

## 論 文 要 旨

氏 名           <sup>ケオオウフン アーニャ</sup>  
KEOSAVANG ANNIA          

論文題目 (外国語の場合は、和訳を併記すること。)

**Instrumental Role of United Nationalities Federal Council as an  
All-Inclusive Platform for the Ethnic Groups in Burma.**

ビルマの少数民族のための共通プラットフォームとしての The United  
Nationalities of Federal Council (UNFC) の役割について

論文要旨 (別様に記載すること。)

- (注) 1. 論文要旨は、A4版とする。  
2. 和文の場合は、4000字から8000字程度、外国語の場合は、2000語から4000語程度とする。  
3. 「論文要旨」は、CD等の電子媒体(1枚)を併せて提出すること。  
(氏名及びソフト名を記入したラベルを張付すること。)

## **Executive Summary**

### **Instrumental Role of United Nationalities Federal Council as an All-Inclusive**

#### **Platform for the Ethnic Minorities in Burma**

#### **Introduction**

The Union of Burma was founded at Panglong, on February 12, 1947, by four former British colonies, namely the Chin, Kachin, Federated Shan States and Burma proper, all of which had their own constitutions. And since independence, the twelfth of February has been celebrated as Union Day in Burma. The observation of Union Day as an official holiday in Burma implies the recognition of the distinctive national identities of those who signed the Panglong Agreement and ratified the treaty through the constitutional arrangement of 1947. It also implicitly recognizes their political rights; that is to say, – establish their independence and their own nation-state. The essence of the Panglong Agreement was, and is, mutual recognition and respect, based on the principles of political equality, self-determination and voluntary association (Williams & Sakhong, 2005).

However, General Aung San, (who, by force of his personality, provided trust that wove the union together (Steinberg, 2010), negotiated with the British and encouraged the minorities to keep within what later became the Union of Burma), was assassinated before Burma obtained her independence on January 4, 1948. After General Aung San's assassination, the 1947 Constitution was rushed through to completion without reflecting on the true spirit of Panglong – failing to fulfill the core essence of the agreement (Williams & Sakhong, 2005). As a result, the country was submerged into five decades of civil war. As a number of scholars concede, *“the political crisis in Burma is not merely attributable to the military's denouncement of the concept of democracy and federalism, but there is a constitutional problem as well.”* In addition to the above mentioned factors, the author attributes the political crisis also to the lack of political empowerment among the ethnic minorities; in other words, there is a lack of a common platform which could serve as an instrumental political forum leading to genuine dialogue, cooperation, and empowerment amongst the ethnic minorities, who for many decades have struggled for ethnic rights, self-determination, federalism, political autonomy and democracy.

Since its independence in 1948 Burma has been struggling to establish a modern democratic political system, and to unite the people under its rule, and so far, it has

failed on both accounts. However, following the release of Aung San Suu Kyi (a pro-democracy leader and the Nobel Prize Winner) from a 15-year house arrest on November 13, 2011, unprecedented political reform has taken place, albeit gradually. Thein Sein, the current president of Burma, and Aung San Suu Kyi, the heroic opposition leader, are the two key political figures actively engaged in constructing a platform for future reconciliation and a path for political reforms. However, anyone familiar with the politics of Burma is well aware of the triangular relationships in politics.

There are three major political forces:

- 1) the former Military government (now replaced by Thein Sein's government);
- 2) prodemocracy groups represented by National League for Democracy (NLD) and
- 3) ethnic minority groups now represented by the United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC)<sup>1</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup>Kyaw Yin Hlaing, *Problems with the Process of Reconciliation, Myanmar/Burma: Inside Challenges, Outside Interests*. (Brookings Institution Press, Washington, D.C., 2010)

Thus, it is dangerous to ignore the significant role of these tripartite political forces play on the overall reforms. That is to say, many of the failed ceasefires are as a result of the exclusion of ethnic minority groups from the decision making and political process in formulating policies and outlining talks for future reconciliation and nation building process.

Although the leadership of both President Thein Sein and Aung San Suu Kyi is seen as the backbone of these political reforms, one cannot overlook the significant role of ethnic-based insurgencies in the process of nation-building and future reconciliation.

Thus, a certain kind of tripartite dialogue has to take place in order to reconcile their political differences, and making compromises that will lead to mutually acceptable solutions instead of merely focusing on becoming the only winner in the game of politics<sup>2</sup>. And lastly, the engagement of the military junta in the process of nation-building and future reconciliation should be made transparent so as to ensure a genuine democratic and inclusive political system in Burma.

