2015 MYANMAR/BURMA UPDATE:
MAKING SENSE OF CONFLICT

5-6 JUNE 2015
H.E. U Khin Aung Myint
Speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar

H.E. U Khin Aung Myint was elected as the Speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House of the Union Parliament of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar) in January 2011. He also served as the Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (Union Parliament) for the first thirty months of his five-year term.

As Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, he led the Myanmar delegation including 15 MPs to attend the 32nd ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary General Assembly in Cambodia in 2011, which included a ceremony accepting Myanmar into the assembly. In 2012 he attended the 20th ASEAN Summit in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. He has led Myanmar parliamentary delegations to many countries. He also formed the Myanmar Parliamentary Union (MPU) in 2012, bringing together members of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, as well as State and Regional Hluttaws. And he carried out the initiative for the MPU to become a member of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) at the 126th IPU Assembly in Kampala, Uganda in April 2012.

Between 2006 and 2010 he served as the Minister of Culture. Prior to his ministerial assignment, he served as Major General in the Myanmar Defence Services, and Director of Public Relations and Psychological Warfare for the Ministry of Defence. He participated in convening the National Convention during the years 2004-2007. He started his career with the Ministry of Defence in 1965 and in 1970 was promoted to serve as a military gazetted officer.

He was born in Bago, Myanmar in October 1946. He gained a Bachelor of Arts as his first degree in 1967 and then gained a Diploma in Defence and Security in 1997. He was awarded 19 Military Awards and the Thiri Pyanchi title, the Award for Outstanding Performance in public service. In 2014, he was conferred an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws by Ramkhamhaeng University in Bangkok, Thailand.

He is married, has two sons and three grandchildren.
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Update Publications
It is with great pleasure that I welcome participants in the 2015 Myanmar/Burma Update. The ANU College of Asia and the Pacific is delighted to support this important event.

This year’s conference looks at ‘Making Sense of Conflict’ and I welcome our many distinguished international and local speakers. I extend a particular welcome and our warm thanks to keynote speaker, H.E. U Khin Aung Myint, who will bring a wealth of knowledge to the discussion.

Our first Myanmar/Burma Update took place in the 1990s and this year’s Update continues that tradition of a focussed conference that takes an informed, impartial and robust analysis of the country’s economic, political and social conditions.

The intellectual, political and economic links between Myanmar and Australia are more significant than ever in 2015 as we reflect on the changes taking place in Myanmar ahead of the general elections later this year.

Our commitment to scholarly work on Myanmar is a core part of the research and educational profiles of all of the College’s Schools and Centres; it spans numerous disciplines, including politics and political economy, international relations, economics, law, demography, environmental governance and development.

Since the 1940s, the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific has been a world centre for the study of our region; today we are the largest institutional grouping of scholars in the English-speaking world specializing in Asia and the Pacific. Our mission is to help build a deep capacity for understanding our region, including the growing importance of Myanmar within it.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the commitment of the many academic staff and students who have worked to produce this year’s Myanmar/Burma Update and the role of all of the speakers and participants in advancing knowledge in this important area.

Enjoy this conference and the dialogue, discussion and debate it will bring.

Veronica L. Taylor
Dean, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific
The Australian National University
Welcome to the 2015 Myanmar/Burma Update, hosted by the Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs.

The Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs is very pleased to be hosting the Myanmar/Burma Update once again. As with previous updates I anticipate that this year will bring great conversation and expertise on Myanmar to the School. We are particularly happy to have as our keynote speaker H.E. U Khin Aung Myint, who has graciously given us his time to be a part of the 2015 Update, during a period of intense political activity in Myanmar.

The Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs is especially proud of its involvement in the Myanmar/Burma Update because this event is indicative of the School’s role as a world-leading centre for research, education and outreach in the international, political, societal, diplomatic and strategic affairs of Asia and the Pacific, including mainland Southeast Asia. Situated at the creative cusp between discipline and area studies, the School is home to the world’s foremost collection of expertise on Asian and Pacific politics and societies, including expertise on Myanmar. It comprises a number of vibrant, interdisciplinary, intellectual communities, including the Department of Political and Social Change, which has played an exceptional role in organizing and promoting the Update series, and encouraging scholarship on Myanmar at the ANU for over two decades.

This year’s Myanmar/Burma Update marks a new level of engagement between the School and colleagues from Myanmar. Aside from our keynote speaker, we welcome a number of other prominent intellectuals and participants in the political processes in Myanmar to Canberra, including U Hyket Hting Nan, Amyotha Hluttaw MP; Dr Min Zaw Oo, Director of Ceasefire Negotiation and Implementation at the Myanmar Peace Center; U Kyaw Min, Chairman of the Democracy and Human Rights Party; and Professor Chaw Chaw Sein, Head of the Department of International Relations at the University of Yangon, who is our first ever speaker from the Myanmar academy at the Update conference series. Their contributions will greatly enrich our discussions, and their presence at this event speaks to the importance that we place on Myanmar studies at the School.

I warmly welcome you to the 2015 Myanmar/Burma Update, and look forward to seeing you there.

Professor Michael Wesley
Director, Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs
As rapid political, economic and social change in Myanmar continues, the next Myanmar/Burma Update conference at the Australian National University is occurring on Friday, 5 June and Saturday, 6 June 2015, ahead of the general elections anticipated for later in the year. Hosted by the Department of Political and Social Change, in the Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific, the conference has as its theme “Making Sense of Conflict”.

Since the last conference in 2013, Myanmar has succeeded in making progress on many key economic and social reforms, and in certain areas of institution building. At the same time, political, social and armed conflict persists, and in some parts of the country has increased considerably. The continuation of longstanding conflicts in Myanmar raises questions about their persistence and the prospects of efforts to resolve them. Other non-traditional conflicts also are emerging, and are cause for significant concern.

The 2015 conference aims to address the breadth and depth of conflicts in Myanmar from a range of angles, offering perspectives of people working on the ground and those studying the country abroad. It presents an opportunity for scholars and practitioners to draw on their research and work in studying and addressing conflict in Myanmar to probe its many layers, and consider the means by which conflict might be resolved. It also enables presenters to draw upon discussions had at the 2013 Update on “Debating Democratisation”, and builds on the outcomes of an event that the ANU held in Myanmar during March 2014, on the theme of communal conflict.
GENERAL INFORMATION

Information about the conference

The conference will be held in HC Coombs Lecture Theatre and Coomb Extension, Fellow Road ANU and the Hedley Bull Building, 130 Garran Road ANU. A full ANU campus map can be found at anu.edu.au/maps#

Conference website: asiapacific.anu.edu.au/asiapacific-region/myanmarburma-update

Registration is required. We will accept registrations on the day. All are welcome.

Catering

Morning tea and afternoon tea will be provided courtesy of the ANU Myanmar Students' Association (ANUMSA), and will be served in the Atrium, Hedley Bull Building. Morning and afternoon tea are free of charge, but you are invited to contribute a donation to ANUMSA (for more details on the Association see page 10).

The Australia Mon Association (AMA) will have a foodstall selling lunch boxes for $8 and $10 cash on Friday and Saturday, also in the Atrium, Hedley Bull Building. Vegetarian dishes will be available.

The AMA is a non-profit organisation formed in 1997 to represent and to be the voice of the Mon community in the Australian Capital Territory. The AMA provides Mon language classes, settlement assistance, advocacy, social support and organizes events on important days for the Mon people. Since 1997, the AMA has been raising funds to establish a Mon Community Centre in Canberra, and the lunches are part of that ongoing fundraising effort. Please support this community and take the opportunity to taste traditional Myanmar food.

Conference dinner

The conference dinner will be held on Friday 5 June, 7.30pm at the Great Hall, University House, 1 Balmain Crescent, ANU. The cost of the dinner is $40 per person for the buffet meal only (drinks are extra and are to be paid on the night).

