National League for Democracy

The Policy on
Ethnic Nationalities of Burma
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The position of the National League for Democracy regarding the Ethnic Nationalities of Burma

Introduction

1. The Union of Burma is a country inhabited by descendants of ethnic nationalities who migrated from the highlands of Central Asia. It is the motherland of the Kachin, Kayah, Karen, Chin, Burman, Mon, Arakan, Shan, and other ethnic people.

2. Hence, it is important for each ethnic nationality and/or ethnic group to relate to each other with mutual trust and on the basis of equality. While fostering the spirit that all are national brethren originating from one Union, the problem concerning the ethnic majority and the minorities and the subjective fixation on highland or lowland nativity must be totally eradicated.

3. For this, the National Leader General Aung San stated that;

"A nation can be defined as the integration of a group of people whose interests are closely interlinked and who have faced happiness and suffering together for many years. Even though it is necessary to take into consideration significant differences of race, religious belief, and language, the fact is patriotism mainly depends upon the tradition of having a desire to live together through times of weal and woe." It is vitally important for every citizen to accept this as a guiding principle.

4. Only then will we be able to successfully establish "a new democratic Union" — in other words, "a genuine new democratic state" — in which every nationality can live happily together. The Union will only then be strong and consolidated and lasting peace and prosperity will develop among the nationalities.

5. In order to liberate the country from the yoke of the colonialists and establish a strong and consolidated sovereign "Union", national leader General Aung San and ethnic nationality leaders with keen foresight convened the Panglong Conference to hold thorough discussions, particularly on the following two points,
signed the Pang-long Agreement at Panglong, Shan State on 12 February 1947, and regained the country’s independence together:

"... the diminution of any portion of the autonomy which the Frontier Areas now enjoy in internal administration will not be accepted. Full autonomy in internal administration for the Frontier Areas is accepted in principle."

"Citizens of the Frontier Areas shall enjoy rights and privileges which are regarded as fundamental in democratic countries."

6. Equality for all the ethnic nationalities of the Union and rights of autonomy are hence agreed upon and recognized through a "Family spirit" or "Panglong spirit."

7. Profoundly accepting these beliefs, the National League for Democracy solemnly pledges to build a new multi-party democratic nation by concertedly working hand in hand with all the citizens. It will continue to do so until the objective is successfully implemented.

The Unwavering Position Of The National League for Democracy Toward The Ethnic Nationalities

The (Provisional) Constitution and (Draft) Policies of the National League for Democracy

8. The policies of the National League for Democracy towards the ethnic nationalities as stated in the (Provisional) Constitution and (Draft) Policies of the National League for Democracy in October 1988:

Ethnic Nationalities

(a)"... Special priority will be given to resolve the problem of the ethnic nationalities. In doing so, the National League for Democracy will strive to the bitter end to achieve the best solution
on the basis of recognizing equal rights for all ethnic nationalities, showing sincerity, friendship, and respect for the beliefs of others, having high regard for and believing in basic human rights, and promoting the literature, culture and customs of the ethnic nationalities in accordance with their wishes.

Should all ethnic nationalities extend their cooperation in resolving problems we are convinced that the objectives of seeking peace in the Union and harmony among nationalities will certainly be successful. We must strive to successfully implement these objectives."

(b) "Since it is our desire to establish a Union that is developed and economically strong, we will ensure that every state and region is able to freely undertake economic development tasks. We will implement the right of self-determination of the states by practicing the principle which ensures harmony between the nationalities fully enjoying their inherent rights and the prosperity and welfare of the Union as a whole."

**Declaration No 9 of the National League for Democracy**

9. While the National League for Democracy General Secretary Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was on her nationwide organization tour during 1989, she clarified the position and future tasks of the National League for Democracy as outlined in Declaration No. 9 when she was in Shan State's Panglong (11 February 1989).

Her clarification:

(a) "We look toward establishing democratic conditions to the fullest extent possible in the political, economic, social and other sectors of the entire Union and building a new nation that is as democratic as possible."

(b) "We look toward perpetuating, developing, and establishing peace in the Union on the basis of the strength of unity among all the ethnic nationalities."
(c) "Accepting the principle that all the ethnic nationalities in the Union have equal rights, no nationality shall be given any special privilege nor will any ethnic or racial group be withheld from enjoying the rights to which it is entitled."

(d) "We look toward all ethnic nationalities having the right of self-determination in the political, administrative, economic, and other fields."

(e) "We look toward economic development in all integral regions of the nation as well as the whole Union with the cooperation of and through the extension of mutual help and assistance in all fields among all the ethnic nationalities."

10. With regard to General Programs, she said:

(a) "Upon successful establishment of a democratic system, a National Consultative Convention similar to the Panglong Conference, which had instituted future guiding principles for the Union, will be convened so that foundations for a new democratic society can be firmly laid for the implementation of equality and unity of ethnic nationalities as well as peace and tranquility and the development and perpetuation of the Union."

(b) "This National Consultative Convention, with the consent of the majority, shall decide and prescribe matters relating to equal rights and self-determination of all the ethnic nationalities and self-administrative rights for small races living in the area of a big race, having their own languages, own cultures and specific areas of habitation."

(c) "The National Consultative Convention will explore ways through political means to end once and for all, the hostilities and civil conflicts in the Union that destroy the unity of the ethnic nationalities and cause grave political, economic, social, and other hardships."

(d) "The National Consultative Convention will lay down work programs to invest in, safeguard, strongly assist, and guarantee the development as well as encourage mutual exchanges and
study of the economy, literature, customs and culture, and languages of all the ethnic nationalities and the states."

The expression that "a National Consultative Convention similar to the Panglong Conference, which had instituted future guiding principles for the Union, will be convened" means that the convention will be fully imbued with the spirit of the Union."

The Manifesto of the
National League for Democracy Relating to
Multi-party Democracy General Elections

11. After the National League for Democracy decided to run in the multi-party democracy general elections held in May 1990, it made the following pledges in the party's manifesto for the multi-party democracy general elections:

"Equal rights must be enjoyed by all ethnic nationalities. In addition:

(a) "We look toward perpetuating, developing, and establishing peace in the Union on the basis of the strength of unity among all the ethnic nationalities."

(b) "Accepting the principle that all the ethnic nationalities in the Union have equal rights, no nationality shall be given any special privilege nor shall any ethnic or racial group be deterred from enjoying the rights to which it is entitled."

(c) "We look toward ensuring the right of all ethnic nationalities to self-determination in the political, administrative, economic, and other fields in accordance with the state constitution"

(d) "We look toward establishing regional organs of power for the existing States in accordance with the laws prescribed by the "Pyithu Hluttaw" [People's Parliament] before a new constitution can be completed and as an interim measure.
(e) "We look toward developing different integral regions of the nation as well as the whole Union with the cooperation of and through the extension of mutual help and assistance in all fields among all the ethnic nationalities."

(f) Upon successful establishment of a democratic system, a National Consultative Convention similar to the Panglong Conference, which had instituted future guiding principles for the Union, will be convened so that foundations for a new democratic society can be firmly laid for the implementation of equality and unity of ethnic nationalities as well as peace and tranquility and the development and perpetuation of the Union."

(g) All ethnic nationalities have the right to preserve, safeguard, and develop their literature, languages, culture, and customs.

(h) All ethnic nationalities shall partake in the national efforts aimed at perpetuating the sovereignty of the Union of Burma, strengthening national unity, nurturing democracy, and developing political, economic, social, education, health, and regional programs.

National League for Democracy
Consultations with
the United Nationalities League for Democracy

12. The National League for Democracy won the general elections by a landslide with the overwhelming support of the people. After the victory, it gave priority to sounding out the opinions and views of the ethnic nationalities so that "a new, genuine multiparty democratic nation", which is the aspiration of the people, can be established. Accordingly, the National League for Democracy met and consulted with the United Nationalities League for Democracy, consisting of 21 ethnic nationality political parties and released a declaration on 29 August 1990. Some of the points included in this declaration were:

(a) "After the emergence of the 'Pyithu Hluttaw' (People's Parliament), this 'Hluttaw' shall elect a democratic government and play
a leading role in convening at the earliest time possible a 'National Consultative Convention' participated in by representatives of ethnic nationalities as well as organizations and individuals whose presence is deemed necessary so that guiding principles can be laid down for the establishment of the Union. In accordance with the guiding principles prescribed, the 'Pyithu Hluttaw' shall then draft, approve, and ratify a new, long-lasting, and stable state constitution."

(b) "All ethnic nationalities shall have racial and political equality, fully enjoy the right to self-determination, and build through the strength of unity a Union that guarantees democracy and basic human rights."

