Javier Perez de Cuellar of Peru was born in Lima, Peru on 19 January 1920 and celebrated his 100th birthday on 19 January 2020. Current (and 9th) Secretary-General of the United Nations Antonio Guterres (of Portugal) had sent messages of felicitations 'on behalf of all United Nations' on his distinguished and long-lived predecessor's 100th birthday.

In the complimentary sense of the words both U Thant and Perez De Cuellar were 'accidental Secretaries-General'.

U Thant was the permanent representative of Burma (as it was then formally called) to the United Nations when the second United Nations Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld tragically died in a plane crash in Ndola, what was then Northern Rhodesia on 17 September 1961.

Even before Dag Hammarskjöld passed away the then Soviet Union was proposing or 'touting' that instead of a single Secretary-General there should be three (or) 'troika' of Secretaries-General, so to speak, one from the West or Western bloc ('First World'), one from the East or Soviet bloc ('Second World') and one from the developing countries ('Third World').

In his posthumously published memoirs View from the UN(1978, Double Day publishing) U Thant recounted how he and the UN members overcame (so to speak) this Soviet proposal. In a secret vote on 3 November 1961 the United Nations General Assembly elected him 101 votes for none-against and with no abstention as the third (initially 'acting') Secretary-General of the United Nations. (For the past 30 years or so in United Nations practice after the UN Security Council recommended a candidate or a person as Secretary-General there were no longer formal taking of votes: the UN General Assembly approved the Security Council's recommendation by 'acclamation'.)

When his first term as UN

Secretary-General (UNSG) was about to end in 1966 U Thant initially stated that he would step down but later on he relented and served a second term. This writer clearly recalls seeing an article in Newsweek magazine with U Thant on the cover. Newsweek wrote that 'delegate after delegate took the rostrum [in the General Assembly of the United Nations] and pleaded the Secretary-General to reconsider[to accept a second term as UNSG]'.

Eleven months before his second term ended in December 1971 U Thant made an announcement on 23 January 1971 that 'un-



Perez de Cuellar UNSG

der no circumstances whatever' he would accept a third term as UNSG. Notwithstanding this announcement all the veto-wielding Permanent members of the UN Security Council requested U Thant to stay on for a third term which he categorically and repeatedly refused to serve.

U Thant wrote in his memoirs that less than a month before his second term ended when the United Nations could not find a successor and that 'he felt terribly sick'. When the United Nations Security Council finally agreed on his successor (Kurt Waldheim of Austria) U Thant in his farewell address to the UN General Assembly stated that he 'felt a sense of great relief bordering on liberation in laying down the burdens of office'.

The New York Times honored U Thant in an editorial in its 29 December 1971 issue entitled 'The Liberation of U Thant'. The last sentence of the editorial reads: 'The wise counsel of this dedicated man of peace will still be needed after his retirement'.

In stark contrast, the former Nazi Kurt Waldheim, the fourth UNSG who had lied about his Nazi

past unashamedly campaigned for a third term. Only the exercise of veto by the People's Republic of China for a total of sixteen times in the UN Security Council rejecting Waldheim's candidacy prevented Waldheim from serving a third term.

Javier Perez de Cuellar ('Perez') was also, in the complimentary sense of the words 'an accidental Secretary-General' when the UN Security Council elected Perez as Waldheim was finally forced to withdraw his candidacy.

The veteran statesman Perez did not seek and definitely did not campaign for the UNSG post. A

get what the first UNSG Trygve Lie has called 'the most impossible job on this Earth' (though definitely not an un-coveted one).

Like U Thant, Perez was requested to stay on for a third-term as UNSG including by then US President George H. W. Bush in 1991 and by other UN members but like U Thant he declined.

In the post UNSG career the paths of U Thant and Perez (they have met each other when U Thant was Secretary-General) diversified. Less than three years after he retired U Thant died of cancer in New York in November 1974 and in his native Burma (later Myanmar) ruling authorities for over 30 years 'ignored' or marginalized him, so to speak, until about 2011. In a speech given in the Burmese language at the United Nations General Assembly around 2013 then President U Thein Sein said 'we will always honor the memory of U Thant'.

Both U Thant and Perez of course have had their own critics. Some of these critiques were quite severe if not savage then mocking and definitely uncalled for and unjustified. A journalist one Rosemary Righter wrote that 'U Thant was invisible Perez would not make waves if he jumped from a boat'. Among many others is Righter aware that when U Thant's son died on 21 May 1962 U Thant was so dedicated to his job and so encumbered with (as he stated 9 years later) 'burdens of office' that he did not attend his own son's funeral?

