

**Full Text of the Nation-wide Radio Address Delivered
by President U Thein Sein on 1 December 2013**

My fellow citizens,

In this month's radio speech, I would like to start with an explanation of my positions on some of the ongoing political changes in the country.

Over the last two years, political changes have come to Myanmar in the form of a new political process. It is undeniable that our nation has achieved tangible results. It is also undeniable that the whole of Myanmar society has worked very hard to get to where we are today amidst a plethora of difficulties, problems and challenges. That said, much more is to be done. The level of achievement we have attained so far is comparable to a sprout that has just come out of a seed. It is our national duty to work hard without any reservation to make sure that the sprout will grow strong and healthy over time. There is no other alternative for us than devoting ourselves to sustaining the political reforms that have taken place and to keep the political transition on the right track. It is the duty of all citizens to do everything they can to make sure that the current political process will move forward. I am calling for such action mainly because I believe that my administration alone could not have attained the level of success we have achieved so far with the political reforms and the political transition; our progress is a result of the collective contributions made by the government, Hluttaws, political parties and associations, civil society associations, business enterprises and associations, the Tatmadaw and individual citizens over the last two years.

If a credible political transition is to emerge out of the positive political changes we have attained so far, we must all continue to make firm commitments to common goals. The common goals we set should be pragmatic and we all must work hard to achieve them. Then we will be able to lay the foundation for a better and credible political future for current and future generations.

I also want to brief you all about the political and peace-related developments that have taken place during the month of November. The EU-Myanmar Task Force Forum was held successfully in Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon in November. We have taken many other actions that allow us to create an open society, to institute an economic system that contributes to long term development of the country and improves the welfare of the people and to achieve national unity through the peace process. If these endeavours are to be successful, there must be a consolidated democratic system; there must be equality and mutual respect among diverse members of our society; the majority will have to pay attention to the needs of the minorities; the political process should be open, free and stable; all citizens should be able to play a role in politics; there should be more job opportunities; and the country's economy must be integrated into the world economic system through various means including foreign direct investment.

The EU-Myanmar Task Force was established in order to be able to cooperate with members of the European Union effectively toward all of these goals. Actions are underway in order to build relationships between various levels of governments, parliaments, business enterprises and associations, political parties and organizations, civil society groups and security organizations. The formation of the EU-Myanmar Task Force marks the start of a long-term

and consolidated relationship between members of the EU and Myanmar. This is the time when Myanmar is trying to rejoin the family of nations as a respectable member. As such, I would like to acknowledge the effort made by all civil servants, staff and responsible for establishing such a system of multi-faceted international relations. I am convinced that if we continue to work hard in the areas mentioned above, Myanmar will soon become a respectable and responsible member in the family of nations.

With regard to the peace process, I would like to note that the November Laiza conference of ethnic leaders was a very important landmark for building peace in the country. The meeting between the Union Peace-Making Work Committee and various ethnic groups in Myitkyina that was held immediately after the Laiza conference was also a milestone. One can view these meetings as a sign of progress towards the preparation for the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. At the Myitkyina meeting, it was also decided to hold another meeting between the Union Peace Making Work Committee and ethnic leaders in Hpa-an. It is reported that a working committee was formed with the representatives of various ethnic groups in order to be able to hold consultative meetings peace talks speedily during the preparatory period. It is also reported that this committee has had consultative meetings with various kinds of ethnic groups. I view all the recent actions taken by ethnic nationality representatives as indicators of their positive attitudes towards the collective peace process.

I would like to take this opportunity to reflect upon how far the negotiations to end armed strife have come. I invited all ethnic groups to the peace table on August 18, 2011. Although there was some distrust of our intentions during the initial period, the peace process has moved forward step by step with concrete achievements such as the signing of ceasefire agreements. This progress has resulted from the dedication and genuine will of peace shapers from all sides. I would like to affirm that the government is determined to put to rest suspicion, distrust and worries and discuss without prejudice the needs of ethnic nationalities through political negotiations. The point I would like to reiterate is that the invitation to the peace table is extended with the genuine will to hold genuine political dialogues. In trying to resolve problems politically, we will need to take step-by-step approaches ranging from the conclusion of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, developing jointly a framework for political dialogues and starting political dialogues.

Another important event of this month was the meeting between representatives of some political parties and ethnic armed groups. I would like to note that we wholeheartedly welcome such a meeting. I also want to hope that at the Hpa-an meeting that is scheduled to be held in December, all parties will try to attain positive results through negotiations and discussion and without resorting to any extreme approaches.

I also want to inform you that we are working hard to achieve the electrification of rural areas and provision of clean water to rural people; these are critical components of the rural development program which is one of the priority areas of the current administration. I want to emphasize that the government has adopted the provision of clean water to rural areas one of the priorities in the national plan. The availability of clean water is a fundamental requirement of national healthcare. As such, the government working to ensure sufficient provision of clean water to rural areas by way of making it one of the national priorities and by instituting an integrated water management system to properly manage the nation's water resources.

Our view on issues related to constitutional amendments is that the reasoning one makes, the actions one takes, the political leadership one provides should be based upon an accurate appraisal of the political context in the country. I would like to encourage all political leaders

to approach the issue in a mature and objective manner and in ways that will consolidate the success of the political reforms we have undertaken so far.

The tenth Waning Day of Tazaungmon is the 93rd National Day. On this occasion of National Day, we should remember that there was a time when national awakening gave rise to political consciousness and the will to participate in the political process among the citizens of Myanmar. Nationalism bred political consciousness, which in turn shaped the contours of the political process and national unity that helped the country gain its independence. Like during the struggle for independence, the current situation also calls for all citizens of Myanmar to work hard for the national unity, a fundamental building block of peace and an open society. The country will have an open and free society only if the ongoing political reforms continue. Only then will the political transition move forward step by step. I would therefore like to encourage the entire country to work hard for the development of a consolidated democratic system on the basis of our national unity.

In conclusion, I would like to say that during my term, I have dedicated all my efforts to bringing peace to the country, to improving the social and economic status of the citizens, and to creating a better future for the younger generation.

May you all have peace of mind and good health.
