



# **Myanmar and the Nonproliferation Regime: Sharing Perspectives**

**A Conference Report of the  
First Myanmar-US/UK Nonproliferation Dialogue**

**by  
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**Issues & Insights  
Vol. 14-No. 3**

Yangon, Myanmar  
February 2014

### **Pacific Forum CSIS**

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### **Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies**

Founded in 1992, Myanmar ISIS aims to act as an academic institute concerned with the study of international relations and foreign policy issue areas. It is also concerned with strategic studies and research works on current regional and international issues. Myanmar ISIS's other important task is to contribute timely inputs, views and recommendations for the formulation of policies and decisions on bilateral and multilateral issues with the aim of serving Myanmar's national interest while enhancing peace, friendship and cooperation with other countries of the world. Another area of importance is to project Myanmar's true image and better understanding of it by the world on its stands, policies, and actions on issues related to Myanmar.

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## **Acknowledgements**

The Pacific Forum CSIS would like to thank the US Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (DOE/NNSA) and the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Strategic Programme Fund (FCO/SPF) for sponsoring the Myanmar-US/UK Nonproliferation Dialogue. A special thank you also goes to the Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies (MISIS) for co-hosting the meeting.

This material is based upon work partially supported by the Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration under Award Number DE-NA0002307.

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## **Key Findings and Recommendations**

### **Myanmar-US/UK Nonproliferation Dialogue**

The Pacific Forum CSIS, in partnership with the Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies (MISIS), and with support from the US Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (DOE/NNSA) and the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Strategic Programme Fund (FCO/SPF), held the 1st Myanmar-US/UK Nonproliferation Dialogue in Yangon, Myanmar on Feb. 7-8, 2014. Some 45 Myanmar, US, and UK experts, officials, military officers, and observers, all in their private capacity, joined two days of off-the-record discussions on security perspectives, threats posed by weapons of mass destruction (WMD), the nuclear nonproliferation regime, the biological and chemical nonproliferation regimes, the role of transparency and confidence-building measures, and implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1540. Key findings and recommendations from the two-day meeting include:

- Myanmar's interest in opening to the world and in endorsing international rules and norms is real. Little time was spent on why Myanmar needs to embrace nonproliferation regimes; discussions focused on how to do so.

- While recognizing that proliferation is a threat that they are anxious to address, Myanmar participants explained that they have multiple priorities as they open to the world and transition toward democracy. Other priorities include peace-building within Myanmar, maintenance of social cohesion among local ethnic groups, economic development, poverty alleviation, and addressing international concerns regarding human rights and other issues, plus making a successful democratic transition.

- Myanmar has begun and is fully committed to the process of ratifying and implementing the CWC, the CTBT, and the BTWC along with its continued steps to bring its Additional Protocol into force. (Significantly, adoption of a modified Small Quantities Protocol is not on Myanmar's priority list.) Still, as it moves forward on nonproliferation, there are multiple regimes that need to be addressed. In many instances, lead ministries or agencies have not yet been determined, which further complicates the coordination process. Myanmar is stretching its capacity in seeking simultaneously to address these multiple issues. Priorities need to be established both within the nonproliferation arena and between nonproliferation and other issues.

- Motive matters. The desire to be a good international citizen and rejoin the community of nations drives Myanmar's efforts to participate in nonproliferation regimes. It views these efforts as critical to its future economic development. While other countries attack or condemn various "noncompliance" lists, Myanmar focuses on how to get off these lists. The *willingness* is there; what's needed is the *capacity*.

- As in other Southeast Asia nations, there is little sense in Myanmar of a direct threat posed by WMD. This can erode the priority and urgency attached to efforts to fully implement nonproliferation regimes.

- While admitting the need to change direction, Myanmar participants are very sensitive to criticism of their country and its international isolation. They are quick to see interference in their internal affairs, especially regarding ethnic conflicts, and worry that the policies of other nations toward Myanmar are determined by the views of “one person” (Read: Aung San Suu Kyi).

- Offline discussions emphasized the key role the military plays in decision-making throughout the Myanmar government, even while acknowledging the difficulty in reaching out to this group and influencing its thinking. Outreach to the military, while problematic in many ways (in particular because of sanctions), is critical to the success of efforts to get Myanmar to comply fully with nonproliferation requirements. Recent UK efforts involving limited military education activity could provide a model for US initiatives; especially should Congressional restrictions loosen over time.

- It was argued that the Tatmadaw (the Myanmar armed forces) is attempting to reinvent itself. International engagement, in part, is aimed at developing new strategies and operational doctrines, areas where cooperation could prove beneficial.