Please go to the website to register for the dinner. (Note: Registration closes on 1 June)

Getting to the conference venue

By taxi/cab

To catch a taxi in Canberra, use a taxi rank where cars park ready for dispatch or phone one of the cab services to book a vehicle:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Taxi Company</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canberra Elite</td>
<td>13 22 27 or SMS your name, pick up address and time to be collected to 0417 672 773</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cabxpress</td>
<td>1300 222 977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silver Service</td>
<td>13 31 00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wheelchair Accessible Taxis</td>
<td>Phone ahead on 139 287 to arrange service</td>
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Irrespective of the company you use, the cost of a one-way taxi journey between the Canberra Airport and Hedley Bull Building will be in the vicinity of A$30–$40 in light to moderate traffic — the fare is likely to be higher if the journey is taken between 2100 and 0600 or during morning and afternoon peak hours.

By bus

The Airport Express shuttle bus offers airport-city-airport services daily during peak periods. Other stops include Russell Offices (Department of Defence), National Convention Centre and YHA (Canberra City Youth Hostel). Cost is $12 one way and $20 return. Tickets can be purchased at the airport from the car park customer service office located opposite the bus stop or can be pre-booked at www.royalcoach.com.au or by calling 1300 368 897. The bus stop is located kerbside upon exiting the arrivals hall of the airport.

For the Hedley Bull Building, get off the Airport Shuttle Service on West Row in the city centre. From there, take the number 3 local (Action) bus service (platform 7) or the number 7 Action bus service (platform 5) to Liversidge St, ANU. These local services depart roughly every half hour and a one way adult fare is $4.60. Information on Canberra buses can be found here: www.action.act.gov.au/

Alternatively, walking from West Row in the city centre
to the Hedley Bull Building will take roughly 15 minutes.

**Parking**

On-campus pay parking is from 8:00am–5:00pm, Monday to Friday. On-campus parking is free on Saturday. There are a number of carparks along Garran Road. For further information on parking locations please see: facilities.anu.edu.au/services/maps-and-way-finding

The map below and the map below indicates the two closest car parking areas to the Hedley Bull Building and the Coombs Building.

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**Displays during the update**

The following book displays will be in the foyer of the Coombs Lecture Theatre for the duration of the Update.

The **Burmese Collection** at the **National Library of Australia** holds thousands of books, journals, newspapers and microfilm holdings in Burmese language, with diverse coverage spanning back to the 1870s. These holdings include works on law, government, history, ethnography, language and religion; special holding include the books, papers and photographs of Professor G. H. Luce. The Library is actively building its Burmese collection, reflecting the growing interest in, and increasing significance of, Burmese studies.

**Contact:**
Sophie Viravong (Mainland Southeast Asian Curator)
E sviravong@nla.gov.au

**Asia Bookroom**

Asia Bookroom sells books old and new on Burma/Myanmar by mail order and through their shop. They will also have items for sale during the Update. Join their mailing list to hear of books on Burma as they arrive.

Asia Bookroom
Lawry Place
Macquarie
Canberra
ACT 2614
www.AsiaBookroom.com
E Books@AsiaBookroom.com
Ph 02 62515191

**ISEAS**

ISEAS Publishing is a dynamic academic press with more than 40 years’ experience. It is the largest publisher of academic books that focuses on Southeast Asian politics, economics and social issues. Since 1970 it has issued more than 2,000 books and journals, publishing an average of 70 a year. It has published the last three books in the Myanmar/Burma Update series; for these titles and others from the conferences, see the Update Publications section at the end of this program.

Institute of Southeast Asian Studies
30 Heng Mui Keng Terrace
Pasir Panjang
Singapore 119614
To purchase publications or get more information visit bookshop.iseas.edu.sg/

**Stay in touch...**

For updates on the Update and other activities at the Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs on Myanmar, sign up to our mailing list. Subscribe by sending an email to Allison Ley at allison.ley@anu.edu.au.

**Like us on our Facebook page**
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**Follow us on twitter**
@ANUBellSchool #MyanmarUpdate
**PROGRAM**

Coombs Lecture Theatre

Day One - Friday 5 June

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.00–9.05am</td>
<td>Welcome to Country</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Aunty Susan Barry, Ngunnawal Elder</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.05–9.20am</td>
<td>Conference opening</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Professor Gareth Evans AC, QC, Chancellor, Australian National University (ANU)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.20–10.00am</td>
<td>Keynote address</td>
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<td>H.E. U Khin Aung Myint, Speaker, Amyotha Hluttaw, Myanmar</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Chair: Professor Michael Wesley, Director, Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, ANU</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.00–10.30am</td>
<td>ANU Myanmar Research Centre launch</td>
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<td>Professor Veronica Taylor, Dean, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific, Associate Professor Helen James, ANU College of Arts and Social Sciences, Daw Khin Thidar Aye, Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, ANU</td>
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<td>Chair: Dr Nicholas Farrelly, Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, ANU</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.30–11.00am</td>
<td>Morning tea break (refreshments provided by the ANU Myanmar Students’ Association, ANUMSA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.00–12.00pm</td>
<td>Political update</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Associate Professor Mary Callahan, University of Washington, A perfect storm? Politics, elections and the peace process in 2015</td>
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<td>Discussant: Dr Morten Pedersen, University of New South Wales (UNSW)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.00–1.00pm</td>
<td>Economic update</td>
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<td>Professor Mike Woods, University of Technology, Sydney, Ms Nu Nu Win, Australian Treasury, Mr Sam Hurley, Centre for Policy Development, Key findings from the Myanmar Trade and Investment Strategy Consultation Paper, by the East Asian Bureau of Economic Research, Crawford School of Public Policy, ANU</td>
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<td>Chair: Dr Nicholas Farrelly, Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.00–2.30pm</td>
<td>Lunch break (meals provided by the Australia Mon Association)</td>
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<td>1.30–2.15pm</td>
<td>Book launch (Coombs Ext. 1.04) Opposing the rule of law: How Myanmar’s courts make law and order (Cambridge University Press, 2015), by Dr Nick Cheesman, Department of Political and Social Change, ANU</td>
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<td>Associate Professor Mary Callahan, University of Washington, Adjunct Associate Professor Andrew Selth, Griffith University, Dr Melissa Crouch, UNSW</td>
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<td>Chair: Professor Edward Aspinall, Department of Political and Social Change, ANU</td>
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<td>2.30–4.30pm</td>
<td>Borderland conflicts and peace negotiations (1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Dr Min Zaw Oo, Myanmar Peace Center, The peace process and challenges to ceasefire implementation in Myanmar</td>
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<td>2. Ma Su Mon Thazin Aung, University of Hong Kong, The politics of policymaking in transitional government: A case study of the ethnic peace process in Myanmar</td>
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<td>3. U Hkyet Hting Nan, Member of Parliament, Amyotha Hluttaw, Myanmar, Kachin politics, the Hluttaw and the peace process</td>
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<td>4. Dr Nicholas Farrelly, ANU, Myanmar’s politics of military force in the wake of new conflict</td>
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<td>Chair: Associate Professor Allen Hicken, University of Michigan</td>
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<td>4.30–5.00pm</td>
<td>Afternoon tea break (refreshments provided by ANUMSA)</td>
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<td>5.00–6.00pm</td>
<td>Burmese-language roundtable (sponsored by ANUMSA)</td>
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<td>U Hkyet Hting Nan, Amyotha Hluttaw MP, Dr Min Zaw Oo, Myanmar Peace Center, U Kyaw Min, Democracy and Human Rights Party, Ma Su Mon Thazin Aung, University of Hong Kong, U Khin Maung Yin, UNSW, Naing Ko Ko, ANU, Ma Khin Khin Mra, ANU</td>
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<td>Chair: U Chit Win, Department of Political and Social Change, ANU</td>
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<td>Side event: Friendly Myanmar language session by the ANU Myanmar Students’ Association (Coombs Ext. 1.04)</td>
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<td>7.30–9.00pm</td>
<td>Conference dinner (Great Hall, University House)</td>
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<td>Music by Yuri Takahashi, Comments by Professor Veronica Taylor, Dean, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific</td>
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2015 Myanmar/Burma Update
Day Two - Saturday 6 June

