

Burma

# Myanmar Junta Meets Allied Ethnic Armed Groups, Eyes Peace Conference

Sunday 2 April 2023, by [The Irrawaddy](#) (Date first published: 31 March 2023).

**Representatives of seven signatories to the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) this week flew to Naypyitaw to hold talks with senior junta generals on holding a peace conference and amending the military-drafted constitution.**

The informal talks between the regime-appointed National Solidarity and Peace Negotiation Committee (NSPNC) and seven NCA signatories was held from March 28-29 in Naypyitaw.

The NSPNC was represented by its secretary, Lieutenant-General Win Bo Shein and members Lieutenant General Khin Zaw Oo and U Hla Maung Shwe. The talks between the junta and the signatories have been going on since last year but Lt-Gen Khin Zaw Oo and U Hla Maung Shwe appeared for the first time at the latest meeting, sources close to the meeting said.

Senior members of the Restoration Council of Shan State, Arakan Liberation Party, New Mon State Party, Democratic Karen Benevolent Army, Karen National Union/Karen National Liberation Army-Peace Council, Lahu Democratic Union, and Pa-O National Liberation Organization attended the meeting.

The meeting focused on holding a peace conference, the election proposed by the Myanmar military regime, and making amendments to the army-drafted 2008 Constitution, according to junta media.

NSPNC members Lt-Gen Khin Zaw Oo and U Hla Maung Shwe during the talks.

Min Aung Hlaing is interested in following in the footsteps of previous governments and holding a peace conference, but the regime has yet to reveal details about it.

Colonel Saw Kyaw Nyunt from the Karen National Union/Karen National Liberation Army-Peace Council, the spokesperson of the NCA delegation at the meeting, was not available for comment.

According to the NCA, Union-level peace conferences were held with EAOs under both U Thein Sein's quasi-civilian government and the Daw Aung San Suu Kyi-led National League for Democracy government, which was ousted by the Myanmar military in a 2021 coup.

Observers say any peace talks between the Myanmar military and NCA signatories, none of which is fighting the regime, would have no practical value. Min Aung Hlaing is proposing a peace conference just for show to ease international pressure, they say.

"They are just talking about holding a peace conference without the participation of those who are fighting them. It will be a sham," said a local military analyst, referring to the country's established ethnic armed groups like the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), Karen National Union (KNU) and others. Most of the armed groups are fighting regime forces alongside the parallel National Unity

Government (NUG)'s armed wing, the People's Defense Force (PDF).

In his address to mark Armed Forces Day on Monday, Min Aung Hlaing warned that his regime would not negotiate with, and would take decisive action against, the NUG, PDFs and certain EAOs supporting them.

On the election, despite its pledge to hold the polls, the regime has not yet been able to set a date.

The Myanmar regime called 2022 the "Year of Peace" and has dubbed 2023 the "Year to Enjoy the Fruits of Peace," but armed conflicts are intensifying across the country. While Min Aung Hlaing is preaching peace, he has been urging his soldiers to fully utilize the military skills they have been taught.

Min Aung Hlaing is currently engaged in peace talks with 10 EAOs—seven of them are NCA signatories and three are non-signatories.

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