- Myanmar participants acknowledge the role that China plays in the region and, more specifically, in their economy. While not wanting to jeopardize this relationship and remembering when China was Myanmar’s only international supporter, there is widespread distrust of Beijing, especially “among the people”; many see China as a “revisionist power” and as “a cultural and military threat.”

- Myanmar participants exhibited strong interest in developing close and lasting relationships with the United States and the United Kingdom, including to address proliferation. While work at the bilateral and/or trilateral level appears the most appropriate manner to do so, other countries, organizations (including NGOs), and platforms can play a positive role. Specific offers of assistance by representatives of the OPCW and VERTIC were made and positively taken on board. Coordination among the various countries and entities offering assistance is minimal, however. This is an important area for future work.

- There was a positive reaction to the observation that the West is “re-engaging” with Myanmar and resuming a previous relationship. Cooperation on nonproliferation was seen as a relatively easy way for Myanmar to demonstrate a sincere desire to change.

- Myanmar participants insisted that their country does not have nuclear ambitions. Plans, including cooperation with Russia on development of a research reactor, were abandoned primarily due to cost but also in light of “international concerns.” Some participants noted that the cost-benefit calculus could change, and that Myanmar reserved the right to consider peaceful uses of nuclear energy in the future.

- Beyond rejecting any type of nuclear weapons deals or aspirations, Myanmar participants did not comment on Myanmar-North Korea relations, even though the

subject was raised several times by US and UK participants. Off line, however, several civilian officials volunteered that Myanmar did a “U-turn” on North Korean relations.

- Myanmar participants pointed to disarmament as the primary way to prevent nuclear dangers and as an area where nuclear-armed states could be more transparent. In making this oft-heard NAM argument, however, they did so with less fervor than is often encountered. They also recognize that this does not preclude Myanmar from playing its part. Myanmar’s recent signature of an Additional Protocol and stated intention to endorse other instruments and invest in regimes such as the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone or the newly-established ASEANTOM is evidence that it is willing to play a proactive role not only in nonproliferation, but also in nuclear safety and security.

- As chair of ASEAN in 2014, Myanmar sees opportunities to raise specific WMD nonproliferation issues in the lead-up to the 2015 NPT Review Conference. On NPT matters, Myanmar participants were in a “listening mode” regarding how to define success in 2015 and Myanmar’s potential contribution.

- Myanmar has initiated processes to ratify the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention. Interagency coordination is underway but it is time-consuming. Further assistance is needed to facilitate or speed up both processes.

- Private companies moving into Myanmar as part of its opening process could provide expertise and insight to facilitate compliance with biological and chemical nonproliferation regimes. Again, coordination of such efforts is lacking.

- Authority to implement various nonproliferation-related laws and regulations is in the counter-terrorism law. The government of Myanmar is working on a national CBRN plan that will identify points of contact for all regimes, as well as a needs assessment to develop a national implementation plan of legislation. Myanmar was encouraged to draw up an UNSCR 1540 national action plan to help donors figure out national needs.

- Myanmar participants have many questions about the purpose and usefulness of UNSCR 1540 and the Proliferation Security Initiative. They are also unclear about expectations regarding requests for greater transparency beyond the endorsement of nonproliferation regimes. Their low-key response to a generic discussion of the role of transparency in regional and global security suggests that, as they see it, they are “doing transparency” and that transparency beyond ratification and implementation of nonproliferation conventions is not necessary. They do not make arguments against the concept of transparency, however.

- All participants concurred that this dialogue offers a unique platform to advance Myanmar-US/UK nonproliferation cooperation and that it should continue.

- Future iterations should clarify misunderstandings that Myanmar may have with nonproliferation regimes, but emphasis should be on finding ways to assist Myanmar in

joining and coming into full compliance with these regimes. Prioritization of efforts remains important, even as we continue to focus on building capacity. Deeper involvement in regional nonproliferation efforts through the ASEAN Regional Forum and non-governmental, track-two Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) should be facilitated to help build capacity and deepen understanding of nonproliferation issues.

- Future iterations of this dialogue should also seek to advise Myanmar on setting priorities to address nuclear dangers. This dialogue should help ensure that any future use of nuclear technology by Myanmar is conducted in a safe, secure, and proliferation-resistant manner, by fully discussing the realities, challenges, and myths surrounding peaceful use of nuclear energy. Future iterations should also delve into the nature of and rationale behind Myanmar-DPRK relations and examine ways to more fully engage the Myanmar military.

# **Facilitating Myanmar's Endorsement of the Nonproliferation Regime**

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After years of isolation, Myanmar is re-engaging with the international community and has expressed strong interest in endorsing nonproliferation rules and norms. However, there is still very limited understanding of how Myanmar authorities view their security concerns, let alone how they view their roles and responsibilities in the nonproliferation regime.

