

RESEARCHERS AT SINGAPORE'S *INSTITUTE OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES* SHARE THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF CURRENT EVENTS

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## **Ethnic Insurgencies and Peacemaking in Myanmar**

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### SUMMARY

The reformist government in Myanmar is in the process of trying to consolidate ceasefires with contentious ethnic groups and to move towards political dialogue. This is part of a long history of inter-ethnic strife in the country. Alleged Bamar dominance, the interpretation of “autonomy” and “rights and privileges”, and the right to secede (after ten years) guaranteed by the 1947 Constitution have been behind much of the armed rebellion carried out by major ethnic groups during the first decade of independence.

After many failed attempts by successive Myanmar governments to achieve peace with these groups, the first round of widespread ceasefires was finally achieved in the early 1990s due to military government’s initiatives. It was premised on three points: the right to remain armed; the right to administer each group’s own demarcated territory; and the right to conduct cross-border commercial activities.

After the elections in November 2010, however, the earlier ceasefire agreements lapsed. The elected Union Government of President U Thein Sein subsequently announced a peace offer on 18 August 2011. Though initially skeptical, 13 of these armed groups eventually entered into ceasefire talks at both provincial and Union level. All agreed to cease hostilities after discussions with government representatives and have engaged in further negotiations towards political dialogue. Nevertheless, the government faces the vexing issue of continued violent resistance from the Kachin Independence Organization.

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## INTRODUCTION

State-building in Myanmar is a contentious exercise with many ethnic ‘nations’ challenging the unitary concept of the ruling elites who are mainly from the majority Bamar ethnic group and resorting to armed struggle.<sup>1</sup> The Communists also did not accept the nascent government’s legitimacy and sought ‘regime change’ through force of arms. Consequently, the army was wracked by mutinies and civil war erupted soon after independence and the government had to fight a multi-front war against a multitude of ideological and ethnic insurgencies some of which are still continuing.<sup>2</sup>

Through all this, the incessant fighting in support of the government and its legendary role in the resistance movement against British rulers and later Japanese occupiers in World War II elevated the Myanmar Defence Services (MDS)—known as the Tatmadaw (Royal Force)—not only into an indispensable adjunct to state power but also into a fount of power itself. As such, the military’s perspective has had a domineering influence in shaping Myanmar’s security outlook since independence

Myanmar is a multi-cultural, multi-racial and multi-religious society. Officially, there are 135 sub-national (ethnic) groups under eight major ethnic communities. Population estimates (the last census was in 1983) indicate that the majority Bamar (formerly called Burman) ethnic group constitutes over 60 per cent while seven major ethnic groups and non-native (mainly of Chinese and Indian origin) communities making up the rest of the population (see Table 1 below).

**Table 1 – Officially Designated Ethnic Groups in Myanmar**

Major Group		Percentage Share of Population		
		1983 (Census)	2000 (est)	2003 (est)
Kachin	12 sub-nationalities	1.4	1.4	1.5
Kayah	9 sub-nationalities	0.4	0.4	0.5
Kayin	11 sub-nationalities	6.2	6.2	6.4
Chin	53 sub-nationalities	2.2	2.0	2.1
Bamar	9 sub-nationalities	69.0	66.9	67.9
Mon		2.4	2.6	2.7
Rakhine	7 sub-nationalities	4.5	4.2	4.2
Shan	33 sub-nationalities	8.5	10.5	9.4
Others	unspecified & foreign races	5.4	5.7	5.4

Sources: *Government of Burma, Burma 1983 Population Census (Rangoon. Immigration and Manpower Department, 1986)*; *Lokethar Pyithu Neizin (daily), 26 September 1990*; *Hla Min, Political Situation of Myanmar and Its Role In the Region (Yangon: Office of Strategic Studies, Ministry of Defence, 2001)*, and *Hla Min, id. (2004)*.