9.30–11.00am Borderland conflicts and peace negotiations (2)
1. Dr Costas Laoutides and Dr Anthony Ware, Deakin University, Making sense of Kachin separatist conflict
2. Mr Gregory Cathcart, DanChurchAid, Landmines as a form of protection between conflict and ceasefire
3. Ms Jenny Hedström, Monash University, 'I want to be a very brilliant fighter': Gendered responses to the conflict in Kachin State
4. Mr Ricky Yue, City University of Hong Kong, Pacifying the margins: A case study on the political economy of the Pa-O Self-Administrated Zone in the southern Shan State
Chair: Daw Khin Thidar Aye, Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, ANU

11.00–11.30am Morning tea break (refreshments provided by ANUMSA)

11.30–1.00pm Communal violence and the “western gateway” with Bangladesh
1. Mr Matt Schissler, Myanmar Media & Society Research Project, Oxford University, Discourses of a Buddhist-Muslim conflict: Listening in six Myanmar cities
2. U Kyaw Min, Democracy and Human Rights Party, Who will rescue the Rohingya from their man-made tragedy?
3. Mr Tamas Wells, University of Melbourne, Crazy or disingenuous? Making sense of reactions to communal violence in Myanmar
4. Mr Helal Md Khan, International Research Institute, Bangladesh, Making sense of nonsense borders: Conflicts at Myanmar’s western borders and their dimensions
Chair: Dr Cecilia Jacob, Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, ANU,

1.00–2.30pm Lunch break (meals provided by the Australia Mon Association)
1.30–2.15pm Journal special issue launch (Coombs Ext. 1.04)
Professor Andrew Walker, Department of Political and Social Change, ANU, Associate Professor Sean Turnell, Macquarie University
Chair: Dr Nick Cheesman, Department of Political and Social Change, ANU

2.30–4.00pm Electoral politics and the legislature
1. Professor Chaw Chaw Sein, Head, Department of International Relations, University of Yangon, Electoral politics in Myanmar in 2015
2. U Chit Win, Department of Political and Social Change, ANU, Parliament’s role in conflict resolution
4. Dr Melissa Crouch, UNSW, Legislating reform? Law and conflict in Myanmar
Chair: Mr Trevor Wilson, Department of Political and Social Change, ANU

4.00–4.30pm Afternoon tea break (refreshments provided by ANUMSA)

4.30–6.00pm The many dimensions of conflict
1. Dr Bridget Welsh, National Taiwan University, Is Myanmar divided? Political cleavages and differences in the 2015 Asia Barometer Survey results
2. Dr Jayde Roberts, University of Tasmania, Power, participation and Yangon
3. Mr Gerard McCarthy, Department of Political and Social Change, ANU, At the limits of ‘big P’ politics: Welfare networks, informal institutions and the religious framing of political identity in provincial Myanmar
Chair: Associate Professor Greg Fealy, Head, Department of Political and Social Change, ANU

6.00pm Conference closes

Many thanks for your participation. We hope you enjoy the 2015 Myanmar/Burma Update
BOOK LAUNCH

Friday 5 June, 1.30 - 2.15pm
Coombs Ext 1.04

Opposing the rule of law: How Myanmar’s courts make law and order
(Cambridge University Press, 2015)
Dr Nick Cheesman, Department of Political and Social Change, Australian National University

Panel of Speakers:
Associate Professor Mary Callahan
Jackson School of International Studies
University of Washington

Adjunct Associate Professor AndrewSelth
Griffith Asia Institute, Griffith University

Dr Melissa Crouch
Faculty of Law, University of New South Wales

Chair: Professor Edward Aspinall
Department of Political and Social Change, ANU

As a side event to ANU Myanmar Update Conference 2015, ANUMSA is running a beginner level language session mainly focusing on spoken Burmese. It will cover basic conversational language such as greetings, self-introductions, social conversation and etc. The session aims to let non-Burmesespeakers try the language through a wide range of fun activities of games and role-playing.

Friendly Myanmar Language Session
Friday 5 June 5 - 6pm
Coombs Ext 1.04

"Mingalaba", Greetings!

The rule of law is a political ideal today endorsed and promoted worldwide. Or is it? In a significant contribution to the field, Nick Cheesman argues that Myanmar is a country in which the rule of law is 'lexically present but semantically absent'. Charting ideas and practices from British colonial rule through military dictatorship to the present day, Cheesman calls upon political and legal theory to explain how and why institutions animated by a concern for law and order oppose the rule of law.

Empirically grounded in both Burmese and English sources, including trial records and wide ranging official documents, Opposing the Rule of Law offers the first significant study of courts in contemporary Myanmar. It sheds new light on the politics of courts during dark times and sharply illuminates the tension between the demand for law and the imperatives of order.

For further details on Opposing the Rule of Law and other titles on Myanmar see the Cambridge University Press display in the Coombs Lecture Theatre foyer.

ANU Myanmar Student’s Association (ANUMSA) formed in early 2015 with students from Myanmar and students with their research interest in Myanmar. Its aim is to pool Myanmar-related students across the campus in order to help each other and exchange information and to promote research activity on Myanmar and its culture. Currently, there are currently 23 students from Myanmar and 9 PhD candidates (4 from Myanmar) who are working on Myanmar related research. ANUMSA regularly holds “Brownbag” seminar in order to stimulate research interest among students and researchers.

For further information on ANUMSA visit: http://www.facebook.com/ANUMSA2015 or #ANUMSA
Email: anu.myanmar@gmail.com

facebook.com/events/1034923129870858/
Yuri Takahashi

Conference dinner entertainment
Friday 5 June

Journal special issue launch
Saturday 6 June 1.30 - 2.15pm
Coombs Ext 1.04

Yuri Takahashi
Burmese classical music vocalist

Born in Tokyo, Japan, Yuri studied Burmese classical songs from 1992 to 1994 with Sein Bo Tint while working for the Embassy of Japan in Yangon as a Burmese specialist. Yuri performed as vocalist for Sein Bo Tint’s ensemble from 1993 and often appeared on TV Myanmar’s traditional music program.

Yuri moved to Australia in 1994 and since 1996 has performed regularly for the Sydney Burmese community.

She is a member of Lawkanat, the Sydney based Burmese traditional music ensemble who performed at the Sydney Opera House on the occasion of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s visit to Sydney in November 2013.

As a researcher on Burmese literature and culture she has published many essays and translations. Since 2000 she has been teaching at the Dept. of Japanese Studies and also recently conducted an intensive Burmese language course at the University of Sydney. Currently she is a PhD candidate (modern Burmese intellectual history) at the University.

Social Research
An International Quarterly
Vol. 82 : No. 2 : Summer 2015

The 15th in the Social Research Transitions Series, which since 1990 has sought to understand and evaluate shifts around the world away from repressive regimes and toward states that are more open, this special issue examines the nature of the changes taking place in Burma, or Myanmar, today; questions whether more or different changes are necessary; and speculates on what the future is likely to hold.

The issue includes contributions by Nick Cheesman, John G. Dale and David Kyle, Christina Fink, Tom Kramer, Min Zin, Nehginpao Kipgen, David Steinberg, Tin Maung Maung Than, Sean Turnell, Matthew Walton and Zin Mar Aung.