13. "The meaning of the term 'fully enjoy the right to self-determination' is based on and in accordance with Section 5 of the 1947 Panglong Agreement which states '... the deprivation of any portion of the autonomy which the Frontier Areas now enjoy in internal administration will not be accepted. Full autonomy in internal administration for the Frontier Areas is accepted in principle.' Hence, in line with this ruling and following proper consultations, state and divisional organs of power with self-administering rights shall be given adequate administrative powers.

The Stance of the National League for Democracy with Regard to the Affairs of the Ethnic Nationalities in Drawing Up the Constitution

14. The drawing up of a well defined constitution for a genuine multi-party democratic nation must inevitably be based on democratic principles, human rights, and other fundamental rights. The National League for Democracy has firmly stood by and adhered to the pledges it had given to the people at the time of the general elections. Without first discussing it with the people, the National League for Democracy will never deviate from the promises it had given.

15. The basic principles of the National League for Democracy in drawing up a state constitution:
(a) Ethnic nationalities like to safeguard their lineages that have existed over many generations

(b) They treasure and keenly desire to promote their customs, traditions, cultures and arts, literature, languages, religion, and characteristics

(c) They dearly adore their native land.

(d) They want to continue maintaining the traditions they have had for generations and live freely and independently as before

(e) They want to build an equitable society and live as one big family through weal and woe and on the basis of equality

(f) They want self-determination

16. The National League for Democracy believes that it is necessary to give due recognition to these desires and fulfill their just aspirations. Hence, it is vital to have thorough discussions with an open and broad mind so that political, economic, administrative, social, and other matters are in harmony with time and existing conditions and to ensure that the objectives of democracy, national unity, non-disintegration of the Union, and acceptance of all nationalities as members of one family are achieved.

17. The National League for Democracy believes that should any nationality, having its own territory, own language, and sizeable population within a State or Division wants to have self-administration such a wish must be honored and fulfilled. Regarding this issue, there may be a situation where it becomes necessary to designate within the country, a Union state, a self-administered state, and a nationality state in accordance with political and/or geographical needs. Should such a situation arise, we are of the opinion that the criteria used by the National leader General Aung San in the First Congress of the AFPFL for the drafting of the 1947 Draft Constitution is suitable for consideration: The criteria are:
(a) A well defined geographical boundary;
(b) A unified language different from Burmese;
(c) A unified culture;
(d) A unified historical tradition;
(e) Common interest and adequate economic condition as a group of people;
(f) A sizeable population; and,
(g) A clear will to live in a separate state.

18. All the ethnic nationalities of the Union are members of the same family, and they must share the same geographic features, go through weal and woe, and live together eternally with complete trust for each other. Hence, we believe that in accordance with the state constitution, all states within the Union shall have (a) self-administrative rights, and (b) laws which conform to the constitutional laws of the Union, with the "Hluttaw" having the right to review any law which contravenes the interests of the Union.

19. The country is formed by the integration of ethnic nationalities such as Kachin, Karen, Chin, Mon, Arakan, Shan, etc., based on equality. We believe that it must be devoid of domination, discrimination, unlawful acts, and exploitation of race by race and/or nationality group by another nationality group. The fruits of the country shall be enjoyed by everyone on the basis of one's contribution, either physically or mentally or by virtue of one's diligence and endurance.

20. We hold that every nationality has the right to freedom of worship, freedom of expression — either in writing or in speech, and freedom to nurture and preserve its own precious language, literature, culture, customs, and traditions in accordance with the Constitution without causing harm to anyone.

21. If a well defined genuine multiparty democratic nation is to be built, the state administration must be based on a democratic system, and hence, we hold that the organs of power - from the "Pyithu Hluttaw" to organs of power at different levels - must be formed by representatives elected by the people in accordance with democratic practice.
22. With regard to the formation of "Hluttaw" related organizations, National League for Democracy General Secretary Daw Aung San Suu Kyi consulted the matter with the UNLD on July 15, 1989. Since then, the question of a federal Union was discussed and it was stressed that the formation of the Union does not mean the breakaway of the states. It mainly means peaceful coexistence, smooth cooperation, and sharing of power between the central and state governments. It was agreed that discussions should be held and action taken on sharing power and dividing responsibilities between the central and state governments, opposing chauvinism and narrow-minded nationalist ideas, making utmost efforts to promote friendship and unity among all nationalities, and closer consultations and coordination to be carried out in the efforts to preserve the cultures, customs, and religious rights of all nationalities.

23. Therefore, it was agreed that in forming a Democratic Union, the "Union Hluttaw" will have two Chambers:

(a) The first "Hluttaw" will be composed of representatives elected from the respective constituencies designated as such on the basis of population; and

(b) The second "Hluttaw" will comprise of representatives, an equal number of whom will be elected from each State or Division.

Each State or Division shall establish one "Hluttaw."

According to the fundamentals of democracy, sovereign power rests with the people and the people exercising their sovereign power in accordance with democratic principles elect their own representatives and entrust them to act on their behalf.

24. Relating to the responsibilities of the two "Hluttaw" we hold that both should have equal rights for drafting and tabling bills as well as for scrutinizing, critically reviewing, and offering suggestions on bills tabled. However, we are of the opinion that any bill relating to financial affairs should be initiated by the "Pyithu Hluttaw".
25. Our view with regard to the sharing of power is that it is vital to thoroughly discuss matters which concern the Union and those that concern the states/divisions and following that to prescribe the power accordingly. We profoundly believe that separate legislative rights of the Union and those of the States/Divisions and self-administered regions, as well as their common legislative rights need to be prescribed and enumerated clearly.

26. In adjudication under peculiar circumstances, we hold that some customary laws of the respective ethnic nationalities that comply with the constitution should be allowed to be enforced. However, if these customary laws are not in harmony with the modern era and should the prescription of law of one nationality cause harm to another, the Union "People's Hluttaw" shall have the right to amend and rectify the said laws.

A Summary of the Position Taken by the National League for Democracy with Regard To the Affairs of the Ethnic Nationalities

27. The following is a summary of the position adopted by the National League for Democracy with regard to the affairs of the Ethnic Nationalities:

(a) The motherland should be established under the name of the "Union of Burma"

(b) The unity of all the ethnic nationalities is the fundamental factor vitally needed for peace, stability, all-round development, prosperity, and perpetuity of the motherland, which is established by the integration of all the ethnic nationalities.

(c) In carrying out the interests of the Union and those of the Ethnic Nationalities, it is vital for all nationalities to have equal rights, mutual trust devoid of misgivings, and mutual cooperation and assistance, as well as to work actively as partners while enjoying the fruits of the country on the basis of one's contribution, either physically or mentally or by virtue of one's diligence.
(d) All nationalities shall collectively implement matters concerning the whole nation while enjoying the freedom to practise their languages, cultures, literature, religions which they dearly love and customs and traditions which they wish to preserve.

28. In accordance with the above positions, a genuine multi-party democratic nation will be established as follows:

(a) The motherland will be established as the "Union of Burma"
(b) In establishing the Union, the "Union Pyithu Hluttaw" will be formed with two legislative chambers at the central level - "Pyithu Hluttaw" and the "National Hluttaw"
(c) To form a legislative assembly ~ "Hluttaw" ~ in each State and Division
(d) To form regional organs of power that can exercise self-administrative powers in self-administered regions
(e) To form different levels of organs of power with people's representatives elected by the people through fair and free elections
(f) After thorough discussions, to bestow respective legislative, executive, and judicial powers to different levels of "Hluttaws" and organs of power in self-administered regions
(g) In distributing these powers, thorough discussions are to be held before necessary action is taken so that the Union and the States and Divisions can adequately tackle matters that concern them. In particular, separate legislative rights of the Union and those of the States/Divisions and self-administered regions, as well as their common legislative rights will be prescribed definitively and enumerated properly.
(h) To give regional organs of power the right to exercise, within the framework of the constitution, cultural and customary laws practised by the ethnic nationalities.
(i) To enable every citizen to exercise the freedom to worship the religion of their preference.
29. The fundamental policy of the National League for Democracy is to successfully establish a Union that has a strong economic life, is peaceful and stable, and that guarantees individual rights as well as the rights of Ethnic Nationalities.

30. Seeking national reconciliation through military means will never succeed; we sincerely believe that it can only be achieved through political means. All countries in this world have successfully resolved their domestic problems only through political means.