After Britain subjugated the whole country in 1885, the separation of “Burma proper” from the frontier areas (designated as “Scheduled Areas” populated by non-Bamar races) in the administration of the colonial state had far-reaching implications for the subsequent creation of an independent Myanmar state. Tantamount to instituting a political and socio-cultural divide, it became the bone of contention for Myanmar (majority being Bamar) nationalists who accused the British of pursuing a “divide-and-rule” policy.<sup>3</sup> To these advocates of a unitary state, it seems to have denied the opportunity for the indigenous nationalities of Myanmar to develop a sense of belonging and bonding that could culminate in an “imagined community” of sorts that could forge a modern nation-state out of disparate ethnic “nations”.<sup>4</sup>

This was despite the apparent unity exemplified by the legendary Panlong Agreement signed in February 1947, in which Chin, Kachin and Shan representatives agreed to join the Bamar nationalists’ quest (led by General Aung San; Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s father) to secure independence as a united nation in exchange for “autonomy” in “internal administration”. In fact, the goodwill engendered by the “Panlong spirit” gradually dissipated after U Aung San’s assassination in July 1947. That traumatic event removed a revered leader who was perceived as the most trustworthy guarantor of minority rights at a time when the ethnic issue was becoming more and more politicized and divisive. The solidarity among the national races achieved on the eve of independence was mainly attributed to the stature and charisma of U Aung San, and did not last for very long after his passing. Since then, the non-Bamar ethnic groups’ perception of the majority Bamar’s dominance has been a contentious issue, with far-reaching implications for state-building premised upon national unity.

## ETHNIC GROUPS CHALLENGE THE STATE

The seeds of rebellion among ethnic groups were thus sown under colonial rule and World War II, with the latter availing them the opportunity for stockpiling weapons and mastering the art of armed conflict. Traditionally, the British recruited the “martial races” identified as Chins, Kachins and Kayins (Karens) into military service while very few Bamars were in uniform.

World War II brought ethnic tensions between Bamars and indigenous minorities into the open as some of them who were loyal to the British crown found themselves at odds with the Bamar nationalist allies of the Japanese who invaded Myanmar in January 1942. Heavy-handed behaviour by inexperienced nationalist commanders added insult to injury and fostered resentment among communities such as the Kayins of lower Myanmar<sup>5</sup>. Such experiences under Japanese occupation “revived and intensified” the minorities’ “ancient antagonisms” against Bamars for their perceived hegemony. Moreover, such antipathy was also “encouraged by the Allies” as part of the war effort.<sup>6</sup> The anti-fascist resistance movement that followed (in March 1945) also had differential impacts on different ethnic communities, which affected ethnic perceptions of majority-minority relations.<sup>7</sup> Substantial numbers of ethnic irregulars were recruited by the retreating British and these Chin, Kachin, and Kayin continued

their clandestine resistance in border regions and in their communal base areas. Apparently, “the British [G]overnment, or at least some of its representatives, were prepared to use [them] . . . even to the point of deliberately misleading them as to their rewards after the fighting was over.”<sup>8</sup> As such, a sense of betrayal by the British authorities in allowing the post-war decolonization process to be controlled by the Bamar-dominated AFPFL was engendered amongst these “loyal” subjects of the crown – especially the Kayins – thereby aggravating the national unity problem of independent Myanmar.<sup>9</sup>

The most contentious issues among the ethnic groups, all of which had armed irregulars, were the alleged Bamar dominance over ethnic communities, the interpretation of “autonomy” and “rights and privileges” guaranteed by the Panlong Agreement and the right to secede (after ten years) guaranteed by the 1947 Constitution. As such, separatist tendencies toward an independent ‘ethnic nation’ with its distinctive ‘identity’ led to armed rebellion by all major ethnic groups during the first decade of independence, as non-state armed groups (NSAG) proliferated throughout the Myanmar countryside.<sup>10</sup>

The Kayin insurgency in January 1949 by the armed wing of the Karen National Union (KNU) then known as Karen National Defence Organization (KNDO; now Karen National Liberation Army or KNLA) was the first of dozens of uprising by ethnic NSAGs.

The Mons first joined the KNDO cause and then morphed into its own revolt and became more organized with the formation of the New Mons State Party (NMSP) in 1962. The Karenni or Kayah rose up against the government in April 1957 and the Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) was later formed to lead its independence movement. Later, a pro-communist faction split to form the Karenni National People’s Liberation Front (KNPLF) in 1980. The Shan independence struggle began with the armed uprising by the *Noom Suk Harn* (Brave Young Warriors) that later evolved, in 1964, into the Shan State Army (SSA) led by the Shan State Progressive Party (SSPP). The Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) was formed in February 1961 with the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) as its military wing. The Rakhine (Arakan) “liberation” movement was formed in 1968 while the Chin insurgency came late in 1988. By the late 1980s, virtually all the ethnic insurgencies had shifted their primary objective from secession and independence to ‘self-determination’ and greater ‘autonomy’.