In an attempt to address this problem and facilitate Myanmar's adoption and implementation of nonproliferation rules and norms, the Pacific Forum CSIS, in partnership with the Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies (MISIS), and with support from the US Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (DOE/NNSA) and the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Strategic Programme Fund (FCO/SPF), held the 1st Myanmar-US/UK Nonproliferation Dialogue in Yangon, Myanmar on Feb. 7-8, 2014. Some 45 Myanmar, US, and UK experts, officials, military officers, and observers, all in their private capacity, joined two days of off-the-record discussions on security perspectives, threats posed by weapons of mass destruction (WMD), the nuclear nonproliferation regime, the biological and chemical nonproliferation regimes, the role of transparency and confidence-building measures, and implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1540.

## **Comparative Security Perspectives**

Our US speaker kicked off the first session by explaining that the US role in Asia aims to shape the environment in a way that ensures security and stability, openness and transparency, and human rights and democracy. The US rebalance to Asia is the embodiment of this policy. Although it is not a new policy (the United States never left Asia and many strands of the rebalance predate the Obama administration), Washington seeks to increase its diplomatic, development, and defense engagement with Asia because it is the most dynamic region in the world. While Washington has focused more intently on Northeast Asia in recent years, the United States is particularly interested in enhancing its ties with Southeast Asian countries. In particular, Washington is interested in helping strengthen regional institutions and regimes, creating a more robust regional organizational network, and maintaining a stable balance of power. It is doing so using a wide range of means, e.g., new military force deployments, as well as the creation of new bilateral and multilateral partnerships and coalitions, which are becoming increasingly important at a time of fiscal constraints. Working with China, which is accumulating significant power and influence, is also central to US policy.

Our US speaker stressed that chief US security concerns in the region include North Korea's nuclear and missile developments as well as its proliferation activities, and maritime disputes in the East and South China Seas. Nontraditional security threats, including climate change, piracy, infectious disease, transnational crime, cyber-theft, and the modern-day slavery of human trafficking, are also important challenges.

Our Myanmar speaker stated that Myanmar's security concerns, like most small countries, are primarily internal rather than external. Myanmar's chief concern is internal cohesion and the preservation of national harmony, and Myanmar officials are troubled by any external involvement in Myanmar's internal affairs, especially as it is transitioning toward democracy. Myanmar's principal and immediate threats include 1) ethnic conflicts and peace-building; 2) communal violence; 3) constitutional reform; and 4) military build-up in neighboring countries.

Ensuring national unity is critical to the Myanmar government. Myanmar is composed of over 100 ethnicities, all of which have their own languages and interests. Conflicts among ethnic groups in the Kachin State are a national security threat and despite political dialogue, no solution has been found. Communal violence in the Rakhine State is also of deep concern and the involvement of external actors has worsened the situation, hurt Myanmar's national image, and hindered economic development. Internal Myanmar discussions have focused on the potential for political instability in light of the revision of the 2008 constitution and, in particular, the role that the Tatmadaw (the Myanmar armed forces) should play in government. Our speaker stressed that the armed forces cannot and should not be neglected given the central role that they have had throughout Myanmar's history; she also argued that they are currently attempting to reinvent themselves. Finally, with the US rebalance to Asia and the re-rise of China, Myanmar worries about the potential of great power competition, especially as it is located between two giants (China and India).

During the discussion, Myanmar participants stressed that their country's opening to the world was real and long overdue. While admitting the need to change direction, however, they cautioned against unfair criticism of their country and its international isolation. They also warned against interference in their internal affairs, especially regarding ethnic conflicts, and expressed the view that the policies of other nations toward Myanmar need to be determined by the overall process of change in Myanmar and not by the views of "one person" (Read: Aung San Suu Kyi).

Myanmar participants readily acknowledge the role that China plays in the region and, more specifically, in their economy. Myanmar does not want to jeopardize this relationship and also has a sense of obligation to China based on when China was Myanmar's only international supporter for many years. At the same time, it was noted that there is widespread distrust of Beijing, especially "among the people." It was stressed that many Myanmar see China as a "revisionist power" and as "a cultural and military threat." How to balance these two sets of considerations was seen as an important challenge for Myanmar officials.

## **Perceptions of WMD Threats**

Our Myanmar speaker stressed that WMD are of deep concern because they “kill massively and indiscriminately” and they can be used both by states and non-state actors. Myanmar worries about WMD threats, even though threat perceptions seem more acute among Western countries. To Myanmar, the best way to address this problem is through prevention, hence the importance of raising awareness of the threat and of endorsing all relevant treaties and conventions. Also critical is for countries with WMD to get rid of them. In the nuclear domain, the priority for nuclear-weapon states should be disarmament.