31. In looking forward to national reconciliation, parties concerned should not hold on subjectively to their dogmatic views. Everyone, including ourselves, must seek the truth by taking lessons from the weaknesses and shortcomings evolved from sincere endeavors made in the interests of all. We firmly hold that the interests of the majority must be upheld while an equitable solution is simultaneously being sought for individual rights and ethnic nationality rights.

32. Hence when the constitution is prescribed, it must provide democratic guarantees acceptable by the majority and the people must be able to freely elect their representatives in accordance with the key democratic principle that says sovereign power rests with the people. We profoundly believe that only then can peace, stability, prosperity, and development be truly achieved.
Conclusion

The above position of the National League for Democracy relating to the ethnic nationalities is based on the principles that the National League for Democracy has firmly adhered to since its inception and it will continue to do so. We believe that a genuine democratic nation will never be possible without building strong unity among the ethnic nationalities.

In order to carry forth the interests of the nation and those of the ethnic nationalities on the basis of the principles stated above, it will be essential to embody those principles in the state constitution. This is because a constitution is a contract between the government and the people. Specifically speaking, a constitution must be one that is acceptable to the majority of the people and only then will leaders of ethnic nationalities, political parties, and authoritative bodies will be able to hold face-to-face talks to achieve national reconciliation. We profoundly believe that only then will a well defined "genuine multiparty democratic nation" or "Democratic Union" emerge.

National League for Democracy
Rangoon

9 th. Waning of Tabodwe, 1357 ME
12 February, 1996
“အာရှအာဏာရာတွင် အမျိုးသမီးများနှင့် စိတ်ကူးပြုလုပ်မှုများ ဆောင်ရွက်ရန် အာရှပြည်သူများ လိုအပ်သည် ယူနိုင်သည်”

- နောက်ထိုးမှုများကို အာရှပြည်သူများ အဖွဲ့ မှ စတင်လိုက်နာရင် (၃) မျိုးသို့ ချက်ချင်သော အပေါ် မူလိုက်မြောက် အလွန်အပြင် ပြန်လည်ဖြစ်စေပါမည်

နောက်ထိုးမှုများကို နောက်ထိုးမှုများကို အာရှပြည်သူများ အဖွဲ့ မှ စတင်လိုက်နာရင် (၃) မျိုးသို့ ချက်ချင်သော အပေါ် မူလိုက်မြောက် အလွန်အပြင် ပြန်လည်ဖြစ်စေပါမည်

အာရှပြည်ထောင်စု၏ မြန်မာ့အာရှအာဏာရာများ ဆောင်ရွက်မှုများ အခြေခံသည့် အာရှပြည်သူများ

ယော့ချ္ချားတစ်ချိန် အာရှပြည်သူများ

(၁) မြန်မာ့အာရှအာဏာရာများ အလွန်အပြင် ပြန်လည်ဖြစ်စေခြင်း အသစ်နှင့် အသစ်များ

(၂) မြန်မာ့အာရှအာဏာရာများ မြန်မာ့အာရှအာဏာရာများ

(၃) မြန်မာ့အာရှအာဏာရာများ မြန်မာ့အာရှအာဏာရာများ
治理民族政策的实施和执行

在治理民族政策的实施和执行过程中，政府需要采取一系列措施来确保政策的顺利实施。这些措施包括但不限于：

1. 建立专门的机构和委员会来监督和实施政策
   - 政府应该建立一个专门的机构或委员会，负责监督和执行民族政策。这些机构或委员会应由不同民族的代表组成，以确保政策的公正性和可接受性。

2. 制定具体实施计划
   - 政府应该制定一个具体实施计划，明确各个阶段的目标和时间表。这将有助于确保政策的顺利实施。

3. 培训和教育
   - 政府应该提供培训和教育，帮助相关人员了解和掌握政策。这包括对民族政策相关法律和规定的培训，以及对实施过程中可能出现的问题的培训。

4. 发展和促进民族经济发展
   - 政府应该发展和促进民族经济的发展，通过提供必要的支持和资源，帮助民族经济发展。

5. 建立广泛的公众参与机制
   - 政府应该建立广泛的公众参与机制，让更多的民族参与政策的制定和实施过程。这将有助于提高政策的接受度和实施效果。

通过这些措施的实施，可以确保治理民族政策的顺利实施，从而促进民族之间的和谐与共同发展。
(၂) မူလအချိန်အတွင်း အခြေခံရရှိသည့် အခြေအခံများနှင့် သတိနှိုင်မှုများကို အနည်းဆုံး သိမ်းထားရှိပြီး

(၃) ပေစိုက်စီးအား ကျသောကြောင့် သိမ်းထားရှိပြီး

(၄) အခြေခံရရှိသည့် အခြေအခံများနှင့် သတိနှိုင်မှုများကို သက်သေအားဖြင့်

(၅) အချိန်များကို အားလုံးရှိသည် အသိပေးရန် လိုအပ်သည်။

(၆) စိတ်ဝင်စားခြင်းများအား ပေးလျက် ရှိသည်။

ကျွမ်းကျင်မှုအား ကိုးကွယ်ရန် အသိပေးချက်များကို အားလုံးရှိသည်။

အကြောင်းအရင်းများကို အားလုံးရှိသည်။

စိတ်ဝင်စားခြင်းများကို ပေးလျက် ရှိသည်။

The Policy on Ethnic Minorities of Burma
မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ၏ အမေရိကန်းများအတွက် လူမျိုးများအနေဖြင့် မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ၏ လူမျိုးများအား အမှန်တကယ် ကိုယ်စားပြုခြင်း -

(၁) ဒီနေရာတွင် “လူမျိုးများအား” နှင့် “အမေရိကန်းများ” မြို့အား ရှေးသော်လည်း မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ၏ လူမျိုးများအား အမှန်တကယ် ကိုယ်စားပြုခြင်း ဖြစ်သည်။

(၂) လူမျိုးများအား အမေရိကန်းများမှ အသုံးပြုခြင်း ရှိသည်။ လူမျိုးများကို အမေရိကန်းများသိပ်သည်ဟု ကြိုးစားလျက် ရှိသည်။ သို့သော်လည်း အမေရိကန်းများကို လူမျိုးများမှ အသွေးအမှတ် ပေးခြင်း ဖြစ်သည်။

(၃) လူမျိုးများအား အမေရိကန်းများမှ အသွေးအမှတ် ပေးခြင်း ဖြစ်သည်။ လူမျိုးများကို အမေရိကန်းများသိသည်ဟု ကြိုးစားလျက် ရှိသည်။ သို့သော်လည်း အမေရိကန်းများကို လူမျိုးများမှ အသွေးအမှတ် ပေးခြင်း ဖြစ်သည်။

(၄) လူမျိုးများအား အမေရိကန်းများမှ အသွေးအမှတ် ပေးခြင်း ဖြစ်သည်။ လူမျိုးများကို အမေရိကန်းများသိသည်ဟု ကြိုးစားလျက် ရှိသည်။ သို့သော်လည်း အမေရိကန်းများကို လူမျိုးများမှ အသွေးအမှတ် ပေးခြင်း ဖြစ်သည်။

(၅) လူမျိုးများအား အမေရိကန်းများမှ အသွေးအမှတ် ပေးခြင်း ဖြစ်သည်။ လူမျိုးများကို အမေရိကန်းများသိသည်ဟု ကြိုးစားလျက် ရှိသည်။ သို့သော်လည်း အမေရိကန်းများကို လူမျိုးများမှ အသွေးအမှတ် ပေးခြင်း ဖြစ်သည်။

(၆) လူမျိုးများအား အမေရိကန်းများမှ အသွေးအမှတ် ပေးခြင်း ဖြစ်သည်။ လူမျိုးများကို အမေရိကန်းများသိသည်ဟု ကြိုးစားလျက် ရှိသည်။ သို့သော်လည်း အမေရိကန်းများကို လူမျိုးများမှ အသွေးအမှတ် ပေးခြင်း ဖြစ်သည်။
Extracts from the policies, notifications and statements relating to the ethnic nationalities issued by the National League for Democracy (NLD)
The ( Provisional) Constitution and ( Draft) Policies of the National League for Democracy

"... Special priority will be given to resolve the problem of the ethnic nationalities. In doing so, the National League for Democracy will strive to the bitter end to achieve the best solution on the basis of recognizing equal rights for all ethnic nationalities, showing sincerity, friendship, and respect for the beliefs of others, having high regard for and believing in basic human rights, and promoting the literature, culture and customs of the ethnic nationalities in accord with their wishes.

"Since it is our desire to establish a Union that is developed and economically strong, we will ensure that every state and region is able to freely undertake economic development tasks. We will implement the right of self-determination of the states by practicing the principle which ensures harmony between the nationalities fully enjoying their inherent rights and the prosperity and welfare of the Union as a whole."

