

*The Third Conference on National Dialogues, 5-6 April 2017*

*The House of the Estates, Helsinki*

## **Grassroots participation in the Myanmar peace process**

The peace process in Myanmar is at a critical turning point. After negotiating a Nation-wide Ceasefire with 16 armed groups and jointly designing a complex Political Dialogue Framework between more than 100 national stakeholders (parties, governments and armed groups – representing over 130 ethnic groups), the challenges of addressing each stakeholder group’s demands and expectations is seemingly overwhelming. Currently the formal process is not only becoming increasingly fragile but also presents a risk of exclusiveness. Enabling meaningful grassroots participation by increasing the sense of ownership and empowering local communities creates a setting more conducive to lasting peace. Over the past three years we’ve witnessed the development of several unique track 1.5 initiatives or “common spaces” that started to serve as “safe spaces” for all-stakeholder informal dialogues and as support mechanisms and safety nets. These structures now offer a unique platform for inclusive grassroots participation.

### **Panel:**

Thuzar Thant, Peace and Dialogue Program Manager of Euro-Burma Office based in Yangon, Myanmar. Since 2012 April working closely with various stakeholders engaged in the Myanmar peace process. (Moderator)

Mr. Sai Sai Ngin, Director, White Benevolence - Environmental Research and Education, Shan State Common Space

Mr. Min Htay Aung, Mon State Civilian Ceasefire Monitoring Committee Member, Mon State Common Space

Ms. Nan Mya Thida, Director, Research Institute for Society and Ecology, Karen State Common Space

Ms. Nang Phyu Phyu Lin, Gender advisor to the CSO Forum + Gender Equality Network