Discussants:
Professor Andrew Walker, Department of Political and Social Change, ANU
Associate Professor Sean Turnell, Macquarie University
Chair: Dr Nick Cheesman, Department of Political and Social Change, ANU


From Burma to Myanmar: Critical Transitions will also be available online through Project Muse following publication; visit https://muse.jhu.edu/journals/social_research/
ABSTRACTS

Political update:
A perfect storm? Politics, elections and the peace process in 2015

Mary Callahan, University of Washington
Over the next two years, Myanmar will be home to struggles over political, economic, and social influence. These contests will play out across multiple arenas, both visible and unseen. The two most significant ones are the electoral process of 2015 and ongoing peace negotiations that seek to bring about an end to more than six decades of violent civil warfare. The conduct and outcomes of these two macro-processes could lead to major realignments of power at the national and sub-national level. However, it is more likely that both the election and the peace process will fail to transform Myanmar's myriad social, economic and political dilemmas as fast and comprehensively as popular domestic expectations demand, or as the non-Asian international community awaits.

Economic update: Key findings from the Myanmar Trade and Investment Strategy Consultation Paper

Mike Woods, University of Technology, Sydney; Nu Nu Win, Australian Treasury; Sam Hurley, Centre for Policy Development.
This panel will present findings out of the recent Myanmar Trade and Investment Strategy Consultation Paper published in 2015 by the East Asian Bureau of Economic Research at the ANU's Crawford School of Public Policy, concentrating on macroeconomic trends, challenges for economic development and ways of dealing with them, the major recommendations of the Consultation Paper as they relate to these challenges, and emerging risks and threats to economic reform. It will close with some consideration of policy vulnerabilities in Myanmar, and strategies to address these vulnerabilities and build confidence in development, both domestically and internationally.

The peace process and challenges of ceasefire implementation in Myanmar

Min Zaw Oo, Myanmar Peace Center
The government of Myanmar led by President U Thein Sein currently has signed ceasefire agreements with 14 ethnic armed groups while the representatives have recently drafted the nationwide ceasefire agreement. In the meantime, major clashes are still on-going in northern Shan State. The prospects of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement are still indeterminate. This presentation will discuss the complexities of the peace process such as the nature of the political transition, the challenges of interagency coordination, the Tatmadaw's rules of engagement, war economies, inter and intra-group factionalism, the legitimacy rendered by the ceasefire agreement and the impact of electoral politics. The presentation will conclude with the outlook of the peace process beyond 2015.

The politics of policymaking in transitional government: A case study of ethnic peace process in Myanmar

Su Mon Thazin Aung, University of Hong Kong
Why did the quasi-civilian government of Myanmar manage to pursue ethnic peace processes despite political, security, and technical constraints? This paper takes a new approach to ethnic politics in Myanmar by centering attention on who is involved in coordinating the state-sponsored peace policy process. It argues that the government's technical team influences the sustainability of peace processes despite the aforementioned constraints. The policy community, and the Myanmar Peace Center in particular, employs a piecemeal approach in their dealings with the Tatmadaw and the ethnic armed groups formally and informally. This approach helps to keep the major stakeholders committed. This paper advances theoretical understanding of how government in transition addresses ethnic conflict by especially looking at negotiation policy processes in Myanmar. In explaining the ethnic policymaking process, it adopts the concept of a policy community — a group of interrelated policy actors pursuing a matter of public policy important to them for instrumental reasons. The policy community has been an important tool in analyzing policy-making processes in established and industrialized democracies. However this concept has not been applied to developing countries.
Myanmar’s politics of military force in the wake of new conflict

Nicholas Farrelly, Australian National University

With its long history of direct military rule, Myanmar’s ongoing political and economic changes have deep implications for the deployment of armed force. Both government and non-government forces are testing a new set of expectations about the use of violence for political and other ends. With recent heavy fighting in Shan State, and simmering conflicts in Kachin, Rakhine and Kayin States, the transition to legislative politics has not eliminated the politics of military force. Instead, the use of that force has emerged as a key component of today’s political landscape. This paper examines three aspects that help define the ongoing use of armed force — its historical significance, contested political legitimacy, and varied popular appreciation. Increased awareness of the persistence of armed conflict in Myanmar can help to refine understandings of the country’s rolling transformation, particularly during this moment of growing online connections.

Making sense of Kachin separatist conflict

Costas Laoutides and Anthony Ware, Deakin University

This paper seeks to make sense of the contemporary Kachin conflict by analysing a number of factors in relation to the literature. The paper explores expressions of proximal and root causes in order to understand the drivers of the Kachin conflict but also to highlight the implications for achieving sustainable peace in the context of the upcoming political dialogue. It draws together field research conducted by the authors in late 2014 with theoretical discussion around key ideas often employed in analysing these conflicts: ‘ethnicity’, ‘national race’, ‘identity’, ‘territory’ and ‘resource’ conflict. This field research involved key informant interviews with 48 senior state officials, representatives from the non-state armed and civil groups, negotiators and advisors to the peace process, and key personnel from civil society organisations, multilateral agencies, donors and international non-government organisations. The paper focuses attention on how power is framed and contested in relation to processes of identification and concludes that demands for equality and communal freedom to express identity remain the fundamental drivers of the conflict. The paper concludes that while vested economic interests for personal gain have emerged, complicating pathways to peace, control of resources remains primarily an instrumental means to ensure communal survival and expression of identity, in a struggle between competing outlooks of power management and distribution in Myanmar.

Images

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ABSTRACTS

Landmines as a form of protection between conflict and ceasefire

Gregory S. Cathcart, DanChurchAid

The most recent casualty rates from Myanmar’s six–decade conflict place it third in the number of accidents and deaths from landmines worldwide. Despite this, community assessments often ignore the impact of landmines on development. However, an analysis of landmine use can provide insight into the cultural and historical dynamics of the country’s conflicts and assist by providing practical lessons for engaging communities on protection strategies.

In order to further explore these issues, I draw upon data gathered during two years of work with the Myanmar Union, State Governments and ethnic armed organisations (EAO), to highlight the complexity of landmine use and issues affecting their clearance in South-East Myanmar, and Northern Shan and Kachin States. This research involved formal interviews with both senior and junior officials in government, EAOs and civil society, as well as participant observation of interactions amongst these groups.

This paper will reveal the historical and cultural complexity underlying landmine use as a protection strategy and will provide practical insights for engaging communities in a way that respects and responds to the ambiguities of landmine use in the country.

'I want to be a very brilliant fighter': Gendered responses to conflict in Kachin State

Jenny Hedström, Monash University

Based on primary interviews conducted with women involved in the Kachin armed resistance, this paper will explore the participation of women in the armed conflict in Burma/Myanmar, highlighting how Kachin women’s reasons for supporting ethno-political organizations include (individual or collective) experiences of insecurity, oppression, poverty and gender-based violence, as well as nationalism. Initial research seems to suggest that women’s participation in or support for armed struggle stems from ideological and political reasons that are closely related to socioeconomic marginalisation and discrimination. There is thus a substantial, and important, connection between material conditions, women’s insecurity and political violence that needs to be unpacked.