The Manifesto of the National League for Democracy
Relating to Multi-party Democracy General Elections

"Equal rights must be enjoyed by all ethnic nationalities. In addition:

(a) "We look toward perpetuating, developing, and establishing peace in the Union on the basis of the strength of unity among all the ethnic nationalities."

(b) "Accepting the principle that all the ethnic nationalities in the Union have equal rights, no nationality shall be given any special privilege nor shall any ethnic or racial group be deterred from enjoying the rights to which it is entitled."

(c) "We look toward ensuring the right of all ethnic nationalities to self-determination in the political, administrative, economic, and other fields in accordance with the state constitution"
(e) "We look toward developing different integral regions of the nation as well as the whole Union with the cooperation of and through the extension of mutual help and assistance in all fields among all the ethnic nationalities."

(g) All ethnic nationalities have the right to preserve, safeguard, and develop their literature, languages, culture, and customs.

(h) All ethnic nationalities shall partake in the national efforts aimed at perpetuating the sovereignty of the Union of Burma, strengthening national unity, nurturing democracy, and developing political, economic, social, education, health, and regional programs.

Declaration No 9 of the National League for Democracy

(a) "We look toward establishing democratic conditions to the fullest extent possible in the political, economic, social and other sectors of the entire Union and building a new nation that is as democratic as possible."

(b) "We look toward perpetuating, developing, and establishing peace in the Union on the basis of the strength of unity among all the ethnic nationalities."

(c) "Accepting the principle that all the ethnic nationalities in the Union have equal rights, no nationality shall be given any special privilege nor will any ethnic or racial group be withheld from enjoying the rights to which it is entitled."

(d) "We look toward all ethnic nationalities having the right of self-determination in the political, administrative, economic, and other fields."

(e) "We look toward economic development in all integral regions of the nation as well as the whole Union with the cooperation of and through the extension of mutual help and assistance in all fields among all the ethnic nationalities."
With regard to General Programs, she said:

(b) "This National Consultative Convention, with the consent of the majority, shall decide and prescribe matters relating to equal rights and self-determination of all the ethnic nationalities and self-administrative rights for small races living in the area of a big race, having their own languages, own cultures and specific areas of habitation."

(c) "The National Consultative Convention will explore ways through political means to end once and for all, the hostilities and civil conflicts in the Union that destroy the unity of the ethnic nationalities and cause grave political, economic, social, and other hardships."

(d) "The National Consultative Convention will lay down work programs to invest in, safeguard, strongly assist, and guarantee the development as well as encourage mutual exchanges and study of the economy, literature, customs and culture, and languages of all the ethnic nationalities and the states."

The expression that "a National Consultative Convention similar to the Panglong Conference, which had instituted future guiding principles for the Union, will be convened" means that the convention will be fully imbued with the spirit of the Union."

National League for Democracy
Consultations with
the United Nationalities League for Democracy

The National League for Democracy won the general elections by a landslide with the overwhelming support of the people. After the victory, it gave priority to sounding out the opinions and views of the ethnic nationalities so that "a new, genuine multiparty democratic nation", which is the aspiration of the people, can be established. Accordingly, the National League for Democracy met and consulted with the United Nationalities League for Democracy, consisting of 21 ethnic nationality political parties and released a declaration on 29 August 1990. Some of the points included in this declaration were:
(a) "After the emergence of the 'Pyithu Hluttaw' (People's Parliament), this 'Hluttaw' shall elect a democratic government and play a leading role in convening at the earliest time possible a 'National Consultative Convention' participated in by representatives of ethnic nationalities as well as organizations and individuals whose presence is deemed necessary so that guiding principles can be laid down for the establishment of the Union. In accordance with the guiding principles prescribed, the 'Pyithu Hluttaw' shall then draft, approve, and ratify a new, long-lasting, and stable state constitution."

(b) "All ethnic nationalities shall have racial and political equality, fully enjoy the right to self-determination, and build through the strength of unity a Union that guarantees democracy and basic human rights."

Submissions to the National Convention
(Between 1993 to 1997)

"The State shall undertake the task to promote unity and mutual cooperation among the ethnic nationalities and to ensure such conditions continue to prevail and develop."

"All ethnic nationalities have the right to freely profess their religion, promote their adored language, literature, culture and traditions so long as such practices are not unlawful and against the public interest."

"Every citizen ...
(a) Shall enjoy equal status under the law irrespective of race, religion, social stature, or gender."

All the states shall have the right to self-administration in accordance with this constitution. All the laws enacted by the states shall conform to the constitution of the Union. In case any laws enacted by the states adversely affect the interests of the Union, the 'Pyithu Hluttaw' shall have the right of review."
"Should an occasion arise where 'Pyithu Hluttaw' needs to legislate on any issue relating to ethnic nationalities, 'Pyithu Hluttaw' has the right to make a decision only if over 75 percent (seventy five percent) of Members of Parliament representing the state concerned give approval."

"The Union of Burma is a country formed by 135 ethnic nationalities and ethnic groups all of equal stature, such as Kachin, Kayah, Karen, Chin, Burmese, Mon, Arakan-ese, Shan, etc. As such, it is prohibited for any one national race, one ethnic group or an individual to dominate, control or take advantage over another nationality, group or individual." "Everyone must have the right to enjoy the country's resources according to one's physical, mental, tenacity and effort."

"... To live in unity through thick and thin and with equal status we should enjoy our country's resources using one's physical, mental attributes and hard work."

"Moreover, the speech made by National Leader General Aung San:

"A nation is the result of people living together through thick and thin and deciding after a long period of time, realizing the benefits of being together, like-minded people formed a nation. Although weight must be given to racial origin, religion, and language in actual fact the desire to remain together during good and bad times forms the basis for nationalism," - is a guideline worthy of special note.

"NLD will firmly adhere to these basic principles and practice them accordingly. Specifically, the NLD will not tolerate any situation that affects the unity of ethnic nationalities and leads to the destruction of the Union. Furthermore, the NLD has already publicly declared that it totally rejects any policy of big nation chauvinism.

"Being human, it is natural for members of a family to have misunderstandings, differences of opinion. But there is no problem which cannot be solved through mutual discussions. It is a well known
fact that even sovereign countries in many instances settle their differences through negotiations and discussions. We as human beings can have family squabbles and as such we will be able to solve any issue if peaceful negotiations are carried out in familial spirit. It should not be burdensome to start negotiations. No individual or nationality must try to dominate, control, bully, take advantage of another person or race. We must rid ourselves of such sentiments as large or minor racial group and feelings of doubt and suspicion. We have to cultivate a familial spirit or Panglong spirit or Union spirit and maintain it at all times and live together with one mind, hand in hand, indivisible. For the development and perpetuation of our Union we will defend it with familial spirit, unity and solidarity against any danger from inside or without. Let us take a solemn oath to this effect.

"We must pledge that the fruits of our nation will be shared according to our physical and mental labor as well as our contribution through tenacity and effort while also actively fulfilling our collective and individual responsibilities."

"Laws must be prescribed stating that the Ethnic Nationalities shall be allowed the right to continue to practice their cherished culture, traditions, language, and literature provided that by doing so, national solidarity is not adversely affected or detrimental to the interests of the Union."

"In order to have the right to be elected as the President of the Union by the Ethnic Nationalities on a rotational basis, the Members of Parliament shall elect one of the members as President on rotational basis, based on the 7 (seven) states and the Divisions."

"... It is therefore, proposed that the following committees based on subjects be formed to assist the Government..."

a) ................................
b) ................................
c) ................................
d) ................................

e) Ethnic Nationalities Affairs Committee
f) ................
9) ..........................
"...States. Being "self-administered states" they will possess legislative, administrative and judicial powers but according to the prevailing situation in the country there will be 2 (two) types of powers, namely power retained by the 'Pyithu Hluttaw' and power that ought to be transferred to the states. When drafting the constitution the division of power must be thoroughly discussed, making objective assessments for the interests of the Union as a whole and the respective states and then decide on appropriate empowerment. (Example, As in the Constitution of 1974 which shows a chart clarifying legislative matters)

"A note of caution here is that it is extremely important to have uniformity of law in a country otherwise if certain enactments which relate only to one's own region in the fields of culture and traditions conflict with Union Constitution or with existing laws in the rest of the country, it will not be possible to administer the nation peacefully. It will also cause disunity and dissension among the people. Such an issue is not unique to our country. Every other country has to enact similar legislation. It is therefore extremely important to exercise caution when appropriation of authority and powers is being done. It is to prevent such undesirable matters arising and to see that there is no misunderstanding between the Union and the nationalities that in above-mentioned paragraph 50 (g) it has been stipulated that the 'Pyithu Hluttaw' in which all nationalities will be represented has the right to review all laws enacted by State Legislatures and make timely changes and it is why such a policy was suggested."