Still, our speaker insisted that the importance of nuclear disarmament should not preclude countries from endorsing the nonproliferation regime and Myanmar is actively working to demonstrate its commitment to nonproliferation. It has recently concluded an Additional Protocol (AP) with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and is in the process of drafting domestic legislation to fully implement it; Myanmar seeks “full transparency” in this effort. It has also signed the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) and is in the final stages of working toward its ratification, which should be approved by Parliament shortly. Myanmar is also a signatory of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Ministry of Industry is developing a national legal framework to enable adoption of the Convention. As our speaker put it, “all these conventions are on our radar; we’re working hard to adopt them.”

Our US speaker explained that WMD traditionally refer to nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons as well as missile delivery systems, all of which have dramatic consequences if they are used. Possession of WMD or WMD capabilities by an increasing number of states raises the odds that they will one day be used. There is also the risk that these weapons could fall into the hands of terrorists. The Asia Pacific is plagued with many WMD threats: the region has several nuclear-armed states (China, India, North Korea, and the United States) and many dual-use capabilities are on the market. Countering WMD threats is a challenge. It requires both supply-side and demand-side efforts. In other words, efforts must both control WMD capabilities and address the reasons or motives why states opt to develop WMD.

During the discussion, Myanmar participants emphasized that they are concerned about proliferation and anxious to address it. They also explained, however, that Myanmar has multiple priorities as it opens to the world, among them: peace-building within Myanmar, maintenance of social cohesion among local ethnic groups, economic development, poverty alleviation, and addressing international concerns regarding human rights and other issues, as well as making a successful democratic transition. Prioritization is the first step, then, lead ministries or agencies must be identified to endorse specific nonproliferation agreements; the failure to take that basic step further complicates the coordination process.

Still, Myanmar participants explained that their country has begun and is fully committed to the process of ratifying and implementing the CWC, the Comprehensive

Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and the BTWC, along with continued steps to bring its AP into force, which it signed with the IAEA in September 2013. Adoption of a modified Small Quantities Protocol (SQP) did not seem to be on Myanmar's priority list. When asked to comment on plans to adopt a modified SQP, Myanmar participants only stated that their current focus was bringing their AP into force.

Significantly, the desire to be a good international citizen and rejoin the community of nations appeared to be the primary driver behind Myanmar's efforts to participate in nonproliferation regimes. As in many Southeast Asian countries, the sense that WMD proliferation poses a threat *per se* seemed absent. Rather, Myanmar views these efforts as critical to its future economic development. Regardless of its motives, while other countries attack or condemn various "noncompliance" lists, Myanmar focuses on how to get off these lists. The *willingness* is there; what's needed is the *capacity*.

Offline discussions emphasized the key role the military plays in decision-making throughout the Myanmar government, even while acknowledging the difficulty in reaching out to this group and influencing its thinking. Outreach to the military, while problematic (because of sanctions), is critical to the success of efforts to aid Myanmar to comply fully with its nonproliferation requirements. Recent UK efforts involving limited military education activity could provide a model for US initiatives, especially as Congressional restrictions loosen over time.

### **The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and Related Nonproliferation Mechanisms**

Our US speaker gave an overview of the 1968 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), noting that it is the cornerstone of the nonproliferation regime. He explained that the NPT consists of three major trade-offs: the right for all states to enjoy the peaceful uses of nuclear energy provided that they do not develop nuclear weapons (Article IV); the promise that nuclear-armed states will disarm while others will not develop nuclear weapons (Article VI); and the promise that states will not develop nuclear weapons so long as other states will remain non-nuclear.

Our speaker stressed that the IAEA has been, since its establishment in 1957, the international agency tasked to control and promote the development of nuclear energy worldwide. It is also tasked to promote nuclear safety and nuclear safeguards. Aimed to detect the diversion of nuclear materials, nuclear safeguards are key nonproliferation components. They consist of Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements (CSA), which all non-nuclear weapon states are required to adopt according to the NPT, and, since 1997 the Additional Protocol (AP), which grants the IAEA broader access rights and lets it use the most advanced verification tools to ensure that nuclear materials are not diverted. The SQP is a safeguards agreement for states possessing only very small quantities of nuclear materials; the standard text was modified in 2005 to plug a verification loophole. Other important agreements of relevance include the Treaty of Bangkok, which establishes a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Southeast Asia (while guaranteeing the peaceful and safe

use of nuclear energy and disposal of radioactive waste to all regional states) and mechanisms such as strategic trade controls or the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI).