## CEASEFIRES UNDER MILITARY RULE

The first round of ceasefires resulted from the initiative of the Directorate of Defence Service Intelligence (DDSI; military intelligence) led by its deposed chief General Khin Nyunt not long after the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) took over state power on 18 September 1988. Exploiting the split in the Burma Communist Party (BCP) in which its ethnic units (Wa and Kokang) rebelled against their Bamar leaders, the DDSI managed to secure ceasefires with three main former communist factions in the first half of 1989. The winning formula seemed to be premised on three points: the right to remain armed; the right to administer their own demarcated territory; and to conduct cross-border commercial activities.<sup>11</sup> Later,

these ceasefire groups (CFG) were allowed to participate in the National Convention that was organized to formulate the fundamental principles of the new “democratic” Constitution. The understanding was that political issues would only be discussed with the new government that would be instituted under that Constitution. Altogether 17 NSAGs entered into ceasefire arrangements with the ruling military junta represented by the DDSI. All except for the one with the KIO were verbal agreements. Between 31 March 1989 and 6 April 1997, seventeen ethnic armed groups were officially recognized by the military junta as CFGs with total troop strength of 66,560 bearing 53,447 assorted weapons.<sup>12</sup>

## DISSENT AND DEFIANCE

With the advent of the 2008 Constitution that instituted a multi-party electoral system with provisions for autonomy and a continuing role in political governance for the military, the status quo of quasi-autonomous CFGs became untenable. The constitutional provision (article 338) that was meant to anoint the MDS as the sole armed organization created a security dilemma for the junta with respect to the CFGs' armed wings.

In accordance with the Constitutional rule forbidding armed forces independent of the MDS, the junta in early 2009 insisted that the CFGs be put under MDS control either as a border guard force (BGF) with reduced strength and capability or a local militia (lower status and smaller units than the BGF). The BGF structure reportedly envisaged smaller lightly armed infantry battalions as opposed to previous formations in which larger CFGs (Wa, Shan, and Kachin) deployed huge forces comprising even brigades armed with heavy weapons. A BGF battalion would be formed as follows:<sup>13</sup>

18 officers & 308 other ranks:

- Commanding officer and deputy from CFG (major)
- 30 officers and non-commissioned officers or NCOs are from MDS (3 out of 18 officers and 27 out of 110 NCOs)
- 1 major (out of 3), deputy commander in charge of administration from MDS
- Adjutant and Quartermaster (2 out of 5 captains) from MDS
- Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) from MDS
- WOII (warrant officer grade II) as Head Quarters Superintendent (out of 5) from MDS
- Quartermaster WO II from MDS
- 8 Sergeant Clerks (all) from MDS
- 6 Sgts (out of 16) from MDS
- 9 Corporals (out of 44) from MDS
- Medic (lance corporal?) from MDS

The larger CFGs had repeatedly expressed their preference to keep their forces intact and negotiate terms and conditions for demobilization with the new elected government after the 2010 elections. Some of the CFG representatives who had taken part in the National Convention tasked with formulating detailed basic principles of the new Constitution were also dissatisfied and became disillusioned mainly because their attempts to table and adopt a 'genuine federal' configuration were dismissed by the authorities supervising the drafting process. On the other hand, the junta (which restructured itself as the State Peace and Development Council or SPDC in November 1997) refused to negotiate with the CFGs regarding the BGF scheme. Consequently, the KIA, USWA, MNDAA (Myanmar National Democratic Alliance; the Kokang group) and NDAA (National Democratic Alliance Army; the Mong La group) all rejected the scheme. Tensions rose between major CFGs and the military on account of their intransigence and were exacerbated when the MDS subdued the defiant Kokang group in August 2009 by supporting an internal revolt following violent clashes with the MDS. The pro-junta leaders who came to power then decided to join the BGF scheme.<sup>14</sup> The New Mon State Party (NMSP) also declined the military's offer to transform its military wing into a smaller BGF.<sup>15</sup> Even the DKBA (Democratic Kayin Buddhist Army (a breakaway Buddhist faction of the Christian-dominated KNLA), seen as the military's staunch ally against the KNU, was at times sending mixed signals, at other times indicating that it would maintain the *status quo* instead of conforming to the military's BGF scheme.<sup>16</sup>

Up to five deadlines beginning with October 2009 passed and the impasse continued after the 2010 elections and the coming into force of the Constitution in January 2011.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, five CFGs (KIO, NMSP, SSA-North, KNPP, CNF) who had rejected the BGF scheme together with the KNU and five smaller NSAG (representing the Lahu, Arakan, Pa-O, Palaung and a splinter Wa group) formed the 11-member coalition named the United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC) in February 2011 to collectively work for a federal solution to the problem of ethnic conflict. However, the government did not recognize it as a representative organization for its members.