Pacifying the margins: A case study on the political economy of the Pa-O Self-Administrated Zone in the Southern Shan State of Myanmar

Ricky Yue, City University of Hong Kong

Following the 8888 Uprising and the subsequent seizure of power by the military, the question of legitimacy to govern over a land that consists of 135 ethnic groups has continued to trouble governments in Myanmar to this day. Marred by constant ethnic tensions funded by the narcotics trade, the southern Shan State is one of the conflict hotspots in the country. Yet, between 1989 and 2006, the regime has managed to sign four ceasefire agreements with various armed ethnic groups in the region. Framed within the narratives of political sociology and borrowing the concept of an “emerging political complex” raised by Mark Duffield (2001) and Mary Callahan (2007), this paper will attempt to contextualize the political economy of the Pa-O Self-Administrated Zone in the southern Shan state. Employing a case study approach and drawing from interviews with local political parties, ceasefire groups, armed groups, activists, peacekeepers and NGOs, this paper will try to identify the key actors in the Pa-O political economy and capture the dynamics of interactions between the state and the actors, and among the actors themselves, so as to contribute towards a new understanding of warlord politics by drawing attention to the existence of a warlord’s learning curve.
Discourses of a Buddhist-Muslim conflict: Listening in six Myanmar cities

Matt Schissler, Oxford University

Myanmar has been the site of serious conflicts between Buddhist and Muslim communities. This paper argues that understanding the mobilization of this collective violence necessitates attention to recurrent features in discourses about violence — and Buddhist–Muslim relations — as they circulate in everyday life. Building on more than two years of participant observation in western Yangon, the paper shares initial findings from a series of ‘listening project’ interviews and focus group discussions with residents of six cities in Myanmar: four cities that have experienced recent violence (Sittwe, Meiktila, Mandalay, and Lashio) and two that have not (Pathein and Mawlamyaing). These findings raise critical questions about common explanations for Buddhist–Muslim conflict, particularly those that emphasize instrumental manipulation (“brainwashing”); hatreds primordial or historically determined (“long standing history of anti-Muslim feeling”); the dark sides of new freedoms (“lid lifted off a cauldron”); or instances of extreme hate speech, ‘trigger words,’ and rumors. These findings also prompt important considerations for international actors working to reduce further conflict.

Who will rescue the Rohingya from their man-made tragedy?

Kyaw Min, Democracy and Human Rights Party

This paper explores how only military governments in Myanmar made Rohingya identity into a contentious issue. The citizenship regime today is inconsistent to earlier regimes. The denial of citizenship to Rohingya can be contrasted with the providing of indigenous status to some ethnic groups who have cultural and linguistic ties with Bangladesh but are accepted into Myanmar only because they are Buddhist. The paper then analyses the cause, context and impact of the 2012 violence, which was created with an ulterior motive: the ethnic cleansing of Rohingya. It further discusses the plight of IDPs and boat people. There are some legal points for the international community to deliberate on the citizenship issue of Rohingya. It concludes by arguing that the idea of national races is deeply flawed and arbitrary, and needs revisions. Finally the paper contains a request from the Rohingya community to the international community to rescue them from this man made tragedy.

Crazy or disingenuous? Making sense of reactions to communal violence in Myanmar

Tamas Wells, University of Melbourne

In the last two years violence between Buddhist and Muslim communities has emerged as a core challenge for Myanmar. And there has been widespread international outcry about the government’s failure to protect Muslim minorities. Yet public responses from leaders in the Burman (or Bamar) democracy movement — including those of Aung San Suu Kyi — have also been met with shock and disappointment by Western aid agencies; their responses seem to be muted, or even supportive of the government’s stance.

This paper argues that the starkly contrasting reactions to communal violence are not a surprising anomaly amidst a wider consensus — between Western and local actors — about what democratization means. Rather these reactions to communal violence may be a window into broader contests between narratives of Myanmar’s democratization — not only between Western and Bamar actors, but within the Bamar democracy movement itself. Attention to narratives can reveal important contrasts in the ways in which problems and solutions are constructed, particularly in relation to ‘democratic’ values of rights, pluralism and minority protection.

Yet understanding of narratives is not necessarily a step toward greater agreement, or the development of a ‘metanarrative’. Rather, narratives are often fundamentally self–reinforcing — only permitting dialogue which aligns with their underlying forms of common sense.
Electoral politics in Myanmar in 2015

Chaw Chaw Sein, University of Yangon

The elected civilian government headed by former military elites under president U Thein Sein is now in the last year of its first five-year term. As 2015 is a critical year for Myanmar, international political pressures also have increased and hardened, particularly in relation to holding free and fair elections. While Myanmar has made some headway in its own democratic transition, it still faces many challenges. Holding the 2015 general election, signing a nationwide ceasefire agreement, the ongoing government’s administrative reform, and reviewing the constitutional amendment inside and outside of parliamentary channels are the typical and tough issues for President U Thein Sein’s government, especially in the last phase of his term.

Successful holding of the 2015 election is the top priority of the Union Election Commission and U Thein Sein’s government. In this context, President U Thein Sein has publicly announced that the general elections will be held in the first week of November 2015. The international community is closely watching. Countries like Australia, United States, United Kingdom, Norway, Switzerland, and Denmark, as well as the EU, have been assisting the government and cooperating with the Union Election Commission in Myanmar in order to carry out general elections successfully.

Some people have assumed that Myanmar’s 2015 election will not be free and fair. At the same time there is also another group who think Myanmar is on the right track to becoming a successful democracy. Some are concerned with ‘post-election’ phenomena, such as transfer of power, which has failed to transpire in Myanmar’s electoral history, particularly in the 1990 election process. It is natural that people are worrying about the coming 2015 elections, especially over the transfer of power and fairness of elections. In view of these conditions, this paper will discuss whether Myanmar is on her way to democratic consolidation by conducting a free and fair election and peaceful transfer of power or not.
Parliament's role in conflict resolution

Chit Win, Australian National University

One of the striking features of Myanmar politics today is the evolution of the Hluttaw (the parliament) as an independent institution that has given added momentum and legitimacy to democratization in Myanmar. The Hluttaw’s role and its effectiveness in implementing parliamentary functions (representation, law making and oversight) are not without constraints and controversies. In the context of these functions, this paper seeks to understand how the Hluttaw has handled conflicts amid rolling political, economic and social changes.

In order to understand better the role of the Hluttaw in responding to issues and challenges in Myanmar’s transition, this paper looks at four cases: (1) Confrontation with the constitutional tribunal; (2) Ethnic conflict and the peace process; (3) Communal violence; and (4) The Myitsone dam and Letpadaung copper mine conflicts. They are not only widely acknowledged as milestones in its nascent transition but also exhibit different levels of parliamentary responses and outcomes which I categorize as strong and effective, strong but ineffective, weak but effective and weak and ineffective. By observing the Hluttaw’s responsiveness and effectiveness, I try to capture parliamentary behaviour, strengths and weaknesses in institutionalizing conflict on its own terms. This paper argues that parliamentary tools are less effective in responding to the conflicts directly and the Hluttaw’s strength lies in using its oversight authority reinforced by non-partisan co-operation within the house.
Elections and conflict dynamics in Myanmar, 2015

Michael Lidauer, IFES

This paper takes stock of the nexus between elections and conflict dynamics in Myanmar half a year ahead of the 2015 general elections. Based on the core assumption that elections are rarely a root cause for violent escalation, but that the electoral process can trigger pre-existing conflict, it proceeds by looking at 1) long-standing conflict with ethnic armed groups and the current peace process; 2) anti-Muslim sentiments, with a particular focus on Rakhine State, but also beyond; and 3) meta-conflicts visible in competing demands for constitutional reforms and political dialogue. These layers of conflict are analyzed against the dynamics of the electoral cycle such as the drafting and impact of election-related legislation, voter list updates, and the beginning of the electoral campaign. The paper is framed by references to existing and emerging practices of electoral security planning and the including of conflict-sensitive approaches into electoral support.