Our Myanmar speaker's presentation focused on the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), which he described as “the most important nonproliferation treaty for the region” because it helps enhance peace and security. He explained that Myanmar is keen to support the SEANWFZ as well as other frameworks, namely the IAEA and the newly-created ASEANTOM on nuclear safety and security. His presentation highlighted Myanmar’s intentions, as this year’s Chairman of ASEAN, to continue efforts to make it possible for all five of the NPT NWS to adhere to the SEANWFZ Protocol, thereby giving a legally-binding assurance not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon state parties to the SEANWFZ.

During the discussion, Myanmar participants insisted that their country does not have nuclear ambitions. Plans, including cooperation with Russia on development of a research reactor, were abandoned primarily due to cost but also in light of “international concerns” surrounding Myanmar’s intentions. Some participants noted that the cost-benefit calculus could change, and that Myanmar reserved the right to consider peaceful uses of nuclear energy in the future. The prospects of nuclear power development in Myanmar remain remote, however: one Myanmar participant stressed that their Parliament recently rejected the idea when it was put on the table.

Myanmar participants identified disarmament as the primary way to prevent nuclear dangers and as an area where nuclear-armed states could be more transparent. In making this oft-heard Non-Aligned Movement argument, however, they did so with less fervor than is usually heard. Significantly, Myanmar participants seemed to recognize that this does not preclude Myanmar from playing its part in strengthening nonproliferation. Many pointed to Myanmar’s recent signature of an AP and its stated intention to endorse other instruments and invest in regimes such as SEANWFZ or the newly established ASEANTOM as evidence that Myanmar is willing to play a proactive role not only in nonproliferation, but also in nuclear safety and security.

US and UK participants suggested that as chair of ASEAN in 2014, Myanmar should raise specific WMD nonproliferation issues in the lead-up to the 2015 NPT Review Conference. On this matter, Myanmar participants appeared in a “listening mode” regarding Myanmar’s potential role and contribution; they did exhibit a strong interest in making their mark as ASEAN chair, however.

### **The Role of Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures**

Our US speaker began by distinguishing transparency measures, which refer to information about a country’s intentions, plans, programs, and activities, from confidence-building measures, which define actions designed to reduce uncertainties, provide reassurance, and build trust among countries. He explained that both types of measures help strengthen regional and global stability because 1) they reduce misunderstandings, competition, confrontation, or even conflict between and among

countries; 2) they build habits of cooperation between and among countries; and 3) they facilitate cooperation to address global challenges common to all countries. In the nonproliferation realm, specific transparency and confidence-building measures within the Asia Pacific include implementation of the AP, continued exchanges or information on nonproliferation regulations, or adherence to the protocols of the Bangkok Treaty by nuclear weapon states, for example.

This session did not include a Myanmar presenter. Once the discussion began, it quickly became apparent why. Myanmar participants were unclear about expectations for action by Myanmar regarding requests for greater transparency beyond the endorsement of nonproliferation regimes. Their low-key response to a generic discussion of the role of transparency in regional and global security seemed to suggest that, as they see it, they are “doing transparency” and that transparency beyond ratification and implementation of nonproliferation conventions is not necessary. As one Myanmar participant put it, “signing a nonproliferation agreement automatically institutionalizes transparency.” They did not make arguments against the concept of transparency, however, stressing that they “want to know if there is room for improvement.”

### **The Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention**

Our US speaker gave a presentation on bio-risks; this talk reflected Dr. Yassif’s personal views, which do not necessarily represent the views of the Department of Defense. She gave an overview of the 1972 Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), explaining that it prohibits the development, production, acquisition, and stockpiling of biological and toxin weapons. Although the Convention does not have a verification regime, states parties are called upon to submit annual Confidence-Building Measures declarations that detail their biological activities and to strengthen national implementation – by developing legislation, implementing biosafety and biosecurity standards and promoting a culture of responsibility among researchers. As a reflection of the fact that bio-risks now straddle the health and security domains, the World Health Organization also developed revised International Health Regulations (IHR) in 2005, requiring all member states to detect, report, and respond to public health events of international concern. Looking to the future, responding to bio-risks will require a whole-of-government approach involving the security, public health, and veterinary sectors. The US Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program, especially the Cooperative Biological Engagement Program (CBEP), assists partner countries with building capacity to implement the BTWC and IHR: it helps states better prevent, detect, and respond to bio-threats.

