



MMDP

Myanmar Multiparty Democracy Programme



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1	Introduction
2	Political parties in democratic transitions
3	Electoral systems
4	Sharing from KV13
5	Media and political parties
6	Political party financing
7	Women in political parties
8	Youth in political parties
9	Resource and dialogue centre
10	Partnerships

The Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy (DIPD) have taken the initiative to set up a programme focusing on multi-party dialogue and cooperation in Myanmar in close consultation with the political parties and other actors in Myanmar.

Since January 2012 DIPD started to appraise the possibilities that we as a new democracy institution could support the new democratic development in Myanmar. We invited the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) to join hands with us in exploring a possible role of engagement from NIMD and DIPD through analysis and consultation with a broad spectrum of political parties, actors and stakeholders supporting Myanmar's political parties in their quest to adjust to democratic politics. The consultations with political parties and other stakeholders have resulted in the development of a Multiparty Democracy Programme working on three main objectives:

1. Facilitation of an informal, inclusive, non-partisan multi-party dialogue platform, that addresses key issues of national concern;
2. Strengthening the democratic roles- representation and accountability - of political parties in a cross-party setting;
3. Fostering relationships between political parties and civil society, the media and the private sector around issues of mutual concern.

A two-track approach has been taken so far. Firstly, starting to plan and sequence support around a number of priority issues in the field of multi-party dialogue, political party capacity development and relationships with civil society and the media. Secondly, developing the longer-term strategic and programmatic planning based on more in-depth understanding of the Myanmar context, political dynamics, political party landscape, the regulatory mechanisms, etc. and the role of other local and international actors. The following themes are currently being developed into programme components:

- Multi-party dialogue and political party resource and dialogue centre
- Political Party Financing
- Youth & Women in Political Parties
- Role of Media and Political Parties

The themes and the thematic components are all suited for cross-party training and tailor-made follow-up mentoring within the involved parties as well as for fostering cross-political dialogue and identification of joint issues and possibly reform measures.

The core principles of MMDP when engaging in multi-party support are inclusiveness (inviting all parliamentary parties); impartiality (taking a non-partisan approach) and ownership (local actors set the agenda).

The current annual report is to a large extent based on the news reports and activity reports produced during the year, some of which are also available on our website.

A historic and unprecedented gathering of 50 political parties participated in the Seminar on “The Role of Political Parties in Democratic Transitions”, held 19-20 February in Yangon as part of the Myanmar Multiparty Democracy Programme.

“This is the first time for decades that so many parties are gathered around the same table” one of the political party leaders claimed and continued: “Moreover, we have not before jointly discussed our common roles and challenges as political parties”.

To allow as open and free dialogue between the political parties the seminar was run under “Chatham House Rules” allowing sharing all information, but no quotes and that stimulated the debate a lot. How can parties move from personalized party characteristics?



How can parties better make check and balances on the executive? How did other countries change the situation where the military were assigned special seats in the Parliament? What measures can increase women’s political participation?

These and many other questions were asked to NIMD and DIPD partner representatives and international resource persons; Dr. Ignas Kleden from Indonesia, Mr. Shaun MacKay, South Africa, Mr. CK Lal from Nepal and Mr. Tom Cormier, IDEA.

LAUNCHING THE DIPD READER ON TRANSITION

The DIPD Reader on “Political Parties in Democratic Transitions” was launched at the seminar (and translated to local language). Tom Cormier, IDEA, highlighted the four themes which the publication, the seminar and the follow-up workshops focused on:

- Strengthening the political party organization
- Establishing multiparty dialogue
- Negotiating democratic space with the reforming government
- Responding to voter expectations – representation and delivery.

Mr. Shaun Mackay shared experiences from South Africa regarding the importance of multi-party dialogue and having an inclusive transition process where trust building, leadership, negotiation and compromise were essential to a peaceful transition.

Dr. Ignas Kleden shared the democratization path as it developed in Indonesia and cautioned that the parties in Indonesia played an insignificant role in the reform process, stressed the need to take into account the role of the military and pursue negotiations that accommodate rather than confrontation.

The experiences from Nepal's ongoing transition were presented by Mr. CK Lal highlighting the importance of strengthening the institutionalization of political parties, enhancing civil oversight of the military and deciding on the most appropriate electoral system. Moreover, parties need to keep focus on being in political office for the good of the people and seeking economic development that will enhance equal opportunities and livelihoods. Without, a transition process can easily run off track.