The study aims in comprehending the instrumental roles of United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC) as an all-inclusive platform for the ethnic minorities in the process for future reconciliation. This will serve as a precursor to rebuilding trust amongst and

---

<sup>2</sup>Ibid

uniting all the ethnic minority groups under a set of unified visions and objectives, and as well as establishing a safe atmosphere for an all-inclusive dialogue, empowerment and cooperation which will in turn pave the way for future reconciliation and/or an agreement of unarmed negotiations (ceasefires agreements).

**The objectives of the study are:**

- To determine how UNFC has played an instrumental role in fostering a common platform for the ethnic minority groups of Burma
- To determine the role of UNFC in the long-decade political conflict in Burma through unification of the diverse visions and objectives.
- Establish and *raise the awareness* of the impact of an all-inclusive (full engagement) participatory in community and nation re-building process – with an emphasis being on *reconciliation*.

**Chapterisation Plan**

- To make the study more presentable and understandable, it has been articulated in the following chapters.

- **Chapter 1 Introduction and Theoretical Literature:** Chapter one will give background of the study, explore the theoretical literature, aim and objectives of the study. Problem statement will also be defined in this chapter. Also the researcher will present the limitations of the present research study.
- **Chapter 2 Historical Timeline of Burma:** Chapter two will highlight the impact of the main events on the political situation and ethnic communities of the Burma and also describe the present day standing of Burma due to those events.
- **Chapter 3 Stakeholder Analysis:** Chapter three will analyze the key stakeholders to the political peace in Burma like the prominent non-Burman ethnic groups, the quasi-civilian government of Thein Sein, National League for Democracy (NLD) and United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC). Also, explores the domestic affairs and outside interests.
- **Chapter 4 Research Methodology:** Chapter four will discuss the research design of the present thesis. The chapter will focus on conceptual framework for the study, research philosophy, research design strategy, data collection tools and procedures, ethical considerations of the study, and how credibility of research data will be maintained.

- **Chapter 5 Results and Data Analysis:** Chapter five will present the data analysis. Descriptive analysis would be conducted in this study. In case of qualitative analysis, results of interview will be presented.
- **Chapter 6 Conclusion and Recommendations:** Chapter six the conclusion and recommendations chapter. The conclusions presented in this chapter will be drawn from the findings of primary and secondary research. The conclusions will be based on the objectives of the study. The recommendations will be based on the analysis of qualitative data.

### **Research Questions**

Following are the evocative questions for the study at hand:

- Why is there a need for unification of all the ethnic minority groups under one single informal entity?
- How can the various ethnic rebel groups reconcile their visions and objectives through UNFC?
- What are the functional roles of UNFC and an intermediary agent (the Nippon Foundation) and how do they impact the peace process of Myanmar?

## Historical Timeline of Burma

1. Pre-Colonial Period
2. The Colonial Era (1885-1948)
3. Independence and the Civilian Government (1948-1962)
4. The Military Coup and the Socialist Period (1962-2009)
5. The Embarkation on Political Reform

## The Major non-Burman Ethnic Groups

1. **Arakan (aka Rakhine) State:** Arakan Liberation Army (ALA) and the Arakan Army (AA).
2. **Chin State:** Chin National Army (CNA) and the Chin National Front (CNF).
3. **Kachin State:** Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and Kachin Independence Organizaiton (KIO).
4. **Shan State:** United Wa State Army (UWSA), National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA Mongla), Shan State Army - South (SSA - S), Shan State Army - North (SSA - N), Wa National Army (WNA), United Wa State Army (UWSA), Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA), Lahu Democratic Front (LDF), Palaung State Liberation Front (PSLF), and the Pa'O Peoples Liberation Army

(PPLA).

5. **Karenni (aka Kayah) State:** Karenni Army (KnA), Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) and the Kayan New Land Party (KNLP).
6. **Karen (aka Kayin) State:** Karen National Defense Organization/Karen National Liberation Army (KNDO/KNLA), Karen National Union (KNU) and the *Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA)*.
7. **Mon State:** Mon National Liberation Army (MNLA) and the New State Mon Party (NSMP).

**The Three Key Stakeholders (Three Major Political Forces in Burma)**

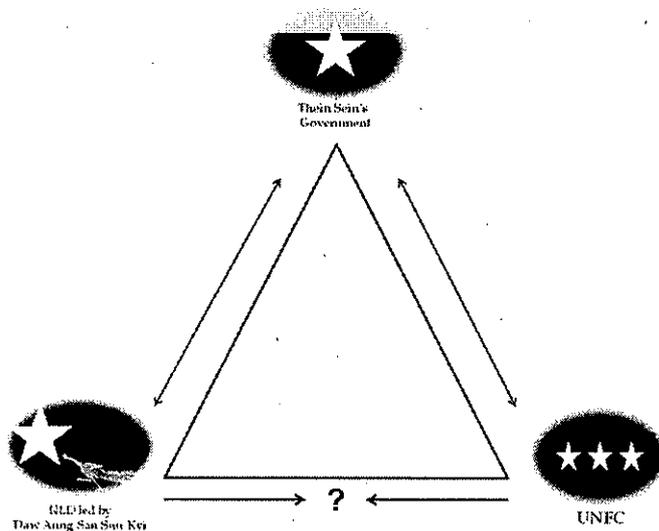


Figure エラー! 指定したスタイルは使われていません。 .1 Internal Stakeholders Map - (Triangle Relationships)