Our Myanmar speaker stressed that Myanmar has been working with the European Union’s CBRN Centers of Excellence since 2013 on biological and chemical issues. That effort has focused on identification of points of contact within the Myanmar government. While the ministries of agriculture and irrigation, health, conservation and forestry, and livestock and fisheries development (four ministries) have been on point to address biological issues, the Ministry of Industry has been in charge of chemical issues. National laws and regulations are being developed, most of which are included in the Counter-

Terrorism Law. Each ministry still has its own regulations, however, and there is no specific all-encompassing biological law.

During the discussion, Myanmar participants had many questions about the BTWC, including why it did not include a verification regime. They took note of the fact that in lieu of a verification regime, the Convention includes a system of voluntary CBM submissions and asked how they should meet its requirements because, as one Myanmar participant put it, “I want my country to be in full compliance.” Specific offers of assistance by representatives of the NGO VERTIC were made and positively taken on board by Myanmar participants. Coordination among the various countries and entities offering assistance is minimal, however, making it an important area for future work.

### **The Chemical Weapons Convention**

Our US speaker gave a brief history of chemical-weapon arms control, stressing that the core treaty is the Chemical Weapons Convention. The CWC prohibits the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, and retention of chemical weapons, as well as their transfer and use. CWC state parties are also required to make declarations about chemical-weapon stockpiles or production facilities they have under their jurisdiction (and they are required to destroy them) and they are required to make declarations about CWC implementation obligations. The CWC divides chemical agents into three schedules and includes a stringent verification regime that consists of declarations and annual reports, routine and challenge inspections, and the possibility of conducting in-country investigations in the case of an alleged use of chemical weapons. The CWC verification regime is managed by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), based in The Hague, Netherlands.

A representative from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons explained that the CWC requires all state parties to adopt the necessary measures to implement its obligations, to establish or designate a national authority, and to inform the OPCW of the measures taken to implement the Convention. It is a difficult and time-consuming process, but assistance of various kinds exists to facilitate this process.

Our Myanmar speaker stressed that adhering to the CWC has been on his personal radar for over 20 years and that Myanmar is working hard to do so. This process will require considerable assistance from the OPCW, however. Khin Maung Latt (*Myanmar Ministry of Science and Technology*) reiterated that unlike in the biological domain, the Ministry of Industry has been identified as the point of contact for chemical issues. In addition to working on national legislation, Ministry officials are now drawing up an inventory of Myanmar’s chemical facilities and are developing relationships with OPCW officials to assist in this (difficult) process.

As during the BTWC discussion, upon request by several Myanmar participants, specific offers of assistance by representatives of the NGO VERTIC and the OPCW were made and seemingly positively taken on board by Myanmar participants. As in the

biological domain, coordination among the various countries and entities offering assistance is a challenge and is an important area for future work.

A few Myanmar participants asked many questions about the CWC verification regime. Of particular concern were the conditions for the conduct of a CWC challenge inspection. More in-depth discussions about the CWC verification regime would be beneficial.

### **UN Security Council Resolution 1540**

Our US speaker explained that United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1540 was adopted in 2004, in the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001 terror attacks and the discovery of the A.Q. Khan proliferation network. The Resolution's goal is to plug gaps in the international nonproliferation regime and, in particular, to respond to growing concerns about WMD proliferation by nonstate actors. It works in connection with other nonproliferation instruments and establishes a legal basis for national actions. The Resolution requires states to put in place, implement, and enforce national laws and regulations to prevent illegal exports of WMD technologies. States are required to report to the UN Security Council's 1540 Committee, which oversees the Resolution's implementation. To assist countries in need, various bilateral and multilateral assistance programs are available.

Although this session did not include a Myanmar presenter, the discussion was lively. Several participants explained that authority to implement various nonproliferation-related laws and regulations in Myanmar is found in the counter-terrorism law. They also stated that the Myanmar government is working on a national CBRN plan that will identify points of contact for all regimes as well as a needs assessment to develop a national implementation plan of legislation. This is a major undertaking that requires time and resources, however, and Myanmar participants explained that this cannot happen overnight given their limited capacity. In response, US and UK participants encouraged their Myanmar counterparts to draw up a UNSCR 1540 national action plan to help donors figure out national needs.

A discussion about PSI followed. While US and UK participants explained that PSI is a critical tool to combat proliferation and that it helps build capacity, Myanmar participants asked many questions about how the initiative operates and its legal grounds. It appeared essential to provide additional information about UNSCR 1540 and PSI, which seem obscure to Myanmar participants.

### **Looking to the Future**

Our Myanmar speaker declared that a new era of cooperation had arrived. Previous suspicions of the international community about Myanmar's intentions and capabilities in the nuclear, biological, chemical, and missile domains are gone. Myanmar is both unable and unwilling to develop WMD. It firmly believes, however, that every country has the

right to pursue the peaceful uses of nuclear technology if it wishes, and Myanmar may consider it in the future, even though “we have no plan to do so right now.”