The seminar was held in cooperation with the local organisation Nyein Foundation, which opened the seminar. In introducing the Myanmar Multiparty Democracy Programme, Hanne Lund Madsen, Senior Adviser at DIPD, outlined that NIMD and DIPD have had very positive preparatory consultations in the form of roundtable discussions with political networks, civil society organisations and government advisers, which confirmed broad-based support for and appreciation of the proposed seminar and for the Myanmar Multiparty Democracy programme, focusing on:

- Facilitating an inclusive and impartial multi-party dialogue platform that addresses issues of national concern;
- Strengthening the capacities of political parties in a cross-party setting for example through training
- Enhancing the cooperation between political parties and civil society, the media and the private sector around issues of mutual concern.



At the following press briefing, Hanne Lund Madsen (see photo left) expressed appreciation of the many political parties' active participation in the seminar and their interest in multi-party dialogue and in discussing issues of common concern in the development of Myanmar. "We have noted the strong request to us for convening more dialogue meetings and we will see how we can best respond", she answered the local media.

In the next phase, the MMDP will also focus strongly on facilitating multiparty dialogue on issues of shared interest and provide opportunities for political parties to hear the experiences of multiparty dialogue and platforms from other countries and in particular the benefits achieved for the political parties and for the democratic process as a whole.

An information seminar on electoral systems held from 15-17 July in Yangon marked another significant gathering of 43 political parties in Myanmar.

The Myanmar Multiparty Democracy Programme held an information sharing seminar on electoral systems with registered political parties in Myanmar, selected civil society organizations (CSOs) and media. The seminar was held at Central Hotel in Yangon, Myanmar.



WHICH SYSTEM TO CHOOSE?

The aim of the seminar was to highlight and inform in a non-prescriptive and impartial manner the objectives of an electoral system and considerations to be made when designing and developing the electoral system. The seminar shared information regarding seat allocations and several types of electoral systems including first-past-the-post, proportional representation and mixed systems. The seminar also addressed the importance of representation, gender equality and social inclusion.

Designing an electoral system is a complex issue and political parties have requested MMDP to assist in making information available as well as share experiences from other countries in transition. “We think we knew a lot about electoral systems, but now we know there is no ‘perfect’ electoral system. All have both advantages and disadvantages,” one political party member commented after the seminar.

A THREE DAY SEMINAR

Following the political parties’ own request to make this information available as widely as possible MMDP held three parallel seminars for three consecutive days. The first day was for parliamentary political parties, the second for non-parliamentary political parties, and the last day was for selected CSOs and media. In the seminar MMDP was pleased to draw upon the broad expertise and experience of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) and International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) within the field of electoral systems around the world.

In order to secure an open and free Q&A after each presentation as possible, the seminar was run under “Chatham House Rules”. This means that the participants are encouraged to share all information outside of the seminar, but not attribute any direct



quotes to people. Some of the questions asked to the speakers Mr. Thomas Cormier (International IDEA) and Mr. Paul Guerin (IFES Myanmar) include: Which electoral system is better suited for Myanmar? How can smaller and ethnic parties be ensured their chances to win in their own regions? What is the trend of changing electoral system in other countries?

The translated and abridge version of the New International

IDEA’s Handbook 2005 on Electoral System Design was also distributed during the seminar. Moreover, the participants were requested to fill out the pre and post seminar questionnaires in order to ascertain what they have learned from the seminar. “It was a successful three days,” said Paul Guerin, one of the speakers. “We hope that the participants bring all take-away points to their parties and share with their friends and colleagues,” Paul continued.

In the next phase, the MMDP will closely monitor the national debate and initiatives with regard to electoral systems and upon request provide further technical advice on the many forms of electoral systems that can be designed or provide a platform for political parties and related actors to exchange ideas and positions on the issue.

Cross-party representatives who participated in KV13 municipal elections study tour in Denmark organized by DIPD shared the most important lessons learned when back in Myanmar.

The KV13 group from Myanmar gave a presentation to the nearly 20 youth representatives from media, civil society organizations, and corporate businesses participating in an election course in Myanmar jointly organized by the Danida Fellowship Centre (DFC) and Action Aid Global Platform in Yangon.

KEY LESSONS LEARNED

Khin Thazin Myint, Programme Coordinator of the Myanmar Multiparty Democracy Programme introduced the topics on political system and democratic culture; decentralization; municipal elections; and the role of key stakeholders in elections, which had been key topics during the KV13 Study Tour.