Legislating reform? Law and conflict in Myanmar

Melissa Crouch, University of New South Wales

Legal and constitutional change often occurs at moments of political crisis. Since the political transition in 2011, efforts of the parliament and civil society have focused on a range of legal and constitutional reforms in Myanmar. This paper will reflect on the past five years of law reform in Myanmar in the broader context of legal reforms undertaken since the end of socialist rule in 1988. While many have analysed the personalities and parties in politics, little attention has been paid to the policies and laws that have been passed. First, constitutional amendment has been a critical demand over the past few years, as concerns that the military retain its role in governance rub against demands for a more democratic future. In early 2015 a law was passed regulating referendums for constitutional amendment, although this comes without clear agreement on what proposals for reform should be put to a referendum. Second, there has been an increase in legislative reforms in parliament across a diverse range of areas. I identify three themes in law-making: functional reforms to implement the new constitutional and political system, though most added little to the text of the Constitution itself; economic and business reforms largely geared towards actual or perceived efforts at greater foreign investment, including in banking, the establishment of special economic zones, and Company Law; and social reforms that affect civil society such as in labour affairs, the media and freedom of assembly. This paper will analyse the extent to which these legislative changes have contributed to the broader process of political reform, and to political and social conflict. It concludes that two areas — constitutional amendment and legislative reform — demonstrate a struggle between the imagined past and future visions, and highlight the way in which law remains a source and site of conflict in Myanmar.

Is Myanmar divided? Political cleavages and differences in the 2015 Asia Barometer Survey Results

Bridget Welsh, National Taiwan University

This paper examines the views of conflict and major political divisions in Myanmar using the preliminary 2015 Asia Barometer Survey (ABS) data. The tasks are three-fold: 1) to report the findings related to views of conflict, including ethnic, class and religious differences; 2) to explain key political divisions in Myanmar found in the data; and, 3) to explore the reasons why there are these political divisions, drawing from socio-economic indicators and political attitudes reported in the survey, e.g. political culture/values/identity. The findings suggest that people in Myanmar recognize many of the political divisions inside their society, and would like to reduce conflict, especially with regard to ethnic minorities and class divisions. On the issue of religious differences, however, the results are less optimistic, indicating strong undercurrents buttressing conflict. With regard to the key political divisions, partisanship and contrasting views of democracy emerged as salient. The factors that help us understand these political differences include education and ideology. This paper aims to bring the views of ordinary citizens into our understanding of conflict and division in Myanmar.
Power, Participation and Yangon

Jayde Roberts, University of Tasmania

This paper examines the power relations that underlie the production of urban space and focuses on the city of Yangon as a contested site. As Burma/Myanmar undergoes reform, different conceptions and experiences of urban life must contend with each other in order to forge a sustainable Burmese urbanism. In this contestation, the different local, regional and national actors exercise sharply varying degrees of control over the urban environment and often look to international standards to guide and measure their actions.

Various agencies such as the UNDP and EU have supported capacity-building projects to encourage broad based participation and public private partnerships in order to build a better Yangon. However good intentioned, these initiatives assume that the everyday resident in Yangon is an enfranchised member who exercises rights to the city. This is because, western towns and cities arose out of the communal effort of local merchants and elite who asserted self-sovereignty through liberty charters. For the residents of Yangon who live in an urban environment largely imposed by the British and controlled by officials who do not see them as constituents, agency is illusive.

Based on preliminary fieldwork in three neighborhoods in downtown Yangon, this paper argues that conceptions and administration of Burmese cities must begin from the local understanding of myo (commonly translated as city) before incorporating aspects of western urban planning and governance. This is particularly critical as international funding agencies continue to flood into Burma/Myanmar to promote the globalized model of democratization and neoliberal development.

At the Limits of big 'P' politics: Welfare networks, informal institutions and the religious framing of political identity in provincial Myanmar

Gerard McCarthy, Australian National University

Little acknowledged outside Myanmar, the last two decades of authoritarian rule from 1988 to 2010 saw the rapid expansion and growth of community-based welfare groups and informal networks of reciprocity. With the tacit endorsement of the regime, these informal institutions played an increasingly essential role in quotidian subsistence for many Burmese people amidst the social and economic stagnation of the authoritarian period.

Based on fieldwork in the first half of 2015 in Taungoo township, a Bamar majority town in central Myanmar, this paper examines the dual function that informal subsistence institutions now offer in providing assistance and in shaping the political identities of those with whom they engage. I argue that these networks — often organizationally and discursively linked to Buddhism — are helping to frame many people’s understanding about what is at stake in the current political transition, lending political imaginaries a deeply moral and religious hue. Only by focusing on how these horizontal, non-state, everyday interactions relate to the operation and impact of formal political institutions will we be able to understand the development of political organisation and political imaginaries in Myanmar’s nascent democracy.
**Ma Su Mon Thazin Aung**

Su Mon Thazin Aung is a PhD candidate in the Politics and Public Administration Department, University of Hong Kong. She obtained a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Southeast Asia and Pacific Studies at the University of Yangon, Myanmar, a Master of Business Administration from the University of Newcastle, Australia, and a Master of Science with specialization in International Political Economy from the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Her research focuses on elite politics in the executive, governance and policy, and is particularly concerned with ethnic conflict, resource extraction, media reform and labour policies in Myanmar and Southeast Asia. She writes for Foreign Policy’s blog Democracy Lab. She has also participated in and contributed to several research-training projects in Myanmar in the capacity of an independent researcher.

**Associate Professor Mary Callahan**

Mary P. Callahan is associate professor in the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies at the University of Washington. A political scientist by training, Callahan has specialized in the modern political economies of mainland Southeast Asia, with an emphasis on Myanmar. Her publications include *Making Enemies: War and State Building in Burma* (2003); *Political Authority in Burma’s Ethnic Minority States: Devolution, Occupation and Coexistence* (2007); “The Generals Loosen Their Grip,” *Journal of Democracy* (2012); and “Ethnicity without Meaning, Data without Context: The 2014 Census, Identity and Citizenship in Myanmar” (Transnational Institute, 2014). Currently on leave from UW, she and her family are based in Yangon, Myanmar, where she is researching and consulting on issues related to the upcoming elections and the peace process.

**Mr Gregory S. Cathcart**

Gregory Cathcart is an international development consultant focusing on community perspectives regarding landmine/UXO related issues in South-East Asia. Previously, he worked with the Lao Government to develop a non-technical UXO survey that combined household socio-economic assessments and "village based" land use planning to direct UXO Technical survey and clearance priorities. He has a master’s degree in Public Health and is an aspiring restorer of a Raleigh bicycle.

**Dr Melissa Crouch**

Melissa Crouch a lecturer at the Law Faculty, the University of New South Wales, Sydney. She has previously been a research fellow at the Centre for Asian Legal Studies, the National University of Singapore; the International Institute of Asian Studies, Leiden; and the Melbourne Law School, the University of Melbourne. Melissa is the co-editor of *Law, Society and Transition in Myanmar* (Hart Publishing 2014). She is the author of *Law and Religion in Indonesia: Conflict and the Courts in West Java* (Routledge, 2014). She is the editor of *Islam and the State in Myanmar: Muslim-Buddhist Relations and the Politics of Belonging* (forthcoming 2015 Oxford University Press). Melissa is also recognised for her work on Indonesia as an Associate with the Centre for Indonesian Law, Islam and Society, University of Melbourne. From 2012—2014, Melissa facilitated efforts between the Law Faculty of the National University of Singapore and legal institutions in Myanmar; and she has long-standing connections with the Australia-Burma Society in Melbourne. She teaches in the areas of public law, comparative law, Islamic law, and Asian legal systems.
**BIOGRAPHIES**

**Dr Nicholas Farrelly**

Nicholas Farrelly is a fellow in the Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs at the Australian National University (ANU) and director of the ANU Myanmar Research Centre. His academic specialty is the interaction of security, politics and culture in mainland Southeast Asia. On these topics he wrote masters and doctoral theses at the University of Oxford where he was a Rhodes Scholar. In 2006 Nicholas co-founded New Mandala which has grown to become a prominent website on Southeast Asian affairs. Currently he holds an Australian Research Council fellowship for a study of political culture during Myanmar’s ongoing transformation. Nicholas also writes a weekly newspaper column in *The Myanmar Times* and is co-convenor, with Nick Cheesman, of the 2015 Myanmar Update Conference.

