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**Press Release: November 21, 2016**

*For Immediate Release*

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## **PACE to observe by-election process and conduct an independent verification of the voter list in all vacant constituencies**

Yangon, November 21: PACE plans to monitor several aspects of the process to fill 19 vacant constituencies, both before and on election day. As part of this effort, PACE is preparing to conduct an independent voter list verification in all by-election constituencies.

"Even though there are only a few seats in this upcoming by-election, I think it is a crucial and important process to observe. It is important to measure to what extent the recommendations made last year by domestic and international observers have been taken into consideration to improve the election process, including areas such as the independence of the Union Election Commission, the capacity of the sub-commissions and their communication with UEC, the administration of election-day procedures, the process to update the voter list and the quality of the voter list itself, more transparent mechanisms for advanced voting, the role of civil society, and citizen access to election information, said Sai Ye Kyaw Swar Myint, Executive Director of PACE."

The UEC announced that out of 31 vacant constituencies, 19 will hold by-elections on April 1, 2017. The tentative timeline for the by-elections process was also announced in late October.

### **Processes to be observed**

PACE will observe the following aspects of the 2017 by-election process:

- a) Candidate nomination
- b) Campaign environment
- c) Voter list display process
- d) Quality of the voter list through an independent verification
- e) In-constituency advanced voting
- f) Election-day process
- g) Vote tabulation

PACE will deploy a total of 30 long-term observers (LTOs) during the pre-election period in the 22 townships where by-elections will take place. The organization will deploy an additional 80 enumerators to conduct a systematic voter-list verification in all by-election townships. On election day, more than 600 short-term observers (STOs) will be deployed to observe the opening, voting, closing and vote counting processes at a random sample of polling stations in all the vacant constituencies.



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PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE FOR CREDIBLE ELECTIONS

## Methodology

Throughout this process, PACE will use systematic methodologies designed to ensure that its observation captures the quality of the election process in an objective and unbiased manner. For example, this methodology will ensure that observers will be present in both urban and rural areas, in areas where elections will go smoothly and in those that might present more challenges. Systematic observation like the one that will be used by PACE have been used by domestic observers in more than 50 countries.

In accordance with the UEC's guidelines for domestic observation, PACE has applied for accreditation for its long-term and short-term observers for the 2017 by-election process.

## About PACE

The People's Alliance for Credible Elections (PACE) is an independent, non-partisan, non-governmental domestic election observer group based in Yangon. PACE was founded in 2013 to strengthen democratic institutions in Myanmar through safeguarding citizen rights and promoting public participation in the electoral process. To promote transparency, accountability and inclusiveness in the electoral process, PACE works on civic and voter education, election observation and electoral reform.

Upholding the principles enshrined in "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," PACE's work is implemented regardless of race, religion and gender. Moreover, PACE has signed the "Declaration of Global Principles for Nonpartisan Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations," a document endorsed by more than 260 organizations from 75 countries.

In 2015, PACE observed the election process as an accredited observer organization. In September 2015, PACE observed the nationwide two-week voter list display process with 110 long-term observers in 110 townships. A total of 129 LTOs were deployed to observe the 60-day campaign period from September 7 to November 6, 2015. On election day, November 8, 2015, PACE deployed more than 2,000 short-term observers (STOs) to observe the opening, voting, and closing and counting process, conducting the first sample-based observation (SBO) in Myanmar.

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