Tun Tun Hein, central executive committee member of the National League for Democracy (NLD) presented his experience on the political system and democratic culture of both the Netherlands and Denmark. He highlighted the differences of orientation in changing from absolute monarchy to parliamentary democracy as well as citizens' participation and electoral system in the two countries. Following this presentation there was debate on whether or not the proportional representation (PR) system used in Denmark can be suitable in Myanmar context. Or if more mixed electoral systems will be better suited.

Tin Royal of the Chin National Party (CNP) spoke about the high levels of decentralization and about the association of municipalities existing in both Denmark and the Netherlands. He in particular highlighted how municipalities in these countries manage taxes paid by citizens and provides the service delivery (such as public schools, maintenance of roads, health facilities and many more). He also found the high level



of cooperation between municipalities interesting. A lively question-and-answer session followed on resource allocation and decentralization in Myanmar.

Kyi Kyi Maw of the Democratic Party (Myanmar) shared her experiences by observing the campaigning, the voting and the counting of the votes. She also emphasized that in a free and fair election not only is it important to ensure plurality of political parties but also an equal access to the funding by the different parties. Questions centered on how political parties in Myanmar are financed at the moment and how an effective fundraising can be undertaken for coming 2015 election.



Htet Aung Kyaw of the National Democratic Force (NDF) provided an overview of the important roles of political parties, media, and civil society organizations during elections and how they work and present the mechanisms for reporting, monitoring, and supervision before and after election. The past by-election in Myanmar was discussed by the participants and ways to improve electoral practices in the coming 2015 election in Myanmar. Both the participants in the KV13 Study Tour to Denmark and the participants in the local election course in Myanmar agreed that all stakeholders have an important role to play in ensuring free and fair elections and that good voter education, election management, and a level playing field in the political competition is key.

Finally, Khin Thazin Myint expressed appreciation of the opportunity to exchange experiences on elections between Myanmar Multiparty Democracy Programme, the Danida Fellowship Centre and Action Aid Global Platform.

In the beginning of 2014 the participants in the KV13 Study Tour will also share the experiences within their respective parties and in the political party networks they form part of.

In the next phase, the MMDP will be ready to consider requests from the political parties, the Union Electoral Commission and other stakeholder regarding knowledge sharing on electoral systems and electoral processes and other issues covered by the Political Party Knowledge Facility of the programme.

The banks of Inya Lake in Yangon was the serene setting for a conversation between 43 political parties and journalists from 36 leading media houses in Myanmar. The Myanmar Multiparty Democracy Programme and International Media Support (IMS) have joined hands to make this path-breaking event happen. The purpose of the seminar was to make political parties and media persons talk to each other in a convivial atmosphere away from the compulsions of their professions.

Honourable U Tin Aye, the Chairman of Union Election Commission (UEC) of Myanmar set the tone of the seminar by pointing out that media and political parties need to work together to strengthen democracy in the country. In the second session, Mr. Thiha Saw from Myanmar Journalist Association (MJA) and U Khin Maung Lay, Editor-in-Chief of Golden Fresh Land, highlighted the complementary roles that parties and

media have in listening to the voices of the citizens, in being accountable and in doing their work in line with professional ethics.



Tin Maung Than of MDRI, a think-tank based in Yangon, emphasized sensitivities of relationship between media and political parties in times of transition and called upon participants to exercise restraint in dealing with each other. A lively debate followed. The seminar broke for lunch with a lot of ideas to consider and participants talked to one another about their impressions.

The afternoon session began with a presentation of the case study by Ratih Hardjono Falaakh, the Secretary General of Komunitas Indonesia untuk Demokrasi (KID), about the relationship between political parties and media in Indonesia. She dwelled upon the importance of not hurrying the process of reforms but continuing with incremental changes in the desired direction.

The afternoon session contained a case study from Nepal where, Mr. C.K. Lal, a political commentator from Nepal, presented an outline of ups and downs when democratizing a country while institutionalizing the cordial relationship between the press and

political parties. He advised small and ethnic parties to form alliances in order to attract media attention and told journalists to report about issues of marginalized people to increase the respectability of the free press in all sections of society. Mutual respect helps deepen understanding, which is vital for the health of a long-lasting democracy.

The last session turned out to be the most engaging. Six groups discussed and came up with various recommendations to create and maintain working relationships between political parties and the press. Everyone agreed that forums for such conversations need to be institutionalized in Myanmar. Political party leaders have to be trained in the skill of dealing with the media. Journalists also have to learn new ways of engaging in political parties.