"'State Councils' are to be formed in the States. When such councils are formed it will only be democratic if the members are elected by the public. Based on past experience if widespread elections are held there will be numerous parties and a large number of candidates. It ought to be noticed the country will have to meet heavy expenses and it will also be difficult to manage the process. Thus, having regard to all factors the councils should be formed with Members of Parliament from a particular state who are not working at the Federal level. In this manner Members during Parliament recess will be serving their state, having a hand in state projects and in touch with every situation in the state. The State Council is the most powerful organization in the state since in ac-
cordance with the constitution it can enact laws, lay down policy and authorize projects. The Council is to meet once a month on a regular basis, hold ad hoc meetings as required and carry out the duties."

The State Council shall elect 1 (one) Chairman, 1 (one) Deputy Chairman, 1 (one) Secretary and 4 (four) Councilors from among themselves to form an Executive Committee who will serve full time on state duties. In the Kayah State Council, 1 (one) Chairman, 1 (one) Vice Chairman, 1 (one) Secretary and 2 (two) Members shall be elected to serve as Executive Committee members.

"The Chairman of the Executive Committee of the State Council shall be the Chairman of that state. In view of the special circumstances of the states, the state chairman by virtue of the post shall be a member of the (Central) Government and also perform the duties of State Minister of the state concerned. It has been stated above that the Prime Minister himself will select the ministers who will work with him, when a government is formed. However, in deference to the fact that self-administration having been granted to the states and the state chairman being permitted to be elected according to democratic principles the state chairman ought to be accepted as a member of the (Central) Government as a minister for the state concerned. In this respect, the possibility of someone who does not belong to the prime minister's political organization or who is not on good terms with the Prime Minister being included cannot be ruled out. However, it is presumed that it should not be a matter for concern since such a person will have been elected democratically and will be bound to uphold the interests of the Union and the nationalities over other issues. Moreover, the 'Pyithu Hluttaw' will be enacting legislation separately relating to State Councils."

"The State Chairmen will be included in the Central Government as State Ministers."
The Declaration on the Seventh Anniversary of the General Elections

Furthermore, the NLD issued a statement about its position on the issues of democracy and equality cited in the declaration of the United Nationalities League for Democracy on May 5, 1990:

1) To achieve democracy as well as political equality and right of self-determination for the Ethnic Nationalities
2) To achieve unity of all the Ethnic Nationalities
3) To establish a genuine Union system
4) To develop the states proportionately and to build the whole Union into a modern, developed nation
5) To abolish all dictatorial systems
6) To achieve internal peace

"The declarations by the Ethnic Nationalities, resolutions by the United Nations, and the policies of NLD are all identical in nature, hence political problems can be resolved only through dialogue between:

a) Democratic forces headed by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi
b) Ethnic nationalities
c) State Law and Order Restoration Council** (**now the State Peace and Development Council, SPDC)

Since the NLD is of the view that political problems cannot be resolved through subjugation, a decision was made to earnestly urge the authorities to immediately begin taking steps to initiate a dialogue

Announcement by NLD on the 50th Anniversary of Union Day

The establishment of a peaceful, tranquil, and truly democratic Union of Burma must be made on the basis of such requisites as the unity, equality, and mutual respect and trust of all ethnic nationalities. In an environment where basic human rights are being deprived the ethnic nationalities will be unable to obtain rights
due to them. On the other hand, depriving equal privileges to the ethnic nationalities will also prevent a true democratic system from being achieved. Regaining democracy and basic human rights is directly linked to achieving unity and complete understanding and based on equality of all ethnic nationalities. In other words "these are two sides of the same coin."

"All the ethnic nationalities must aim for the successful establishment of a new Union of Burma which guarantees peace and tranquility, individual rights, the privileges and rights of the ethnic nationalities, and economic stability. We hold the firm conviction that to revive the unity of all nationalities it is time to hold face to face discussions based on "Panglong Spirit" between the leaders of the ethnic nationalities, the leaders of the ruling authorities, and the leaders of the democratic groups, including the National League for Democracy.

From the speech given by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on the 50th Anniversary of Union Day (1997)

Today is the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Panglong agreement. The hopes and aspirations of our national leaders and the leaders of the ethnic nationalities have not yet been realized. The Panglong Agreement is not merely a document written on the paper. It is an avowal of belief in national solidarity that is written on the hearts of all our citizens. It is now half a century since the Union of Burma became a sovereign independent nation. But because we have not yet been able to achieve genuine unity, it is very difficult to call our country a true Union.

To achieve true solidarity we need a system that will allow all our ethnic nationalities to express openly and without danger their hopes, aspirations, fears, resentments and dissatisfactions. Only if there is such a system will we be able to dissipate the misunderstandings and dissatisfactions that exist between us. I can promise that our party, the National League for Democracy, will strive sincerely to bring about full understanding between the peoples of our Union. On this 50th anniversary of Union Day, I invite all the ethnic nationalities to cooperate with us.
The seminar held at Mae Tha Raw Hta from 7 to 14 January by 15 ethnic nationality groups and other representative of ethnic nationalities issued a statement. In this statement it is said that "since the time of independence in 1948, successive regimes in power have violated the right to equality of all citizens irrespective of race" as provided for in Panglong Agreement. Armed subjuga-
tion by successive regimes, practicing racial chauvinism for the last 49 years, has been a disastrous experience of suffering, unprecedented in history for the ethnic nationalities. It is a matter of
great regret that these bitter experiences of the ethnic nationalities led to lack of confidence in the Union. To remedy these mistakes of
the past is the duty of all of us. By all of us, I mean the ethnic
nationalities as well as the majority Burmese. We must consider
the aspirations of the ethnic nationalities. In the agreement of the
seminar these aspirations are stated as follows:

a) To dismantle the military dictatorship and establish
peace in the country;
b) To practice the democratic political system;
c) To achieve the right of equality and self-determination
for each and every nationality;
d) To establish a federal union.

A declaration entitled The Views of the Ethnic Nationalities on
Democracy and Equality has also come out. According to this
declaration, the essential needs of our country are;

1) Democracy and political equality for the ethnic nation
alities;
2) Solidarity between all the people of the nations;
3) Establishing a genuine Union;
4) The proportionate progress of all the states and for the modern-
zation and progress of the whole Union;
5) To abolish all forms of dictatorship;
6) Internal peace.

If we look at the views expressed in the above declarations, the
abolishment of dictatorship, internal peace, democracy and equal-
ity for all the ethnic nationalities constitute the essential founda-
tion for a true Union. We shall all have to join hands and work to-

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The Policy on Ethnic Nationalities of Burma
gether to fulfill these basic requirements. It cannot be denied that our ethnic brothers and sisters are well aware of this. In the conclusion of the declaration entitled The Views of the Ethnic Nationalities on Democracy and Equality it is said that:

we should strive to establish unity through discussions between all those who have political standing within the country, legitimate political parties and cease-fire groups. If we can't do this, we shall all be gradually diminished, drowned in difficult, ties and destroyed. Therefore (we) would like to urge that we should try to gather together all those within reach and strive to free ourselves for (our) general difficulties.

"...for the emergence of a genuine Union based on the equality of all the ethnic nationalities, it is clearly necessary for all the ethnic nationalities to work together in strong unity with our forces which are striving for democracy and human rights. As a commemoration of this 50th anniversary of Union Day, I hereby invite all the ethnic nationality leaders, those with political standing in the country, legitimate political parties and cease-fire groups to cooperate with us in a seminar as a prelude to a future Convention which will revive the spirit of Panglong and which will truly represent the people. I earnestly invite all the ethnic nationalities to come to join us in a preliminary seminar to a Convention which will represent all the people of the nation.

From Volume (8) Commemorating the First Anniversary of the Committee Representing 'People' Parliament' relating to problems facing the nationalities and the future of the Union

"...Real peace will never be achieved and national unity can never be built so long as the problems concerning the ethnic nationalities remain unresolved correctly. A democratic system and multi-ethnic nationalism need to be implemented and practiced if national unity is to be established..."