Our US speaker stressed that nonproliferation is only one area where cooperation can flourish between Myanmar and the West. There are many others. In particular, the relationship between Myanmar and the West has changed considerably since (most) US sanctions have been lifted, with the notable exception of sanctions against military officers with links to North Korea. He suggested that Myanmar should suspend all arms trade with Pyongyang and make public statements to that effect. The United States and the United Kingdom should in turn step up engagement with Myanmar via military-to-military dialogue and various similar activities to build confidence and trust.

Discussions during the two-day meeting made clear that Myanmar’s interest in opening to the world and in endorsing international rules and norms is real. Indeed, little time was spent on *why* Myanmar needs to embrace nonproliferation regimes. Rather, discussions focused on *how* to do so. There was also a positive reaction to the observation that the West is “re-engaging” with Myanmar and resuming a previous relationship, and cooperation on nonproliferation was seen as a relatively easy way for Myanmar to demonstrate a sincere desire to change. While work at the bilateral and/or trilateral level appears the most appropriate manner to do so, other countries, organizations (including NGOs), and platforms can also play a positive role.

All participants agreed that this dialogue offers a unique platform to advance Myanmar-US/UK nonproliferation cooperation and that it should continue. Future iterations should clarify misunderstandings that Myanmar may have with nonproliferation regimes, but emphasis should be on finding ways to assist Myanmar in joining and coming into full compliance with these regimes. Deeper involvement in regional nonproliferation efforts through the ASEAN Regional Forum and nongovernmental, track-two Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) should be facilitated to help build capacity and deepen understanding of nonproliferation issues.

Future iterations of this dialogue should also help guide Myanmar on setting priorities to address nuclear dangers. Specifically, this dialogue should ensure that any future use of nuclear technology by Myanmar is conducted in a safe, secure, and proliferation-resistant manner, and by fully discussing the realities, challenges, and myths surrounding peaceful use of nuclear energy. Future iterations should also delve into the nature of and rationale behind Myanmar-North Korea relations and examine ways to more fully engage the Myanmar military. Significantly, beyond rejecting any type of nuclear-weapon deals or aspirations, Myanmar participants did not comment on Myanmar-North Korea relations, even though the subject was raised several times by US and UK participants. Offline, however, several civilian officials volunteered that Myanmar did a “U-turn” on North Korean relations. The state of Myanmar-North Korea relations remains an important area of work.

The United States, United Kingdom, and others seeking to assist Myanmar must keep the country's limited capacity in mind and assist in setting priorities. The focus of our assistance must remain on capacity building. In that regard, comments by Myanmar participants suggested both that Myanmar would welcome proposals for strengthened capacity-building assistance. At the same time, Myanmar participants also stated that it would be helpful to minimize overlapping offers of assistance from different providers. Thus, sharing of information among potential providers would be valuable. DOE/NNSA support for Myanmar's implementation of the Additional Protocol was explicitly cited as a good model for future assistance.

## Appendix A

### **Myanmar-US-UK Nonproliferation Dialogue February 7-8, 2014**

#### Agenda

##### Friday, February 7, 2014

9:00 **Welcome Remarks**

9:15 **Session 1: Comparative Security Perspectives**

This session will compare and contrast the main threats and challenges in the region and reflect on Myanmar's place in it. What are the principal security issues that each country faces? How does each country view the regional balance of power? What factors influence that balance and how are current trends impacting it? Specifically, what is the role of the United States? How does each side view the role of China and India? What is the role of the UK, EU, and ASEAN? Are there any other key players that play a significant role in the region?

10:45 **Coffee Break**

11:00 **Session 2: Perceptions of WMD Threats**

This session will examine perceptions about weapons of mass destruction (WMD) threats. What are WMD threats? How does each country understand and perceive such threats? Does each side consider them to be serious security challenges? How much do WMD threats feature as priorities in each country's security assessments? More generally, how serious are such threats in Southeast Asia? In the Asia-Pacific region more broadly?

12:30 **Lunch**

13:45 **Session 3: The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and Related Nonproliferation Mechanisms**

This session will look at views of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), nuclear safeguards, and the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), along with other key nonproliferation mechanisms. What is the role of the NPT and NPT review process? What is the role of nuclear safeguards? How far along is Myanmar's implementation of its Additional Protocol? What is the role of SEANWFZ and other nonproliferation mechanisms, such as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)?