Mr. CK Lal and Mrs. Ratih Hardjono Falaakh

During the closing session, hosts expressed satisfaction at the outcome of the seminar and pledged to continue to support such initiatives in the future in order to assist the democratization process in Myanmar. The importance of free press in a functioning democracy requires that political parties become more media savvy. Areas for improving capabilities of political parties in handling media before, during and after elections have to be explored to design effective intervention strategies in the future.

The take away from the seminar for most participants is that they need to work harder and better to reach out to each other in order to improve the effectiveness of political parties and the media. Participants expressed hope that there would be more of such opportunities to meet and learn collectively and that the event required follow-up activities from all stakeholders in order to continue in improving the roles, responsibilities and relationships between political parties and the media.

In the next phase, the media component will be a core activity of MMDP with the overall objective of increasing dialogue and understanding between political parties and the media in support of democratization in Myanmar. Based on the above consultations, seminars and research activity clusters will be the following: **Elections** – Media and political parties during election campaign and voting – including a codes of conduct. **Voice and Accountability** –looking into how both parties and media are central in giving voice to the citizens and help in developing accountability mechanisms. **Tool box** – Guidance and advice on how to organize the internal and external communication in a political party. The component will be implemented in collaboration with IMS and local media organisations, while also drawing on the expertise of other international organisations in the field.

The key issue of political party financing was addressed for the first time in a seminar for political parties in Myanmar, where the challenges with fundraising, accountability and regulation were highlighted. More than 50 representatives from 46 registered political parties explored the role of political parties in party finance during a two-day workshop organised jointly by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and Myanmar Multiparty Democracy Programme in Yangon 28-29 November 2013.

“Money in politics, or political finance, is linked to key aspects of any modern society. Management of political finance is necessary for credible and genuine elections and electoral campaigns because it has the potential to skew competition between contestants. While funds are necessary for political parties to operate it is equally important that an appropriate model of oversight and transparency is developed in each country”, says Magnus Ohman, guest expert for the training.



Political Party Expert Magnus Ohman shares experiences from other countries

limits on contributions and spending; the provision of public funding; the roles of other stakeholders such as civil society and media as well as global lessons learned in the oversight of money in politics.

The workshop also drew out views from key actors in political finance, the Union Election Commission, political parties and CSOs on regulating, enforcing and monitoring; to review existing law and practice in Myanmar and to look comparatively at challeng-

MONEY IN POLITICS

The workshop was a success due to the close collaboration with the Myanmar political parties, the Myanmar Multiparty Democracy Program and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). The workshop gave an introduction to key problems and solutions in political finance, also addressing the global experience of regulating political finance in different countries and how regulations can be enforced. The workshop also highlighted the rules regarding disclosure (financial reporting); bans and

limits on contributions and spending; the provision of public funding; the roles of other stakeholders such as civil society and media as well as global lessons learned in the oversight of money in politics.

es and solutions from around the world; and to discuss and share potential recommendations for the context of Myanmar.

EXPERIENCES ARE SHARED LOCALLY

“Money matters a lot in political decision making process. But money should only be a ‘tool’ to the process. Therefore strategies for controlling money in politics must be taken into account,” says U Sao Than Myint, central executive member of the Shan Nationalities Development Party (SNDP).



Brainstorming for group discussion of party finance

Daw Khine Win Myint, executive member of the Union of Myanmar Federation of National Politics (UMFNP), comments after the seminar that “money is a huge barrier for the small political parties that are facing a lack of political and campaign finances. Unlike the bigger parties, we are on a self-help basis and mainly relying on membership fees and income from

organizing the events. To us as representatives from the small parties, today’s

workshop is very important because now the voices of the small parties are heard. This way I hope we will together find a solution to have access to funds to take part in the coming election.”

The translated version of the publication on controlling money in politics by Dr. Magnus Ohman was also distributed to the participants. Moreover, a similar training was provided to the Union Election Commission having a key role in the regulation of political party finance.

The political party financing is a longer-term component of MMDP and the parties were also requested to nominate two persons (one from leadership position and another from finance responsible) to set up task team within their parties on the issue. So far 38 parties have shown their interest to form a task team within their parties.

In the next phase, the component on Party Financing will be a key area of work of the MMDP in cooperation with IDEA and in close consultations with the UEC.

In consultations with the political parties in Myanmar, the importance of the role of women in political parties have been stressed and all parties have encouraged the Myanmar Multiparty Democracy Programme (MMDP) to contribute to a further understanding of this issue and assist in their deliberations. Therefore MMDP has entered cooperation with a women's expert, Shwe Shwe Sein Latt, to assist in the mapping and planning to find some operational recommendations for the MMDP in the field of Women in Political Parties and the scope for cooperation.