**Ms Jenny Hedström**

Jenny Hedström is a PhD student in Politics and International Relations at Monash University, Australia. Her research is focused on women involved in the Kachin armed struggle. She most recently worked for International IDEA’s Diversity and Democracy programme and has over ten years’ experience working on issues concerning gender and ethnicity, primarily in the context of Burma/Myanmar. She has published extensively on issues concerning Burma/Myanmar, gender and ethnicity for both academic and policy audiences.

**Mr Helal Mohammed Khan**

Helal Mohammed Khan is the director of and a researcher with International Research Initiative Bangladesh (IRIB). A soldier-turned-peacekeeper, Helal is inquisitive about the dynamics of conflict resolution and peace-building in Asia, Middle East and beyond. Consequently he is developing interests in political Islam, and hopes to integrate its various models in the peace studies of 21st century. In the past Helal served in the Bangladesh Army as a Major (longer portion of the service being in Chittagong Hill Tracts and in areas adjacent to Bangladesh-Myanmar borders), taught special warfare and tactics at the School of Infantry, and completed staff course at the Defence Services Command & Staff College. He served with United Nations in D R Congo, and on deputation, to Border Guards Bangladesh (as Staff Officer to Director General, and also as Operations Officer in a battalion deployed along Myanmar borders). Helal has been writing on defence and strategic issues in journals and newspapers in Bangladesh. His Masters thesis (Defence Studies, 2008) was on the decision making process in time-constrained environments, and for postgraduate diploma (International relations, 2014), on the Sykes-Picot agreement and its after-effects in Middle Eastern politics. At present Helal is doing his MPhil in International Relations at the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.

**Mr Sam Hurley**

Sam Hurley is a Policy Analyst at the Centre for Policy Development, an independent and non-partisan policy institute based in Sydney and Melbourne. From 2008 to 2014 Sam worked as an analyst in various roles at the Commonwealth Treasury, where his responsibilities included forecasting economic growth in United States and China and assessing the impact of fiscal and monetary policy settings on Australia’s economy. In 2014 he also worked as a Research Associate at the East Asian Bureau of Economic Research, as part of the team that produced the Myanmar Trade and Investment Strategy Consultation Paper.
Mr Michael Lidauer

Michael Lidauer is a social anthropologist with a focus on Southeast Asia by background. Since his graduation from the University of Vienna in 2002, he has worked with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in the Caucasus, and as EU election observer across South and Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. From 2007 to 2009, he coordinated the International Civilian Peace Keeping and Peace Building Training Program (IPT) at the Austrian Study Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution (ASPR) and directed a pilot training program on Security Sector Reform (SSR). In early 2010, he coordinated the EU election observers in South Sudan. Between 2010 and 2012, Michael Lidauer was awarded a scholarship to study towards a PhD in Political Science in the Cluster of Excellence on “The Formation of Normative Orders” at Goethe University Frankfurt. Since 2011, he has been a research associate of the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF). He has been following the Myanmar transition since 2010 and working as the IFES Senior Elections and Conflict Advisor in Myanmar since September 2014. He has also published academically on Myanmar.

Dr Costas Laoutides

Costas Laoutides is a lecturer in International Relations at Deakin University. He holds an MA in International Conflict Analysis from the University of Kent (UK) and a PhD in International Politics from the University of Wales, Aberystwyth (UK). His research focus is on the study of separatist conflicts and he is the author of Collective Responsibility in the Secessionist Struggle (Ashgate) and co-editor of Territorial Separatism in Global Politics (Routledge). In addition, Costas has published articles and book chapters related to various aspects of separatist conflicts including de facto states, the Kurds in Iran and the Transnistrian conflict in Moldova.

Mr Gerard McCarthy

Gerard McCarthy is a PhD candidate in the Department of Political and Social Change, Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, ANU and an Australian Government Endeavour Postgraduate Scholar and Visiting Fellow at University of Yangon’s Department of International Relations. Gerard's doctoral research explores the role of informal institutions in framing political imaginaries in Myanmar’s ongoing transition from authoritarianism. His writing has been published in books, blogs and outlets including The Guardian, Myanmar Knowledge Society, The Lowy Institute, ANUs DevPolicy Centre, New Mandala, and Inside Story.

U Kyaw Min

Kyaw Min was born in 1945, and graduated from Yangon University Institute of Economics and Institute of Education. After graduation he served with the Basic Education Department in various capacities for 20 years. Since 1988 he joined democracy activities. Then he got elected in the 1990 parliamentary election for the seat of Buthidaung, Rakhine State. After his party was banned and the election results denied by the military, he joined the Committee Representing the People’s Parliament (CRPP), formed and headed by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Due to his political activity, he was jailed for 55 years along with another four of his family members in 2005. Luckily he and his family members were released from jail under presidential amnesty in 2012. Presently he is serving as the chairman of a registered political party, the Democracy and Human Rights Party (DHRP).
U Hkyet Hting Nan

Hkyet Hting Nan is a member of parliament from the Myanmar Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House) representing Kachin State Constituency No. 1. He is also the President of the Unity and Democracy Party of Kachin State (UDPKS). He currently chairs the parliamentary committee on national races affairs, conflict de-escalation and peace and has been giving extensive support to IDP camps in Kachin State. Since 2011 to date, he has been involved in the peace process between the government and the KIO (Kachin Independence Organisation). At the height of the Kachin conflict in 2013, his peace motion was adopted by the parliament. He accompanied the President on a state visit to Brunei Darussalam in 2012 and also visited various countries including the United States as part of parliamentary exchange and study tours.

Prior to becoming an MP, he was a member of the 2008 Constitution Referendum Commission and was involved in the Kachin Literature and Culture Committee in various capacities. He also led an organizing committee for the Kachin Manaw Festival from 2005—2008. At the local level, he took part in various sports and literacy programmes. Born and raised in Kachin State, he received his bachelor’s degree from Mandalay Arts and Science University in 1981. He also runs Aung Shwe Gabar Jewelry Company. He is married with three children.

Dr Min Zaw Oo

Min Zaw Oo is an expert in Myanmar affairs and is currently involved in the on-going peace process and security sector reform in Myanmar. Min has also contributed to policy initiatives especially to restore Myanmar’s relationship with the United States and European countries. Min is currently the Director of Ceasefire Negotiation and Implementation at the Myanmar Peace Center (MPC). He facilitates negotiation to achieve a ceasefire with 14 armed-ethnic groups and is currently helping stakeholders finalize the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. Min was the Director of Research and Deputy Chief of Party at Democracy International’s election-strengthening project in Afghanistan. Min also worked at a subsidiary of the US-based IDS International, as Research Director, to support the US military’s Human Terrain System in Afghanistan. Prior to his deployment in Afghanistan, Min was an independent consultant to the Genocide Early Warning Project which monitored high-risk countries around the world. He has also worked for the Political Instability Task Force that was established under the direction of the US Vice President in 1994. Min also contributed his analysis to Counter Networks and Narratives Weekly publications, circulated among counter-terrorism officials under the direction of the Special Operation Command. Min was exiled for 21 years abroad as a political activist until his return to Myanmar in 2012. Min received a Ph.D. in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from George Mason University. He also holds an M.A. in Security Studies from Georgetown University, and an M.S. in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from George Mason University.