↔ Straight arrow line (in RED) represents conflict/ambiguous relationships

↔ Thick arrow line (in light BLUE) represents cooperative relationships

There are three major political forces at work in Burma, the **former military government** (now replaced by Thein Sein's government), prodemocracy groups represented by National League for Democracy (NLD) and ethnic groups now represented by United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC)<sup>3</sup>. Despite active engagement from the leadership of President Thein Sein and Aung San Suu Kyi, the leaders from all concerned parties, government and ethnic minority groups alike, have yet to display their sincere desire to bring about genuine political reforms through reconciling their differences. Instead they are merely participating in political gamesmanship. They should be, rebuilding trust across the lines of conflict vertically and horizontally in the context of tripartite politics<sup>4</sup>, which are seen as an essential foundation upon which future reconciliation and mutual recognition of their interdependency can be obtained. However, before trust between the quasi-civilian government and the ethnic minorities and prodemocracy groups can be rebuilt, trust amongst the ethnic minorities has to be established first and foremost in order to unite them as one legitimate political force for the struggle of ethnic rights, self-determination, federalism, political autonomy and democracy.

---

<sup>3</sup>Kyaw Yin Hlaing, *Problems with the Process of Reconciliation, Myanmar/Burma: Inside Challenges, Outside Interests*. (Brookings Institution Press, Washington, D.C., 2010)

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

## Research Type

There are three types of research purpose most commonly described in the literature: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. However, the research can be descriptive as well as exploratory at the same time.

Exploratory study enables finding “*what is happening, to seek new insights to ask questions and to assess phenomena in a new light*” (Berg 2012). Descriptive study is carried out “*to portray an accurate profile of persons, events or situations*” (Berg 2012). Lastly, explanatory studies fosters establishment of the relationship between variables, which will be studied in the research.

The study at hand adopts an exploratory and explanatory study as it analyzes the role UNFC plays in enabling long-term political peace in the country of Burma. The study explores the present scenario of political turmoil in the country and how UNFC can enable ceasefire agreements and political dialogues amongst the rebel groups and integrate their objectives and make them members of UNFC and thus, curb the violent protests persistent in Myanmar. The study shall also explain how the key stakeholders can collectively promote peace and economic development in Burma.

### Research Approach

There are two commonly adopted approaches: Induction and Deduction. Taylor et al. (2006) explains that a research marked as per 'Inductive Approach' is inclusive of generalized conclusion as per observations. On the other hand 'Deductive Approach' is subject to the works of the researcher led by hypothesis related to the former researches, and develops hypotheses as well as tests as per determined knowledge.

The study has implied inductive approach wherein the scholar observes the existing situation in Burma and how generalizes conclusion based on the observations through face-to-face interviews and other secondary findings.

### Questionnaire design

An open-ended questionnaire was developed based on the analysis of secondary data pertaining to the peace promoting initiatives in Burma. The prime objective of this series of in-depth one-on-one interview with the leaders of the ethnic groups is to understand and analyze the *instrumental roles* of United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC) as an all-inclusive platform for the ethnic minorities in the process of future reconciliation in Burma and the political roles of humanitarian assistance in the evolving peace process in Burma.

The questionnaire comprises of twelve open-ended questions pertaining to the formation and instrumental role of UNFC as an all-inclusive platform for the ethnic minority groups. The followings are the twelve open-ended questions employed in a series interviews:

1. When was the UNFC established and what were the motives behind its establishment?
2. Is a UNFC a political entity or a mere non-governmental organization whose only motive is to provide humanitarian aid/emergency relief aid to the rebel-controlled areas? Or both?
3. If UNFC is a political entity, what are its political philosophy, objectives and visions and ARE they compatible with those upheld by the ethnic groups (ethnic rights, political equality, federalism, self-determination)?
4. What are the instrumental roles of UNFC in the community rebuilding and peace process? Do the roles of UNFC undermine or foster the relationships between Their Sein's government and the ethnic groups?
5. Is it not possible for both the Burmese government and the ethnic groups (who are still in combatant with the military junta) to lay down their guns and talk? How

much do you agree with the following statement; *“Without GUN the government refuse to sit with us (the ethnic groups) at the peace table.”*