## MAKING PEACE

After the elections in November 2010, the military indicated that the ceasefire agreements made earlier had lapsed, but still did not move against the armed ethnic groups who refused to comply with the BGF scheme.<sup>18</sup> After assuming power in March 2011, the elected Union Government of President U Thein Sein announced, on 18 August 2011, an offer to all armed ethnic groups to enter into peace talks based on a two-step process.<sup>19</sup> Though initially skeptical toward the government's peace overture, altogether 13 NSAGs eventually entered into ceasefire talks at both provincial and Union levels (see Table 2 below). All of them apparently had agreed to cease hostilities after discussions with government representatives at the regional or Union level and have been engaged in various stages of further negotiations towards political dialogue.

Meanwhile, to further institutionalize the peace process, the President formed the 11-member “Union Peace-making Central Committee” on 3 May 2012. This was chaired by him and comprising the two vice-presidents, speakers of parliament, C-in-C of MDS and security related ministers as well as the attorney-general. This high-level body then delegated the implementation task to the 52-member Union Peace-making Work Committee (UPWC) chaired by Dr. Sai Mauk Kham (the civilian Vice-President) with the Deputy C-in-C, eight ministers, 10 chief ministers of provinces (State and Region), 10 regional military commanders, a deputy minister (Border Affairs), deputy attorney-general, one representative of parliament, 18 ethnic representatives of parliament (9 each from Lower and Upper House), and the Cabinet’s director-general as members.<sup>20</sup> Thereon, UPWC Vice-Chair Minister U Aung Min (one of the three vice-chairs and Railways Minister who later became the President’s Office Minister), who with the assistance of NGO interlocutors from Myanmar EGRESS had been previously reaching out to ethnic armed groups as well as Myanmar exile groups on behalf of the government, became the *de facto* chief negotiator.<sup>21</sup>

Confidence-building measures with the armed ethnic groups were stepped up under the government’s new peace initiative and as a result even the non-CFGs Karen National Union (KNU) and Restoration Council for the Shan States (RCSS) entered into ceasefire negotiations with the central and provincial governments.

**Table 2 – Armed ethnic groups that accepted the Government’s ceasefire offer**

No.	Ethnic Group (year founded/est. troop strength)	Initial agreement date
1	United Wa State Party/Army (UWSPA) (1989/20-30,000)	6 September 2011
2	National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA), Mongla (1989/3000)	7 September 2011
3	Democratic Karen Benevolent Army-Kalo Htoo Baw (2010/1,500)	3 November 2011
4	Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS)/Shan State Army South (SSA-S) (1996/5-6,000)	2 December 2011
5	Chin National Front (CNF) (1988/200)	6 January 2012
6	Karen National Union (KNU)/KNLA (1947/4-5,000)	12 January 2012

7	Shan State Progressive Party (SSPP)/Shan State Army North (SSA-N) (1964/3-4,000)	28 January 2012
8	New Mon State Party (NMSP)/MNLA (1958/800+2,000)	February 2012
9	KNU/KNLA Peace Council (KPC) (2007/200)	1 February 2012
10	Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP)/Karenni Army (1957/600)	7 March 2012
11	Arakan Liberation Party (ALP)/ALA (1968/60-100)	5 April 2012
12	National Socialist Council of Nagaland - Khaplang) NSCN-K (1980/4-500)	9 April 2012
13	Pa-O National Liberation Organization (PNLO)/PNLA (1949/200)	25 August 2012

Source: *Deciphering Myanmar's Peace Process: A Reference Guide 2013*, Chiang Mai, Burma News International, January 2013.