15:15 **Coffee Break**

15:30 **Session 4: The Role of Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures**

This session will reflect on the role of transparency and confidence-building measures in nonproliferation. How are transparency and confidence-building measures applied in the area of nonproliferation? Why are they important? What can be done unilaterally, bilaterally, and multilaterally to enhance transparency and build confidence?

17:00 **Session Adjourns**

**Saturday, February 8, 2014**

9:15 **Session 5: The Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention**

This session will explore the Biological and Toxin Weapons (BTWC). What is the role of the BTWC? What are its main provisions and requirements? What is the purpose of BTWC confidence-building measures? What is on the agenda of the BTWC review process? How is BTWC implementation proceeding? What is the role of the Implementation Support Unit (ISU)? What are the requirements for accession to the BTWC?

10:45 **Coffee Break**

11:00 **Session 6: The Chemical Weapons Convention**

This session will examine perceptions of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). What is the role of the CWC? What are its main provisions and requirements? What are the chemical substances under control? How does the CWC verification system work? What is the role of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)? What is on the agenda of the CWC review process? What are the requirements for accession to the CWC?

12:30 **Lunch**

14:30 **Session 7: UN Security Council Resolution 1540**

This session will emphasize that all WMD, missiles, and other sensitive technology are subject to control. What is UNSCR 1540? What are its main provisions, especially regarding trade of strategic goods and the physical protection of sensitive technologies? How is it being implemented? What are the reporting requirements? How can our countries cooperate to better implement the Resolution? How does the Proliferation Security initiative support NSCR 1540 and broader non-proliferation goals? What is the role/value of UN sanctions in general?

16:00 **Coffee Break**

16:15 **Session 8: Looking toward the Future**

This session will reflect on next steps for the bilateral relationship and future cooperation on nonproliferation and on security issues more broadly. What is the

future of Myanmar relations with the US/West as they relate to nonproliferation issues? How can both sides work together to better address these issues? What specific issues should they prioritize? What should they not do to keep relations moving forward? What are the major near-term challenges and major milestones? How can the US and UK, among others, contribute to this process?

17:45 **Meeting adjourns**

18:30 **Farewell dinner at the Kandawgyi Palace Hotel**



## **Appendix B**

### **Myanmar-US/UK Nonproliferation Dialogue**

#### **Participant List**

##### **Myanmar**

U Nyunt Maung Shein  
Chairman  
Myanmar Institute of Strategic and  
International Studies (Myanmar ISIS)

U Win Aung  
Chairman, Republic of the Union of  
Myanmar Federation of Chambers of  
Commerce and Industry

H.E. U Hla Maung  
Member, Myanmar ISIS

H.E. U Wynn Lwin  
Member, Myanmar ISIS

U Ko Ko Hlaing  
Chief Political Advisor to the President of  
the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

U Myint Thu  
Deputy Director-General  
ASEAN Affairs Department  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Daw Yin Yin Oo  
Deputy Director-General  
Strategic and Policy Studies Department  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Dr. Khin Maung Latt  
Department of Atomic Energy  
Ministry of Science and Technology

Colonel Aung Myint Oo  
National Defence College, Ministry of  
Defence

Lt. Colonel Khin Maung Soe  
Research Department  
Office of the Chief of Staff (Army)  
Ministry of Defense

U Kyee Myint  
Member, Myanmar ISIS

U Denzil Abel  
Member, Myanmar ISIS

Daw Kyi Kyi Hla  
Member, Myanmar ISIS

Daw Carole Ann Chit Thar  
Member, Myanmar ISIS

U Than Tun  
Member, Myanmar ISIS

Daw Maran Ja Taung  
Member, Myanmar ISIS

U Khin Maung Lynn  
Joint Secretary 1, Myanmar ISIS

U Ba Hla Aye  
Joint Secretary 2, Myanmar ISIS

Dr. Chaw Chaw Sein  
Professor/Head of Department  
International Relations Department  
Yangon University

U Ye Min Thein  
Deputy Director, International Organizations  
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Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Dr. Khin Khin Lay  
Deputy Director  
Department of Atomic Energy  
Ministry of Science and Technology

Dr. Than Sint Naing  
Deputy Director  
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Dr. Mar Mar Oo  
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Dr. Kay Thwe Kywae Aye  
Deputy Director  
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Dr. Moe Phyu Hlaing  
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Daw Thandar Khin  
Deputy Director  
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**US/UK**

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Organization for the Prohibition of  
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Ralph Cossa  
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Lewis Dunn  
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Science Applications International  
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Robert Gromoll  
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Sumitro Chair for Southeast Asia Studies  
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First Secretary  
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British Embassy, Yangon

Charles Mahaffey  
East Asia Team Chief  
Office of Regional Affairs  
Bureau of International Security and  
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