Dr Jayde Roberts

Jayde Lin Roberts is an interdisciplinary scholar of the built environment who focuses on the influence of diasporic communities on the physical and social structures of Asian cities. She completed her Fulbright-funded fieldwork in 2009 and her dissertation on the Chinese in Rangoon in 2011. After earning her doctorate at the University of Washington, she began teaching at the University of Tasmania in 2012. Since 2012, she has broadened her research in Yangon to include the city as a whole with a particular focus on everyday urbanism. Her book, Traces and Places of the Chinese in Rangoon, which is a rewriting of her dissertation, will be published by the University of Washington Press in 2015.
Mr Matt Schissler

Matt Schissler has lived and worked in Myanmar and Thailand since 2007. He is based in Yangon, where he manages the Myanmar Media and Society (M.MAS) Research Project for St Antony’s College, Oxford University. From 2012 to 2014 Mr Schissler was the Advisor to Paung Ku, a local organization that provides mentoring, financial, and technical assistance to strengthen civil society across Myanmar. Prior to joining Paung Ku, he spent nearly five years working with ethnic human rights and media organizations, where he focused on strengthening local capacities to document human rights violations, advocate for human rights, and work as independent journalists. He holds a master’s in International Human Rights Law from Oxford, and wrote a highly acclaimed dissertation exploring relationships between local responses to forced labour in eastern Myanmar and transnational efforts to enforce the Forced Labour Convention. He also holds BAs in Rhetoric and in Politics from Whitman College. In August 2015 he will begin a PhD in anthropology at the University of Michigan, where he will also be a Graduate Fellow at the Weiser Center for Emerging Democracies. He speaks Burmese.

Professor Chaw Chaw Sein

Chaw Chaw Sein has been Head of the International Relations Department, University of Yangon since 2006. She was promoted to the post of Professor in 2011 and now is taking charge of both International Relations and Political Science at Yangon University. She also works as a member of Myanmar ISIS, an independent think tank, and participates in international conferences jointly held by Myanmar ISIS and international partners. She works closely with the National Defense University, the Ministry of Defense by supervising theses and giving lectures.

Chaw Chaw Sein obtained her PhD Degree in International Relations from Yangon University in 2004 and her research and interests are on China–Myanmar relations. Chaw Chaw Sein has written articles on Myanmar police reform; decentralization in the current Myanmar reform proces; BCIM integration; and Myanmar education reform.

Dr Anthony Ware

Anthony Ware is a development studies scholar with a research focus on Myanmar. He is currently a Senior Lecturer in International and Community Development at Deakin University, having previously taught into the development studies programme at the University of Melbourne and worked in the development sector in Southeast Asia. His research focus is on the empowerment of local communities in their own development, so his research has explored broad areas impacting on this in Myanmar, including understanding the nature and impact of politics (national and international), conflict and religion on local development.

Anthony is the author of Context Sensitive Development: How International NGOs Work in Myanmar (Kumarian Press, 2012), and editor of Development in Difficult Sociopolitical Contexts: Fragile, Failed, Pariah (Palgrave, 2014), as well as 22 chapters, journal articles and other scholarly publications, most focussed on Myanmar. He supervises or co-supervises eight doctoral candidates, four of whom are working on Myanmar. He is also the Acting Director of the Australia Myanmar Institute.
BIOGRAPHIES

Mr Tamas Wells
Tamas Wells spent six years, from 2006–12, working in the development sector in Myanmar with a range of local and international NGOs. He is currently completing a PhD in politics at the University of Melbourne and is also the editor of the Paung Ku Forum — an online discussion forum on aid and development in Myanmar.

Dr Bridget Welsh
Bridget Welsh is a Senior Research Associate, Center for East Asia Democratic Studies, National Taiwan University (NTU). She specializes in Southeast Asian politics, with particular focus on Malaysia, Myanmar and Singapore. She has edited/written numerous books including, Reflections: The Mahathir Years; Legacy of Engagement in Southeast Asia; Impressions of the Goh Chok Tong Years in Singapore; Democracy Takeoff? The B.J. Habibie Period; Awakening: The Abdullah Badawi Years (a Malay edition Bangkit was published in 2014). Two single-author books are forthcoming, Democracy Denied? Malaysia’s GE13 and Embracing Democracy: Political Attitudes in Malaysia as well as three edited collections, Does Democracy Matter?: Regime Support in Southeast Asia; Democratic Citizenship; and Youth in East Asia and UMNO at 60: A Changing Party?. She is a member of the Asia Barometer Survey, and is currently directing the survey in Malaysia and Myanmar. Prior to joining NTU, she taught at the Singapore Management University, the Johns Hopkins University-SAIS and Hofstra University. She received her doctorate in political science from Columbia University, her language training at Cornell University (FALCON) and bachelor’s degree from Colgate University. She is a Senior Advisor for Freedom House and a member of the International Research Council of the National Endowment for Democracy.

U Chit Win
Chit Win has been a PhD candidate in the Department of Political and Social Change, Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific since February 2013. He is an Australian Leadership Award recipient. He is also a Deputy Director from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw and oversaw Myanmar-Thailand boundary affairs before coming to Australia. Previously, Chit Win had been posted to Myanmar embassies in Jakarta and Tel Aviv in various capacities. His doctoral research seeks to understand the behavior of Myanmar’s parliament by looking at the role of activists, technocrats and ethnic elites who have been co-opted as parliamentarians for legitimacy and inclusiveness. While the politicians represent different parties—including the ruling party, and minor and ethnic parties — his research argues that the co-opted have become an important force within tolerable boundaries. His research explores how co-optation occurs and what its costs and benefits have been for Myanmar during its nascent democratic transition. He has written several op-eds and book reviews in the East Asia Forum, New Mandala and Nikkei Asian Review on the experience of Myanmar’s transition and several papers to be published in 2015 and 2016.

Ms Nu Nu Win
Nu Nu Win is currently the Manager of the Macroeconomic Policy Unit at the Australian Treasury, with responsibility for monetary and fiscal policy advice. She has a background in macroeconomic modelling, economic forecasting and large business taxation law and policy. Nu Nu has an interest in development economics, especially in Myanmar, and she coordinated the Myanmar Trade and Investment Strategy ‘White Paper’ while on a National Government Fellowship with the Crawford School of Public Policy at the Australian National University.
Professor Mike Woods

Mike Woods is Professor of Health Economics at the University of Technology, Sydney. He has had a long career in economics and public finance in the Commonwealth and the two Territories (ACT and NT). He is also currently a Senior Advisor to the OECD Southeast Asia Regional Development Programme. From 1998 to 2014 Mike was a Commissioner, then Deputy Chair, of the Australian Productivity Commission where he presided on over 20 national policy inquiries, including on reform in such fields as health, aged care, industry policy, structural adjustment and education. Mike has worked extensively in China on issues of fiscal reform and social insurance reform and was an advisor to the EABER-MDRI, *Myanmar Trade and Investment Strategy Study*.

Mr Ricky Yue

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The Hon Gareth Evans AC QC FASSA has been Chancellor of the Australian National University since January 2010. He was a Cabinet Minister in the Hawke and Keating Labor Governments from 1983–96, in the posts of Attorney General, Minister for Resources and Energy, Minister for Transport and Communications and — from 1988–96 — Foreign Minister. During his 21 years in Australian politics he was Leader of the Government in the Senate (1993–96) and Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives (1996–98). From 2000 to 2009 he was President and CEO of the Brussels-based International Crisis Group, the independent global conflict prevention and resolution organisation.

Gareth Evans was made a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) in 2012 for his "eminent service to international relations, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region, as an adviser to governments on global policy matters, to conflict prevention and resolution, and to arms control and disarmament", and in the same year was elected an honorary Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences of Australia (FASSA). *Foreign Policy* magazine cited him as one of the Top 100 Global Thinkers for 2011 "for making 'the responsibility to protect' more than academic". In 2010 he was awarded the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute Four Freedoms Award for Freedom from Fear, for his pioneering work on the Responsibility to Protect concept and his contributions to conflict prevention and resolution, arms control and disarmament.
UPDATE PUBLICATIONS

Myanmar’s Democratization: Comparative and Southeast Asian Perspectives
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The Illusion of Progress. The Political Economy of Reform in Burma/Myanmar

Burma-Myanmar: Strong Regime, Weak State?
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