

## **President U Thein Sein meets with Myanmar National Human Rights Commission and the Interfaith Friendship Group, 21 July 2013**

Yangon, 21 July — President U Thein Sein urged the Interfaith Friendship Group and Myanmar National Human Rights Commission to cooperate with the government and to take responsibility for image the country not to be tarnished as it is found that the conflict between the two communities in the country is being exaggerated as racial and religious conflict between the two communities and regional and international issues in an attempt to bring it to the UN.

Meeting with the group at Yangon Region Government Office this afternoon, the President reiterated that he expressed his concerns in his speeches that a conflict between the two communities could turn into regional and international issues, and if it happened, it could harm the image of the country and its reforms.

The constitution of the country includes provisions to give protection to the four major religions including Islam and Myanmar does not accept racial discrimination, he added.

During his visits to foreign countries, he has clarified that the conflicts were caused by criminal cases in the respective areas, he added.

He urged the group to work together with the government for three priorities tasks. The first task is the rehabilitation of the areas where the conflicts broke out, he said.

The government has already spent over 6 billion kyats on providing aids to over 100,000 victims in cooperation with the international organizations, he said.

Punitive actions had been taken against those who involved in the conflicts and riots and police are obliged to carry out their duties in attempts to do more investigations related to the conflicts.

The second process is prevention of conflicts from reoccurring. It is required for Interfaith Friendship Group to form region/ state/ township level groups while the government is engaged in the second process. He called on Myanmar Human Rights Commission to launch educative campaigns to heighten the public awareness of human rights.

The third process is a long-term plan to seek and resolve root causes of conflict. It is necessary to continue to implement the tasks of socio-economic development including health and education and realize recommendations of Rakhine State Investigation Commission.

Next, Union Minister U Wunna Maung Lwin stressed the need of greater cooperation among the government, Myanmar National Human Rights Commission and Interfaith Friendship Group so as to inform international community including the United Nations about objective conditions in Myanmar.

Then, Union Minister U Khin Yi explained citizenship rights prescribed in 1982 Citizenship Law and instigation behind the scene that spark difficulties in collecting data to get accurate count of population in Rakhine State.

Afterwards, Union Minister Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win clarified matters related to provision of food to 120,000 victims and progress in construction of shelters and ongoing international cooperation.

Next, Union ministers, the chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw Fundamental Rights of Citizens, Democracy and Human Rights, the region chief minister, the secretary of Rakhine State Investigation Commission, the patron, the chairman, the chairman of Myanmar National Human Rights Commission and members made supplementary reports.

The President coordinated matters presented by those present. After the meeting, the President cordially greeted members of Myanmar National Human Rights Commission and Interfaith Friendship Group.—MNA

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