The graciousness if not magnanimity of Perez can be seen in 1995 during the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the United Nations Then Perez's successor the sixth Secretary-General the late Boutros-Ghali decided not to invite both Kurt Waldheim and Perez, as former UNSGs to New York since Waldheim, as a former Nazi, was barred from entering the United States. Waldheim phoned from Austria to Perez in Peru to verify that Perez too was, like him, not invited. Perez wrote that he 'understood' Boutros-Ghali's decision.

Since 2001 the United Nations University in Tokyo has held the annual 'U Thant Distinguished Lecture'. The first 'U Thant Lecture' was given by a very different personality from that of U Thant at times irascible, if not arrogant then -and as of January 2020- cur-



U Thant (Photo : Wikimedia Commons)

rent Prime Minister of Malaysia Dr. Mahathir Mohamad. The writer's humble view is that the first U Thant Lecture should have been given by Javier Perez de Cuellar, U Thant's distinguished successor.

Perez de Cuellar was at the helm of the United Nations when quite a few other international events of note and significance occurred. There was the Argentine 'invasion' of Malvinas/Falkland Islands and its recapture by the British naval and marine forces (April to June 1982) which Perez unsuccessfully- though no fault of his own- tried to solve amicably.

Indeed as the winds (or is it drones or missiles?) of war seem to be 'blowing' between the United States 'under Trump' and Iran 'under the Ayatollahs' one is reminded of what then United Nations Secretary-General Perez De Cuellar said when he stated that the 1991 Gulf War (Gulf War I) ('triggered by the late Saddam Hussein's invasion of Iraq and the UN Security Council Resolution 678/1990 authorizing the use of 'all necessary means'- read military force- to evict Iraq from Kuwait) was 'not a United Nations war'.

Contrast this candid statement with-dare I say it-the overrated, in some circles- the late Kofi Annan's equivocation when asked point-blank by a BBC interviewer around 2004 as to whether the 2003 'Gulf War II' was illegal or unlawful. The interviewer had to ask the seventh UN Secretary-General at least twice before Annan replied almost reluctantly, 'shyly' that 'it was unlawful according to the United Nations Charter'.

Compared this equivocation of Annan with that Secretary-General U Thant's fairly consistent al-

beit polite critiques of the United States' role in the Vietnam war since the mid-1960s leading Readers Digest to call him (in the negative sense of the words) 'a Burmese Marxist'. At the same time in his home country 'other' Burmese Marxists had fairly strongly criticized U Thant for siding with the Americans during the Vietnam war!

Dag Hammarskjöld (posthumously) in 1961 and Kofi Annan forty years later in 2001 were the only UN Secretaries-General who had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. (On behalf of the United Nations Emergency Forces then Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar accepted the Nobel Peace Prize in 1988).

The young (16 year old) Swedish activist Greta Thunberg will certainly be (re)nominated for the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize. U Thant was nominated for the Nobel peace prize a few times (the Nobel peace prize archives did state the nominees list up to around the year 1967) but he never received the Nobel prize. It is extremely unlikely that the 100 year old Javier Perez de Cuellar would even be nominated by any person or organization for the Nobel peace prize for 2020 though - in this writer's opinion, like U Thant they were -and are- deserving candidates.

It is an honour to give my respectful appreciation and tribute in commemoration of the late U Thant's 111th birthday and Perez de Cuellar's 100th birthday. (Dr. Myint Zan is Professor (retired) Multimedia University Malacca, Malaysia)

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2020, 73rd Anniversary Union Day National Objectives

1. All ethnic nationals to preserve and protect for non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of National Unity and Perpetuation of Sovereignty.
2. To work on the peace process till success is achieved based on Union spirit.
3. To strive with the collective strength of all ethnic nationals for rule of law, a fair justice system and the security and safety of all citizens.
4. To prevent/protect all people from the danger of narcotic drugs as a national duty and thereby uplift their standard of living.
5. Emergence of a Constitution which will be in alignment with a genuine Democratic Federal Union.

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Tuesday 21st January, 2020)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and generally fair elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 22nd January, 2020: Rain will be isolated in Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions, Shan, Chin, Kayin and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4-6) feet in off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in Upper Sagaing Region, Kachin, Shan and Chin States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22nd January, 2020: Fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22nd January, 2020: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22nd January, 2020: Generally fair weather.

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