6. Does each leader/representative of the ethnic groups (under the membership of UNFC) have a fair share in the decision-making process concerning the affairs and issues of the ethnic groups, the administration and management of the organization (UNFC), policies framework for peace process, and etc.?
7. There are multi-facet relationships with vested interests in a highly competitive environment in this historical transition, so how does UNFC as a common platform (politically) facilitate in creating equilibrium for the members of UNFC and Their Sein's government?
8. All ethnic groups share a set of common (universalized) objectives and those are: ethnic rights, political equality, federalism and self-determination. Given the current stage at which Burma is, these objectives can only be regarded as the ideals or visions. How are these ideals/visions being translated into the daily activities and management of UNFC? What are the building blocks for community rebuilding from the perspective of the ethnic leaders?
9. Will the UNFC be disbanded when the objectives and visions of the ethnic groups as well as those of UNFC are achieved?

10. Can Thein Sein's government and the ethnic groups achieve an agreement of unarmed negotiation and /or future reconciliation, which is crucial to securing a self-sustaining peace and stability?
11. What common ground already exists on which the contending parties can build a more secure future?
12. Are there better prospects for success from a bold militaristic aggression (and retaliation from the ethnic rebels) and international pressure for negotiation?

#### 4.1 Recommendations

- **A Shift of Focus**: There remains a fixation, amongst the ethnic leaders, of focus on one particular issue – that is – the desire to rid the military junta (*tatmadaw*) of all political authority. In other words, the ethnic leaders are trying to win political points and demanding a complete transfer of power from the former military junta (now represented by Thein Sein's *civilian*-government). Such fixation has only led to an addition to hatred, which knowingly or unwittingly framed as a “divide” between the ethnic minorities (*non-Burman*) and the majority (*Burman*) and the paradigm designed around the line of allegiance further fueling the attitude of “*them versus us*”. There is a strong presence of

shared hatred amongst these leaders, which can ultimately be used as a justification of their common grievance and rationalization of their revenge against the military regime. As a result, all effort and energy has been directed towards a negative cause – that only brings about destruction to not only the others (them) but also to the ordinary people of their respective ethnic roots.

- **Reconciliation of Differences:** Instead of trying to win political points and demanding a complete transfer of power from the former military government (Thein Sein's government), all political forces should shift their focus to acknowledging and bridging their differences and designing an administrative authority structure that will provide an effective power sharing arrangement.
- ***Fostering And Ensuring Trust amongst UNFC member group and Mutual Cooperation:*** The three main political forces must overcome their own political differences and shift from political gamesmanship to working together. This will determine the effectiveness of Burma's political transition. That being said, there continues to be questions regarding the durability and sustainability of Thein Sein's regime and the future of Burma's political transition remain open.

To ensure political legitimacy and empowerment of the ethnic groups, a genuine mutual trust among the leaders is paramount. Strengthening their capacity for rebuilding communities and securing basic human needs/rights for their people should be the top priority. In order to ensure success from these initiatives, the UNFC must accommodate the demands of the ethnic leaders and facilitate a meaningful discourse between Thein Sein's government and the ethnic groups.

- **Language: Establishing a Tri-Lingual Society:** in the context of Burma, where there is a clear divide between the majority *Burman* and the ethnic minorities (non-*Burman*), language has a remarkable impact that can either be beneficial or detrimental to Burma's reforms and national unity. When asked what language they usually use when communicating with their comrades of different ethnic background and with Thein Sein's government, all the ethnic leaders responded that they use *Burmese* (here referred to the language). Given the racial superiority, the language, *Burmese*, can be employed as a tool to enforce racial superiority over those of ethnic background. One of the most significant and invaluable heritage left behind by the British colonial is the *English language*.

Burma can take advantage of this invaluable heritage for creating a sense of commonality that will benefit the unification of different nationalities. Establishing a *tri-lingual* society can be one of visions towards which all the Burmese people can work together, making English language as the *lingua franca* while respecting the languages of different ethnic minority groups by allowing each state freely use their respective local language as the medium of communication and instruction in school.

- ***For the new government post-election of 2015:*** if change comes too quickly the new government would still be a very fragile body, highly vulnerable to internal as well as external pressures and threats (Selth, 2001). Thus the transfer of governance and administrative authority, which was centralized within the circle of *tatmadaw*, to a new government should be calibrated with great delicacy. For all these arrangements to be accomplished effectively the *tatmadaw* will have to grant the current civilian and new local governments in each ethnic area, sufficient political freedom to exercise their popular mandate.

- ***Idealism to Realism:*** The aspiring visions shared by all the ethnic groups may be equality, genuine federalism, self-determination, and democracy, but there is urgency for all the leaders to address the foremost fundamental issue, and that is to secure basic human needs/rights for their people. This demands a shift from 'idealism' to 'realism'. Their Sein's government needs to move beyond temporary ceasefires and resolve underlying political issues.