As part of the consultation several dialogues have taken place with selected political parties, women parliamentarians, international and local organisations working on women's issues and government entities on their aspirations and plans regarding women and gender equality. The roundtable consultations addressed the following key issues:

- What is the current debate and state of affairs with regard to women in political parties in Myanmar?
- What are the main opportunities and challenges faced by political parties in this regard?
- Who are the key international actors and local NGOs engaged in this field and their plans?
- How can the MMDP support the needs and opportunities within women in political parties?

During the process, a roundtable on women's issues was held in Yangon with IDEA.

ORGANISATION OF WOMEN IN POLITICAL PARTIES

Some of the preliminary findings are that in Myanmar only a few political parties have a women wing or department. The roles and responsibilities of women departments have not been clearly defined and there are no clear guidelines and procedures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in party structures and decision-making. In addition, there is also a lack of both short and long term capacity building programs to promote women empowerment and leadership within internal party. The study also finds that most local NGOs and the international community have carried out relatively few activities so far on this issue. It is an additional challenge that there

is no joint strategy for this support and no overview of what everybody is doing, which might result in possible overlap and ad hoc initiatives.



Shwe Shwe Sein Latt and Khin Thazin Myint holding consultation on Women in Political Parties

WOMEN IN POLITICS IN MYANMAR

In Myanmar, few women are representing decision-making roles in politics and public life although the country is experiencing reform process in many sectors. Although the Myanmar quasi-civilian government has already ratified the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) since 1997 and launched the National Strategic Plan for Advancement of Women (NSPAW) to improve status of women and equal rights, women still have limitations to participate in politics and decision-making. These includes that the definition of leadership is based on gender and culture, injustice, norms and stereotype, balancing home and work life, gender based violence, discrimination, lack of recognizing gender equality and lack of support to women leaders.

However, there were some improvements in the female participation in political leadership after bi-election in 2012. According to Inter-Parliamentary Union, the percentage of female representation in the parliament has now reached six percent (26 out of 431 members). Moreover, out of 37 ministers, the first female minister was appointed at the Ministry of Social Welfare and seven female deputy ministers were appointed. There were four female ministers at the state and regional level parliament (two in Kachin State, one in Yangon and one in Irrawaddy Region). There is no specific quota for the female representation in parliament even though there are no specific limitations for women's participation in politics in 2008 constitution.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Shwe Shwe Sein Latt is therefore suggesting MMDP to develop comprehensive interventions to increase women's participation in political parties and decision-making and thereby also help achievement of effective democratic transformations. In more concrete terms, it is recommended MMDP to organize awareness rising and advocacy trainings with key decision makers from parliament, election commission, leaders from political parties, and relevant government administrations. Unless the key decision-makers and policy actors are ready and willing to give priority to the promotion of women's rights and their participation in politics, the progress will be difficult to achieve.

Among the ideas recommended are mentoring and coaching programs among female role models and potential female leaders from political parties. It is also important to identify male champions from different political parties and promote them to encourage male members to support female leaders. Additionally MMDP is suggested to organize political women forums, exchange programs, and study tours that could be used as an inspiration for political parties to find out how to bring women and women's interests into politics.

MMDP will now consider how these recommendations can be carried out to the benefit of women and of the political parties.

The engagement of youth in political parties in Myanmar has in the consultations with political parties been identified as a key priority together with the strong interest in strengthening youth political education.

Therefore MMDP has initiated a mapping study to assist MMDP in understanding the current landscape in Myanmar with regard to youth in political parties and to assist MMDP in developing the contours of a three year component on youth in political parties. The study will in particular look at:

- The current debate and state of affairs with regard to youth in political parties in Myanmar
- The main opportunities and challenges faced by political parties in engaging youth and their current plans and aspirations
- The work of other international actors engaged in this field and their plans and interest in cooperation
- An appraisal of the relevance of translating the DIPD Guide: “How to build a Youth Wing” in to local language and the involvement of Danish Youth Party Leaders as trainers and facilitators in Myanmar.

In line with MMDPs partnership approach the activities on youth in political parties will also be undertaken jointly with interested and competent local organisations.



Consultation on Youth in Political Parties with Federal Democracy Alliance

In response to the requests from political parties in Myanmar, the MMDP immediately established a knowledge resource facility for political parties to access international knowledge and experiences in a number of areas.

