

**Full Text of the Nation-wide Radio Address Delivered  
by President U Thein Sein on 1 March 2014**

**My fellow citizens,**

I would like to inform all of you about the recent changes and developments that have taken place in our country during the month of February just as I have done previously on this radio program.

All of you will notice that February is filled with historic moments born out of the Myanmar independence struggle. Not only is February significant for building national unity and ethnic affairs, it gave birth to the Union day which commemorates an important step in the independence struggle—the Panglong conference and the signing of the Panglong agreement. It is also a month when General Aung San was able to establish a union system based on the Panglong spirit where all ethnic nationalities can live together in peace, unity and equality.

Since independence, Myanmar has also experienced bitterness stemming from conflicts grounded in political disagreements and divisions within the society. This is the time to learn lessons from our past experiences and strive together to resolve all the conflicts so that all ethnic nationalities can live together in peace and harmony.

We can also see that the progress achieved in the national reconciliation process based on peace building is because we are trying to align Panglong promises with the current situations by seeking political solutions through dialogue.

In order to achieve a nationwide ceasefire agreement which is part and parcel to the peace process, all the relevant authorities and groups are currently negotiating to hold a conference in Hpa-an. Like all of you, I am optimistically expecting that one of the results of the Hpa-an conference is the determination of the date to sign a nationwide ceasefire agreement. Step by step, we will undertake the signing of the nationwide ceasefire agreement, agreement on the political dialogue framework and the inauguration of the political dialogue process.

Again, I would like to encourage the government, the legislature, the political parties and forces, the Tatmadaw, ethnic armed groups, civil society organizations and all the people to be magnanimous, worldly, patient and try to understand each other's needs so that we can work together to achieve peace in Myanmar.

I also met with members of the business community and representatives from business associations on February 22, 2014. The main message I communicated during the meeting was that the government is undertaking economic reforms to establish a well functioning national economic system. I also encouraged the private sector to view these economic reforms as opportunities within a new framework and participate in these reforms as well as make necessary adjustments themselves with a view of building a competitive business environment that serves as the basis for market economy.

I also reiterated that the private sector should shift their focus to finding solutions and building institutions in their specific areas of business expertise and activity instead of criticizing and viewing the economic reform process in a negative light.

During the past month, I also visited and inspected the ongoing building and renovation projects such as Bago-Sittaung dike, Htihlaing lake located in Meiktila district of Mandalay region, Zagyan-Kanmyae and Kanar lakes in Myinchan district that are necessary not only for agricultural production but also for flood protection. Not only do the building and renovation of rivers, creeks, ponds and lakes aid in water delivery for agricultural and human use, we are prioritizing such projects because they also improve the socio-economic conditions of the people living in the rural areas.

On the other hand, we are taking the lessons learned from the Cyclone Nargis disaster to undertake preventative measures to protect from natural disasters. More specifically, we are utilizing special funds allocated by the legislature for disaster preparedness to protect from natural disaster homes, agricultural lands, and water resources that people living in the rural areas depend on.

During this month, the President of the Federal Republic of Germany paid a goodwill visit to Myanmar commemorating 60 years of diplomatic relations between Myanmar and Germany. After discussions, we were able to reach agreements that forgive 50% of Myanmar's total debt of 1,048 million euros and restructure the remaining 50% of the debt into a low-interest, longerterm schedule. We were also able reach agreement to cooperate on the development of small and medium enterprises to aid in the overall reform process. In his speech delivered at the Convocation Hall at the University of Yangon, the President of Germany spoke about the experiences of East and West Germany and the role of the people in the democratic transition.

I have already articulated my position on Constitutional amendments in my previous speeches. I would again like to reiterate my view that necessary Constitutional amendments ought to be made to reflect the political, economic and social needs of the society. I would also like to stress that the political and media freedoms resulting from current political reforms have allowed the people and various political forces to freely discuss and debate issues touching on the amendment of the Constitution as well as other existing laws.

Even though we can choose to adopt different viewpoints with regards to the Constitution and existing laws, we must act within the existing legal frameworks and we need to respect the systems that are in place when we try to amend them. In other words, we need to instill a practice of acting within the legal fabric even if we don't like the fact that the laws we are trying to change still remain in place.

This cultivation of the culture of rule of law is extremely important for the future democratic growth of Myanmar.

Here, I would like to stress that my reason for speaking to the people of Myanmar through these radio addresses is to inform all you about the government's plans, highlight practical implementation of these plans and inform the public of my views on certain political, economic and social issues.

In other words, I am doing this as way to restart the direct communication between the government and the people that has been lost for quite some time. Likewise, I am putting my energy in this because I believe that setting up a regular practice of communicating with the people will compel the future leaders of this country to treat its citizens with respect.

I would like to conclude here by pledging that will work tirelessly to achieve peace in the country, promote economic development, and build a better future for the younger generations.

May you all have peace of mind and good health.

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