"The political problems that need to be tackled now by Burma are the promotion of democracy and resolution of the problems relat-
ing to ethnic nationalities. Although the issues can be presumed as separate, the two problems are so intertwined they can hardly be separated. Just as the rights of the ethnic nationalities cannot be taken up without democracy flourishing, national unity cannot be achieved without resolving the ethnic nationalities problem. Progress and development will remain as a mental exercise so long as national unity cannot be achieved. If problems concerning ethnic nationalities are not handled appropriately or tackled erroneously national unity will be destroyed and the Union of Burma is bound to face dangerous situations. This problem must therefore be dealt with in a serious manner. In handling the situation, it is extremely important to be impartial and objective..."

In the future Union of Burma:

1) The fullest democratic principles must be practiced.
2) The right of self-administration and self-determination of ethnic nationalities must be given recognition.
3) No one shall be given special privileges.
4) The Union must be established on the basis of the principle of equality
5) Being a country where several ethnic nationalities reside states with self-administered regions and special ethnic regions should be created in the states with self-administration rights.

These are the suggestions for inclusion when the constitution is drafted based on the above-mentioned basic issues.

"The Union of Burma cannot resolve the prevailing problems relating to political, economic, social, and ethnic nationality issues and is, therefore, facing all sorts of difficulties now. We are deeply convinced that the only way to overcome the difficulties and solve the problems is through a substantive political dialogue for national reconciliation between the Defense Services (existing ruling authorities), the democratic forces including NLD, the ethnic nationalities whose parties contested the elections, and ethnic armed organizations.
From the Declaration Commemorating
the 53rd Union Day

"...The basic principles about sovereign power coming from the people must be observed and treated with great respect"

"... National programs that will resolve national problems and lead to national unity must be laid down only by the 'Pyithu Hluttaw'. Under such programs, a more wide-ranging, inclusive, and democratic convention shall be convened. Following the basic principles agreed to after discussions at the convention a genuine Union will be established, thereby the problems relating to ethnic nationalities will be solved.

"... Moreover, since the ceasefire ethnic forces are also part and parcel of the ethnic nationalities, the forces and the ethnic nationality political parties will need to join hands to reach a solution regarding the problems affecting ethnic nationalities."

"... As a result of continued efforts on issues concerning their own nationalities, problems relating to all ethnic nationalities, and for the emergence of a genuine Union, an alliance of 4 (four) ethnic nationality political parties has firmly been established.

"... Solving the drug problem through 'quick cure' methods such as crop substitution or relocation of opium growers to another place in batches will not work. While crop substitution may benefit local residents to some extent, it is not an effective method to eradicate opium or reduce narcotic drugs."

"The regions where opium and narco-products are cultivated are those where minor ethnic groups reside and their politics, economy and social welfare are connected in one way or another with the problems faced by all the ethnic nationalities. It is therefore not possible to separate the reduction and eradication of drug cultivation from the fundamental political problem applicable to the ethnic nationalities"
From the Announcement issued on the 55th Anniversary of Union Day

"... Union Day is a memorable day when the brethren comprising all the ethnic nationalities vowed to be united and of one mind in order to regain independence for the Union of Burma without differentiating states and mainland ..."

"... The signing of the historic Panglong Agreement, a valuable landmark, serves as a guideline to achieve success as a result of unity through discussions between individuals, parties and groupings, and racial entities. It gave rise to Panglong spirit or Union Spirit...."

".... Only a political solution can bring about real and unshakeable unity which will guarantee the future of the Union ...."

"The problems which presently need to be tackled urgently in Burma are democratic development and national unity. These two issues are conjoined and inseparable. Just as the rights of all nationalities cannot be fulfilled without democratic development, it will also not be possible to build a solid long lasting Union if we fail to create unity among all the nationalities."

"Accordingly, NLD will always give serious attention to the promotion of democracy and at the same time the energizing of the Union spirit and strengthening of national unity."

NLD adopted the following policies in relation to ethnic nationalities

"To aim for the perpetuation, development and peace and tranquility of the Union hand in hand and in unity with all ethnic nationalities."

"To aim for the prosperity and progress of the entire union and each and every state and region in the Union with the co-operation, assistance and aid of all nationalities in each and every area"
"All the ethnic nationalities have the right to protect, defend and promote their literature, language, culture and traditions."

"All the nationalities must participate in proportion to the size of the Union in such matters concerning the perpetuation of the sovereignty of the union, solidarity and unity of all nationalities, development of democracy, politics, economy, social welfare, education, health, regional development, etc."

"A truly democratic Union of Burma must be established based on these principles."

"Since the Union of Burma is a country with several ethnic nationalities it is extremely important that all these nationalities live in peace and solidarity. When a national policy is laid down and practiced, a big racial chauvinism and a narrow-minded nationalism must be shunned. It will be possible to establish a truly prosperous, developed, peaceful and tranquil Union of Burma only if a policy guided by peace and solidarity is adopted and democratic principles are practiced."

"The primary requirement according to current historical context is to respect the people’s desire and to show deference to democratic practices. Only if the political principle that a country’s sovereign power is vested in the people is practiced will the union as a whole be on a solid base. The main requirement for the emergence of national unity and solidarity is to accept the people’s freedom of self-determination and to treasure democratic rights."

Extracts of speeches delivered during
NLD General Secretary Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s Travels

"One of the obligations of the NLD is to develop cordial relations with ethnic nationalities and to have the right approach to do so and this is very important. We shall always work hard in hand with our allies. Our Union of Burma is made up of several nationalities but up-to-now the features of a Union are not clearly defined."
"Our future will be secure only when all over nationalities march together hand in hand. If the ethnic nationalities are at odds with one another, if they are disinclined to work in unison the future of the Union is one to be viewed with apprehension."

"Our country, Burma is one with several ethnic nationalities. Just before independence, from the time my father and his compatriots fighting for independence were of the opinion that a country like ours with different racial groupings should be established as a Union in order to develop and achieve unity. A Union of Burma would enable all the ethnic nationalities to oversee and maintain their culture, language and traditions."

"...We must try and unify all differing views. Only after agreement is reached, we will work towards a genuine peace. As far as we are concerned, we always consider our ethnic relatives as our equal."

"Among the ethnic nationalities, in spite of racial differences, we can get agreement with a meeting of the mind and shared belief. By belief, I mean for the country. Based on our desire to establish a Union system we can proceed on that premise. In our country, we need to have great consideration for our ethnic nationalities."

"Our country is a Union and as such the country can progress only when all the ethnic nationalities are united. We must, therefore, have unity among us. We have come here for unity alone. It is not for NLD that we are here."

"If there is any dissatisfaction among the ethnic nationalities, the Burmese as the majority race is mostly to blame. One responsibility of the majority race is to protect the interests of the minority. We, therefore, need to establish a Union which will give a guarantee to protect all basic human rights. We must all aim for this objective."

"If there is any difference of views between us we must be able to openly express and discuss the matter. Without resorting to force and negotiate issues over which we are at odds with one another, only then can be attain peace. There can be no progress
in a country where peaceful conditions do not prevail. We cannot do anything to achieve progress if we are worried, full of anxiety all the time."

"What do we want the most? If there is any dissension over why we want democracy, we cannot agree on this issue, it is better to discuss matters, rather than resort to force, to arrive at a solution we must all work towards this objec-tive."

"I would like to request all ethnic nationalities to assist to the best of their ability for the establishment of a Union which will pro- vide safety for everyone."

"Independence was gained because of help rendered by all ethnic nationalities."

"All the nationalities must provide all assistance in establishing a democratic system."

"We have embarked on this trip imbued with Union spirit."

"Burmese and Chin nationals are the same. There may be differences but where we are no different is we are human beings. We don't want to have a life full of anxiety. Everybody has the right to hope for happy existence."

"No one can be devoid of politics. If the intention is to shape one's life, efforts must be made and if there is unity, it makes things easier. Helping each other, sharing suffering, when everything is taken into account, then the suffering will decrease and more heart­ ening things lie ahead."

"Burma being a country with several nationalities, traditional cultures abound, so everyone must have the right to safeguard one's culture."

If we are united among ourselves, our differences will be a source of strength for us."
"A Union, which is composed of several states, respects the wishes and the inherent rights of the people in those states, honors their democratic rights, and enables them to enjoy freedom, equal in status, and the right to have equal privileges through weal and woe."

"When we reflect on ways to solve the problems of ethnic nationalities we find that we must rid ourselves of the obsession of the past 50 years after gaining independence relating to misconception and racial prejudices. In addition it will be necessary to study past history together with the problems concerning nationalities developing internationally and then seek an impartial and objective solution. In viewing the issues which arose and are still in existence in connection with ethnic nationalities it is not possible to expect all these difficulties to be solved simply by signing ceasefire agreements with the armed ethnic groups. It should be followed by political discussions."