Despite tangible progress in ceasefire agreements and an enhanced level of trust and confidence between the central government and most of the armed ethnic groups, the latter are still highly suspicious of the MDS' motives as the fighting continues in the Shan and Kachin states where the KIO and even the RCSS (under ceasefire arrangement) troops claimed to have been attacked by the military repeatedly over the last few months. Much of the dispute and discord has to do with lack of political dialogue and military encroachment into CFG territory. The government's sequencing of "ceasefire first" has been unacceptable to the KIO/KIA which had been fighting since June 2011.<sup>22</sup>

The President's instruction to the MDS in December 2011<sup>23</sup> to take only defensive action towards KIA<sup>24</sup> and eleven preliminary meetings at both State (provincial) and Union levels did not yield any ceasefire agreement. Instead, towards the end of December 2012, the fighting escalated with the KIA attacking outposts and convoys as well as destroying public infrastructure like bridges, power lines, rails and equipment, while the military responded with heavy artillery and air strikes to capture KIA positions deemed essential to safeguard vital lines of communications.<sup>25</sup>

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

U Aung Min explained the impasse with the holdouts as follows:

“issues of national races armed groups and national races date back to the independence of the country. It is required [sic] bilateral efforts to clear the cloud of doubts between the two sides to uncover the truth. It is simply not easy to solve the six-decade old problems at one sitting overnight ... armed engagements in Shan State were because there has not been designated places for armies of the two sides ... Such problems would vanish after step by step implementation of peace-making policies adopted by the President.”<sup>26</sup>

While the UPWC has been relentlessly engaging with the new CFGs and other NSAGs to consolidate the ceasefires and move towards political dialogue, the continued violent resistance of the KIO/KIA is a vexing issue for the reformist government of President U Thein Sein. The government has also been accused of a dual-track policy of talking while fighting and some even questioned the President’s ability to control the military and enforce his instructions. In the international media front, the MDS has been vilified and subjected to condemnations by ethnic activists and human rights organizations, some of whom are lobbying for a unilateral ceasefire. The military’s top leaders need to handle these predicaments with finesse and patience and perhaps embrace a new security mindset to enable the MDS to become part of the solution in the peace process rather a problem as portrayed by its detractors.

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## Endnotes

- 1 See, e.g., Tin Maung Maung Than, 'Dreams and Nightmares: State Building and Ethnic Conflict in Myanmar (Burma), in Kusuma Snitwongse and W. Scott Thompson (eds.), *Ethnic Conflict in Southeast Asia*, (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies), pp. 65-108.
- 2 See, e.g., chapter 5, in Mary P. Callahan, *Making Enemies; War and State Building in Burma* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003). In fact, the country's capital was under siege and almost fell to Kayin ethnic insurgent army in early 1949. That bitter experience left an indelible mark in the psyche of the military leaders and state managers of the day.
- 3 Historically, the Kayin, Kachin, Chin, and the Kayah as well as the more developed Shan were never integrated into the Bamar kingdom. The monarchs based in central Myanmar opted for suzerainty rather than direct rule. Thus, the British probably found such an arrangement extremely convenient in terms of conserving administrative and military resources and continued the practice with some modifications (see Robert H. Taylor, "Perceptions of Ethnicity in the Politics of Burma". *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science* 10, no. 6 [1982]: 13-14).
- 4 See, e.g, Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised edition (London: Verso, 1993).
- 5 John F. Cady, *A History of Modern Burma* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1965), pp. 443-4.
- 6 Andrew Selth, "Race and Resistance in Burma, 1942-1945." *Modern Asian Studies* 20, no. 3 (1986), p. 495. Cf. Taylor's argument that "the idea of ethnic conflict as conceived in Western ascriptive terms" influenced both the Bamar nationalist elites and ethnic leaders and that the imposition of a modern nation-state system created an alien context for ethnic relations (Taylor op. cit., p. 10).
- 7 See *ibid.*, p. 14; and Selth, op. cit., 505.
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 502.
- 9 David Brown, *The State and Ethnic Politics in Southeast Asia* (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 59-63.
- 10 For a comprehensive account, see Martin Smith, *Burma: Insurgency and the Politics of Ethnicity* (London: Zed Books, 1991).
- 11 Among them, the Wa CFG led by the leaders of the United Wa State Army (UWSA, 15,000 to 25,000 strong and reputedly armed with heavy mortars, artillery and modern anti-air weapons) was given wide latitude to run its area with almost no intervention by the central government. Even the MDS had reportedly refrained from entering Wa territory without prior arrangement. The three CFGs in the Shan State, whose territories are adjacent to the Yunnan province of China, had extensive socio-economic and quasi-political links with China, set their own judicial and administrative rules and were believed to have engaged in illegal border trade, including drug production and trafficking. See, e.g., International Crisis Group (ICG), "China's Myanmar