Examples of areas covered by the Resource and Dialogue Centre are:

- Political party laws and regulations
- Political party financing regulations
- Electoral systems
- Electoral cycles
- Multi-party dialogue and multi-party cooperation
- Role and functions of political parties in democratic transitions
- Relationships with civil society and the media
- Capacity development of political parties

All politically active members can forward queries or questions relating to the challenges of the political parties to MMDP and we will share information, manuals, training tools, guidelines, resource institutions and literature on the topics of interest.

As part of the knowledge facility, a number of information sheets for example on Parliamentary Monitoring Organization, Party Financing, and Party Defection/Floor Crossing have been drafted and translated into local language and shared with the political parties.

In the next phase, the MMDP will further develop the resource center tapping national and international knowledge pertaining to the thematic areas of work and to the work of political parties in Myanmar. The resource center will be a library and a physical meeting place for political parties and provide the facilities for the multiparty dialogues to take place on current issues of interest to the political parties.

Moreover, there are plans of facilitating consultation meetings between the political parties and the UEC focusing both on the priorities outlined in the Strategic Plan of the UEC and on the priorities among the political parties.

Sharing ideas and experiences on multi-party dialogue from other countries are also planned for 2014 providing the Myanmar political parties a first hand experience of multi-party dialogue platforms in countries like Tanzania, Kenya, Nepal and Ghana.

Starting from scratch in Myanmar made the establishment of partnerships both locally and among international actors a high priority. Most importantly has been the good relations with and engagement from the Myanmar political parties, which are our main partners in the programme. Together a large number of consultations, meetings and seminars have been undertaken, which have proved the relevance and need for the work of the Myanmar Multiparty Democracy Programme.

During the pilot phase the advice and sharing at the very start has been greatly appreciated from many organizations. In line with our mandate we have held as broad consultations as possible with political parties across the political rainbow, including members of parliament, chairs of parliamentary committees, the existing political party alliances, presidential advisers and political think-tanks. In the near future the setting-up of a MMDP Planning Committee with representation of the political parties will be explored.

MMDP has enjoyed cooperation with and support from NIMD on the overall programme identification, planning and start-up of activities in the pilot phase and with many other organisations on specific components. For example with IDEA on electoral systems, party financing and women; with IFES on electoral systems and party financing; with IMS on Media and Political Parties; with Danida Fellowship Centre and Action Aid Global Platform on Knowledge Exchange on Local Elections in Denmark – KV13 and with Shalom on the role of political parties in democratic transitions and institutional support to the MMDP in the very first start-up of the programme.

Moreover, a number of local civil society organisations have provided valuable guidance and advice to the programme as well as providing excellent facilitation during our seminars and workshops. The ongoing consultations with among other Yangon School of Political Science, Myanmar Institute for Democracy, Sandhi and Egress are important. We are also grateful for the guidance provided in the pilot phase from DanChurchAid, the Danish Burma Network and the Danish Representation.

We have also enjoyed very good relationships with the Union Electoral Commission, which has been of great importance to the programme. Thus, the Chair of the UEC opened the Seminar on “The role of political parties and media in democratisation” and the UEC participated in several of MMDPs information seminars i.e. on Electoral Systems. Several bilateral consultations have been held with the UEC to consider co-operation and synergies.

At the initiative of the MMDP a Coordination Forum among the Political Party Support Agencies has been formed. This forum (with more than 20 organisations affiliated) has

existed for more than a year with rotating host and provides our programme and other actors a valuable platform for information sharing and coordination.

The MMDP is also participating in the Democratic Initiatives and Processes (DIP) co-ordination forum established by UNDP and the MMDP consults on a regular basis with UNDP, the EU delegation and other international actors.

We have also briefed and met with several delegations both in Denmark and in Myanmar. First of all, DIPD met with Thura Shwe Mann and his delegation during the visit to Denmark at the invitation of the Speaker of Parliament in May 2012.

Moreover, we have briefed and met with the following delegations in Myanmar:

- The Danish Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee
- The Danish Parliament's Presidium
- Secretary General of IDEA and Board Member of DIPD, Vidar Helgesen
- The Danish Policy Formulating Mission
- The EU Election Expert Mission
- HRH Crown Princess Mary of Denmark and the Danish Minister for Development Cooperation

We thank all our partners for the support, advice and cooperation extended and we are committed to continuing and deepening our partnerships in the next period 2014-2017.



Delegation of Thura Shwe Mann visiting Denmark in May 2012