"... The only way to settle the issues is though 'dialogue', and the basic principle governing the dialogue is to recognize the basic birthright of respective ethnic nationalities and to establish a Union with genuine democratic principles."

"... In Burma democratic rights have ceased to exist for all its people (including ethnic nationalities) and ethnic nationalities have lost the right of self-determination and their birthright."

"These problems may appear to be two difficult issues but they are related and so intertwined as to be indivisible. Just as an independent, modern, rich and developed country cannot be established without having democratic principles, so also if the ethnic nationalities' problems are not solved it will not be possible to set up an independent, modern, prosperous, and developed country."
"It is better for this reason that the issue relating to democracy and ethnic nationalities must be dealt with simultaneously."

"When building national unity the first stage towards national reconciliation is building confidence on a firm base and secondly to seek a solution to the problems through mutual discussions and having accomplished that national solidarity and unity can be created."

"The current situation prevailing in Burma demands that all political, ethnic nationality, economic, social, education, and other problems be urgently resolved as a national issue. If these problems are not settled soonest possible, conditions will deteriorate and the problems will become commingled and the country will deteriorate beyond solution. This will cause the country and the people to undergo unfathomable suffering.

"It is therefore imperative that strong confidence building measures must be taken among State Peace and Development Council, NLD, ethnic nationality political parties, and armed ethnic groups and all the problems should be settled expeditiously after full discussions."

From the 58th Session (Third Committee) of the United Nations

"To restore democracy and respect the results of the 1990 elections and to enter immediately into substantive and structured dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other leaders of the National League for Democracy directed towards democratization and national reconciliation and, at an early stage, include other political leaders in these talks, including representatives of ethnic groups."
From the Report of the Secretary - General on the Human Rights Situation in Burma

"...The Secretary-General therefore appeals once again to Senior General Than Shwe and other leaders of the Government to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and colleagues without delay to initiate immediately substantive dialogue with NLD. Dialogue that includes the ethnic nationality groups should occur soon after or in parallel. The Secretary General continues to maintain that it is only through an all-inclusive dialogue that the Government of Myanmar will be able to ensure that national reconciliation is durable, the transition to democracy is smooth and Myanmar's future as a stable prosperous and multi-ethnic nation is secure."

Extracts from the Coordination Meetings of United Nationalities League for Democracy, NLD General Secretary Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

"Primarily, we have Union spirit. We must nurture Union spirit primarily because only with this spirit that we will preserve and promote the culture, traditions, religions of all the nationalities. We must demonstrate unity of diversity. We must aim for it. Our diversity must be our strength. Our diversity should never be our weakness."

Bo Aung Kyaw Street Declaration No. 1.

"Union Nationalities League for Democracy and National League for Democracy agreed unanimously that all nationalities shall have equal status, political equality and right of self-determination and need to establish a union which guarantees democracy and human rights for all the nationalities."
NLD’s Seven Principles

a) To be open, honest and have mutual respect
b) National reconciliation (This matter concerns national unity. Emphasis has been given and detailed explanation given about this issue)
c) To employ measures conducive to peaceful solution
d) To aim for harmony and without retribution
e) Mutual respect
f) Mutual cooperation
g) To work for mutual understanding

The intention is to rebuild Burma into a genuine Union of Burma through employment of democratic principles. In doing so, ethnic nationalities shall have rights and shall be included without fail. They shall be permitted to teach their literature freely according to their culture. They must be shown respect.

For the aforesaid reason, it will not be possible to establish a democratic Union of Burma without the participation of the ethnic nationalities. If this is not done, it is impossible for the union to be stable and long lasting.

4th Waxing of Wakhaung 1366 ME
19th August, 2004
“...ထိုအဖွဲ့အစည်းအရာတွင်နှင့်တိုးတက်မှုကိုပြုလုပ်သူများကိုကြားရေးအဖွဲ့အစည်းအရာနှင့်တည်ဆောက်သူများကို တိုးတက်မှုကို ပြုလုပ်မည်ဟုယုံကြည်မှုများကို စီမံခန့်ခွဲပြုလုပ်ပါသော်လည်း ပြုလုပ်သည်၏။ ပြုလုပ်သူများကို တိုးတက်မှုကို ပြုလုပ်သူများကိုပြုလုပ်ပါသော်လည်း ပြုလုပ်သည်၏။”

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ဖော်ပြထားရှိသောစာသီးစီ...
(c) ကချင်သာရီမြို့ ဆောင်ရွက်ရေးမှုရှင်းနှင့် ပုံမှန်ကန့်သတ်ချက်များ ကို ပြုလုပ်ရာ ပြုလုပ်သည့် လူမျိုးတိုင်းတွေ့ရှိသော နေရာများတွင် လူမျိုးတိုင်းများ ရောက်ရှိသော လူမျိုးတိုင်းများ အကြား သို့သက်ရောက်သော မြို့တော်မြို့များ ဖော်ပြသည်

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The Policy on Ethnic Nationalities of Burma
(၄) နှစ်ပေါင်းတစ်နှစ်က အသက်ဦးစုံချင်း အရေးပေါ်လာခြင်းကို မြန်မာ့လူမျိုးက အသုံးပြုခြင်း အတွက် အကောင်အထည်ချခြင်း ရှိခါးရှားသော အခြေအနေများကို တင်တွေးမြင်ခြင်း

"စာရင်းပြုစုချက်အပေါ် အားလုံးသော အခြားသော အစိတ်အပိုင်းများဖြင့် အပြောင်းအလဲများကို ရှာဖွေရန် ရည်ရွယ်သော အခြေအနေများကို သိရှိခြင်းကို ကြည့်ရှုရာ

" (၅) နှစ်ပေါင်းတစ်နှစ်က အသက်ဦးစုံချင်း အရေးပေါ်လာခြင်းကို မြန်မာ့လူမျိုးက အသုံးပြုခြင်း အတွက် အကောင်အထည်ချခြင်း ရှိခြင်း အခြေအနေများကို တင်တွေးမြင်ခြင်း

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“...

(3) "ငြိုင်းရင်းသားတို့ ရေးသားသုံးစွဲသူတို့၏ ဝင်ပစ်မှု၊ အစိုးရေးသားသူတို့၏ ဝင်ပစ်မှု၊ ရေးသားသုံးစွဲသူတို့၏ ဝင်ပစ်မှု၊ အစိုးရေးသားသူတို့၏ ဝင်ပစ်မှု အပေါ် "ကြိုးစားမှု နှင့် အစိုးရေးသားသူတို့၏ ဝင်ပစ်မှု အပေါ် "ကြိုးစားမှု နှင့် အစိုးရေးသားသူတို့၏ ဝင်ပစ်မှု အပေါ် "ကြိုးစားမှု နှင့် အစိုးရေးသားသူတို့၏ ဝင်ပစ်မှု

“အစိုးရေးတို့ မေးစိုးချင်သော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး အစိုးရေးတို့ မေးစိုးချင်သော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး အစိုးရေးတို့ မေးစိုးချင်သော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး အစိုးရေးတို့ မေးစိုးချင်သော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး အစိုးရေးတို့ မေးစိုးချင်သော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး အစိုးရေးတို့ မေးစိုးချင်သော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး

“ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး ကြိုးစားမှု ချက်ချင်းသော သိမ်းဆည်းရေး
“အကြောင်းဆိုပါက ပြည်ပါးမှာ ပေါ်ရွှေ့ပြောဆိုပါတယ်။ ပြည်ပါးမှာ ရိုက်ထည့်သွင်းပါတယ်။

“မြောက်ချင်းမှာ ပြည်ပါးမှာ ပေါ်ရွှေ့ပြောဆိုပါတယ်။”

မြောက်ချင်းမှာ ပြည်ပါးမှာ ပေါ်ရွှေ့ပြောဆိုပါတယ်။...
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“The Policy on Ethnic Nationalities of Burma”
“... အာရှလေး ကရေစီစွဲမည် စီစဉ်ပေးသော အခြေအနေ သို့မဟုတ် တောင်စီး အခြေအနေတွေကို ပြုလုပ်ရင် သို့လျှင် စီစဉ်ပေးသော အခြေအနေတွေ ကို ပြုလုပ်ရင် သို့မဟုတ် တောင်စီး အခြေအနေတွေကို ပြုလုပ်ရင် သို့မဟုတ် တောင်စီး အခြေအနေတွေကို ပြုလုပ်ရင်...”

“... အာရှလေး ကရေစီစွဲမည် စီစဉ်ပေးသော အခြေအနေ သို့မဟုတ် တောင်စီး အခြေအနေတွေကို ပြုလုပ်ရင် သို့မဟုတ် တောင်စီး အခြေအနေတွေကို ပြုလုပ်ရင်...”