- Dilemma”, Asia Report No. 177, Brussels, 14 September 2009; and Mary Callahan, *Political Authority in Burma's Ethnic Minority States: Devolution, Occupation, and Coexistence*, East-West Center Policy Studies 31 (Washington D.C.: East-West Center, 2007).
- 12 See, e.g., Yan Nyein Aye, *Endeavours of the Myanmar Armed Forces Government for National Consolidation* (Yangon: U Aung Zaw, 2000). Among the 17 CFGs, the four popularly known as the Wa, Mong La, Kokang (all in the Shan State) and New Democratic Army (NDA in Kachin State) were formerly ideological insurgent groups under the BCP but assumed localized ethnic identities as CFGs after renouncing their BCP links..
  - 13 See, e.g., Burma News International, “Myanmar Peace Monitor” online at <http://www.mmpeacemonitor.org/#!border-guard-force-scheme/c47m>.
  - 14 Twenty-three BGF units were eventually formed with troops from five ethnic NSAGs (NDAK, KNPLF, MNDAA, Lahu and Makman militia) and the DKBA.
  - 15 See, e.g., “The Kachin’s Dilemma-Become a Border Guard Force or Return to Warfare”, EBO Analysis Paper No.2/2010, Brussels, Euro-Burma Office, 2010; Lawi Weng, Mon reject militia plan”, *Irrawaddy.*, 23 April 2010, in BurmaNet News, 23 April 2010; and Brian McCartan, “Myanmar ceasefires on a tripwire”, *Asia Times*, 30 April 2010, in BurmaNet News, 30 April 2010.
  - 16 See, e.g., Lawi Weng, “DKBA, KNU held secret peace talks”, *Irrawaddy*, 2 July 2010, in BurmaNet News, 2 July 2010; and Saw Thein Myint, “DKBA Brigade 5 refuses to toe junta’s BGF line”, Kachin Information Center, 23 July 2010, in BurmaNet News, 23 July 2010.
  - 17 McCartan, op. cit. See, e.g., Hseng Khio Fah, “Junta sets no new deadline for BGF program at latest meeting”, S.H.A.N., 24 June 2010, at [www.shanland.org/index](http://www.shanland.org/index); “The Kokang Clashes-What Next?”, EBO Analysis Paper No. 1/2009, Brussels, Euro-Burma Office, September 2009; and “No kowtowing by dissident ceasefire armies”, S.H.A.N./, 28 December 2009, at [www.shanland.org](http://www.shanland.org).
  - 18 For details of the BGF scheme and related developments, see Tin Maung Maung Than, “Myanmar’s Security Outlook and the Myanmar’s Defence Services”, in *Security Outlook of the Asia Pacific Countries and Its Implications for the Defense Sector*, NIDS Joint Research Series No.7 (Tokyo: NIDS, 2012), pp. 96-97.
  - 19 See *ibid.*, pp. 97-99; and Union Government Announcement No. 1/2011, in *NLM*, 19 August 2011.
  - 20 See, Euro-Burma Office “Political Monitor No. 14 (5-18 May 2012), annex. A and B.
  - 21 Personal communications and observations, Yangon and Naypyitaw.
  - 22 See, e.g., TNI-BCN Conference Report “Prospects for Ethnic Peace and Political Participation in Burma/Myanmar” (Bangkok, July 8-9 2012), The Transnational Institute and Burma Centrum Nederland; Nany Mya Nadi, “Residents flee as fighting intensifies in northern Shan State”, *Domestic Voice of Burma*, 4 September 2012, in BurmaNet News 1-4 September 2012; and Hinthani Ni, “KNU asks gov’t to move military bases”, *Mizzima News*, 7 September 2012, in BurmaNet News, 7 September 2012..

- 23 See the “Statement by the National Human Rights Commission”, 13 December 2011, in *NLM*, 14 December 2011.
- 24 *ibid.*
- 25 See Government Information Team, Press Release (1/2013), 4 January 2013, *NLM* 5 January 2013. This had led to international concerns with the West and U.N. Secretary General urging the military to desist. See, e.g., Kocho Olarn and Jethro Mullen, “Myanmar airstrikes on Kachin rebels raise global concern”, CNN, 3 January 2013, in *BurmaNet News*, 3 January 2013.
- 26 See, U Aung Min’s report to the Pyithu Hluttaw on 20 August 2012, in *NLM*, 21 August 2012.