“... အာရှလေး ကရေစီစွဲမည် စီစဉ်ပေးသော အခြေအနေ သို့မဟုတ် တောင်စီး အခြေအနေတွေကို ပြုလုပ်ရင် သို့မဟုတ် တောင်စီး အခြေအနေတွေကို ပြုလုပ်ရင်...”
“... နောက်ပိုင်းဆိုင်ရာတွင် လူမှုရေးအချက်အလက်များ အလွယ်တကူ လုံးဝ တည်နေသည်။ …

(၃) စိုးရိမ်များအနေဖြင့်  "ရင်ရဲလောင်းစိုးရိမ်" ကို တိုးတက်စေချင်သော အချက်အလက်များ
(၄) စိုးရိမ်များအနေဖြင့်  "ရင်ရဲလောင်းစိုးရိမ်" ကို တိုးတက်စေချင်သော အချက်အလက်များ
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“... နောက်ပိုင်းဆိုင်ရာတွင် လူမှုရေးအချက်အလက်များ အလွယ်တကူ လုံးဝ တည်နေသည်။ …

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The Policy on Ethnic Minorities of Burma
(၃) သို့မှသား လေ့လာသော ကြောင်းသားများကို ပြောင်းလဲနိုင်သော စီမံကိန်း စနစ်/ ထွက်ရှုမှုစနစ်ကို ရေးသား၍ ခြေချင်းကြည့်တိုက်ပိုင်းတစ်ခု လုံခြုံနေရာ ရေးထိုးပါ။

(၄) သို့မှသား လေ့လာသော ကြောင်းသားများကို ပြောင်းလဲနိုင်သော စီမံကိန်း စနစ်/ ထွက်ရှုမှုစနစ်ကို ရေးသား၍ ခြေချင်းကြည့်တိုက်ပိုင်းတစ်ခု လုံခြုံနေရာ ရေးထိုးပါ။

(၅) လျှပ်စစ်ရေးလိုအပ်သည်ကို ပြောင်းလဲနိုင်သော စီမံကိန်း စနစ်/ ထွက်ရှုမှုစနစ်ကို ရေးသား၍ ခြေချင်းကြည့်တိုက်ပိုင်းတစ်ခု လုံခြုံနေရာ ရေးထိုးပါ။

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(ဗ) သရုပ်ဆောင်ရွက်ရေး ရောဂါနှင့်ပတ်သက်သော ပျော်ရွှင်ခြင်း သင်တန်း

(ဗ) သရုပ်ဆောင်ရွက်ရေး ရောဂါနှင့်ပတ်သက်သော ပျော်ရွှင်ခြင်း သင်တန်း

(ဗ) သရုပ်ဆောင်ရွက်ရေး ရောဂါနှင့်ပတ်သက်သော ပျော်ရွှင်ခြင်း သင်တန်း

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“သရုပ်ဆောင်ရွက်ရေး ရောဂါနှင့်ပတ်သက်သော ပျော်ရွှင်ခြင်း သင်တန်း”

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(ဗ) သရုပ်ဆောင်ရွက်ရေး ရောဂါနှင့်ပတ်သက်သော ပျော်ရွှင်ခြင်း သင်တန်း

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“သရုပ်ဆောင်ရွက်ရေး ရောဂါနှင့်ပတ်သက်သော ပျော်ရွှင်ခြင်း သင်တန်း”

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From the speech given by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on the occasion of The Fiftieth Anniversary of Union Day on 12 February 1997.

Today is the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Panlong agreement. The hopes and aspirations of our national leaders and the leaders of the ethnic nationalities have not yet been realized. The Panlong agreement is not merely a document written on the paper. It is an avowal of belief in national solidarity that is written on the hearts of all our citizens. It is now half a century since the Union of Burma become a sovereign independent nation. But because we have not yet been able to achieve genuine unity, it is very difficult to call our country a true Union.

To achieve true solidarity we need a system that will allow all our ethnic nationalities to express openly and without danger their hopes, aspirations, fears, resentments and dissatisfactions. Only if there is such a system will be able to dissipate the misunderstandings and dissatisfactions that exist between us. I can promise that our party, the National League for Democracy, will strive sincerely to bring about full understanding between the peoples of our Union. On this fiftieth anniversary of Union Day, I invite all the ethnic nationalities to cooperate with us.

The seminar held at Mae Tha Raw Hta from 7 to 14 January by fifteen ethnic nationality groups and other representative of ethnic nationalities issued a statement. In this statement it is said that "since the time of independence in 1948, successive regimes in power have violated the right to equality of all citizens irrespective of race" as provided for in Panlong Agreement. Armed subjugation by successive regimes, practising racial chauvinism for the last 49 years, has been a disastrous experience of suffer-
ing, unprecedented in history for the ethnic nationalities. It is a mat-
ter of great regret that these bitter experiences of the ethnic na-
tionalities led to lack of confidence in the Union. To remedy these
mistakes of the past is the duty of all of us. By all of us, I mean the
ethnic nationalities as well as the majority Burmese. We must con-
sider the aspirations of the ethnic nationalities. In the agreement of
the Mae Tha Raw Hta seminar these aspirations are stated as
follows;

a) To dismantle the military dictatorship and establish peace
in the country;
b) To practice the democratic political system;
c) To achieve the right of equality and self-determination for
each and every nationality;
d) To establish a federal union.

A declaration entitled *The Views of the Ethnic Nationalities on*
*Democracy and Equality* has also come out. According to this de-
claration, the essential needs of our country are;

1) Democracy and political equality for the ethnic nationali-
ties;
2) Solidarity between all the people of the nations;
3) Establishing a genuine Union;
4) The proportionate progress of all the states and for the
modernization and progress of the whole Union;
5) To abolish all forms of dictatorship;
6) Internal peace.

If we look at the views expressed in the above declarations,
the abolishment of dictatorship, internal peace, demo-
cracy and equality for all the ethnic nationalities constitute the essential foun-
dation for a true Union. We shall all have to join hands and work
together to fulfill these basic requirements. It cannot be denied
that our ethnic brothers and sisters are well aware of this. In the
conclusion of the declaration entitled *The Views of the Ethnic*
*Nationalities on Democracy and Equality* it is said that;

We should strive to establish unity through discussions be-
tween all those who have political standing within the country,
legitimate political parties and cease-fire groups. If we cannot do this, we shall all be gradually diminished, drowned in difficulties and destroyed. Therefore (we) would like to urge that we should try to gather together all those within reach and strive to free ourselves for (our) general difficulties.

*** for the emergence of a genuine Union based on the equality of all the ethnic nationalities, it is clearly necessary for all the ethnic nationalities to work together in strong unity with our forces which are striving for democracy and human rights. As a commemoration of this fiftieth anniversary of Union Day, I hereby invite all the ethnic nationality leaders, those with political standing in the country, legitimate political parties and cease-fire groups to cooperate with us in a seminar as a prelude to a future Convention which will revive the spirit of Panglong and which will truly represent the people.

I earnestly invite all the ethnic nationalities to come to join us in a preliminary seminar to a Convention which will represent all the people of the nation.

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The Policy on Ethnic Nationalities of Burma
... ငွေရေးတရားရေးသတ်မှတ်ချက်များကို ရေးသားရာ အရာရှိဆိုင်ရာ သဲချင်းစီမံခန့်မှန်းပါသော ဖော်ပြချက်များကို ဖော်ပြသည်။

"... ပြန်သုံးချက်လေးချက်ငါးချက်ပြုတ်ခြင်းကို သဲချင်းစီမံခန့်မှန်းပါသော ဖော်ပြချက်များကို ဖော်ပြသည်။

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The Policy on State Nationals of Burma...
"To restore democracy and respect the results of the 1990 elections and to enter immediately into substantive and structured dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other Leaders of the National League for Democracy directed towards democratization and national reconciliation and, at an early stage, include other political leaders in these talks, including representative of the ethnic groups."

From the report of the Secretary-General on The human rights situation in Myanmar

"*** The Secretary-General therefore appeals once again to Senior General Than Shwe and other leaders of the Government to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and colleagues without delay to initiate immediately substantive dialogue with NLD. Dialogue that includes the ethnic nationality groups should occur soon after or in parallel. The Secretary-General continues to maintain that it is only through an all-inclusive dialogue that the Govern-
ment of Myanmar will be able to ensure that national reconciliation is durable, the transition to democracy is smooth and Myanmar's future as a stable, prosperous and multi-ethnic nation is secure.