



ယုံကြည်ရသော ရွေးကောက်ပွဲများပေါ်ပေါက်ရေး  
ပြည်သူများပူးပေါင်းလှုပ်ရှားမှုအဖွဲ့  
PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE FOR CREDIBLE ELECTIONS

## ယုံကြည်ရသောရွေးကောက်ပွဲများပေါ်ပေါက်ရေးပြည်သူများပူးပေါင်းလှုပ်ရှားမှုအဖွဲ့ People's Alliance for Credible Elections (PACE)

### Campaign Monitoring

#### Preliminary Findings (February 1 to March 5)

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

March 17, 2017

The campaign environment is one of the most important aspects contributing to the credibility of an election. Beginning on February 1 PACE deployed 22 long-term observers (LTOs) to the 22 townships where by-elections will be conducted on April 1 to assess whether all candidates are campaigning under equal conditions and within an environment of fairness and respect. During the observation, PACE's LTOs interviewed members of township sub-commissions, candidates and voters to understand their perception of the campaign environment. Moreover, LTOs also monitored rallies to observe where campaign activities were organized, which materials were distributed, how they reached out to voters, and whether their speeches were respectful of others and consistent with the law.

This document contains the findings of PACE's observation of the first five weeks of the campaign (February 1 to March 5). PACE will publish its findings from the last three weeks of the campaign on or around election day.

### KEY FINDINGS

From February 1 to March 5, PACE deployed long-term observers to observe the campaign environment in all 22 townships where by-elections will be conducted on April 1.

The following findings represent the viewpoints of individual candidates as expressed in 405 interviews conducted by LTOs and direct observation by PACE LTOs at 190 rallies. This information does not include activities or viewpoints of party headquarters, other party supporters or other groups. It also does not include information about activities conducted by parties or candidates before the official campaign period began.

#### Campaign Activities

What activities are candidates using to reach voters?

- Of the candidates, PACE interviewed, the most common outreach activities were distributing materials (48%), holding rallies (38%) and hanging posters (34%). The next most common form of outreach was door-to-door

outreach (26%) or parades/loudspeakers (20%). Very few candidates said they used technology or media to reach voters; only 3.5 % said they used media (interview) to reach voters. and 6% using social media/facebook. But 23% said they did not have any activities planned. This data does not capture outreach activities taken by parties' central committees or by other party supporters.

- Among those interviewed, candidates from USDP and NLD party are the most active party to carry out campaign activities. However, parades and loudspeakers were most used by NLD (, and more candidates from small party (39%) and other big party (28%) responded that they would not carry out any activities at all.

## **Campaign Rallies**

### Are rallies approved by local government officials?

- Of those interviewed, candidates did not report many problems in the rally approval process. All candidates from four party categories said their rallies were approved without changes. Two out of five candidates (40%) said their campaign requests were approved one day before or one the same day campaign activities were planned.

### Where are rallies held?

- Of rallies observed by PACE, most were held at private offices/homes (48%), party offices (21%), religious places (10%), public spaces, like markets or parks (8%). Very few campaign events were held in sports stadiums/fields (2%) or government buildings (3%). No rally of observed rallies was held at industrial places.
- Candidates from all party categories were more likely to use Private Office/House to conduct campaign activities compared to other places. On the other hand, other big parties and small/independent were more likely to use public space (like park, market, etc.) than USDP or NLD.
- At rallies observed by PACE, other big parties (14%), were more likely to hold rallies in religious places.

### What materials or resources are used by candidates at rallies?

- At most rallies observed, candidates handed out printed materials (57%). Other goods, like food (14%), party souvenirs (22%) were also handed out. Nothing was provided at 21% of rallies observed. Small party/independent candidates (73%) more likely to handout printed materials compared to the candidates from the other categories.

## **Campaign Messaging**

### Who is campaigning with candidates at rallies?

- During campaign rallies observed, party leaders joined as speakers at 44%, celebrities at 5% and community leaders at 3%. 51% of rallies observed had no other speakers besides the candidates.
- At rallies observed, candidates from USDP, NLD and other big party had similar rates of party leaders join the rallies. At rallies observed, candidates from small/independent were less likely to campaign without another speaker,

### Are candidates or other speakers using personal or inciting remarks at campaign rallies?

PACE observed the language of candidates and official speakers at rallies to see if personal or inciting remarks were made. PACE did not observe the speech of candidates outside of rallies or speech by other actors.

- At all of rallies observed, no speaker made any comment about a group or person based on their religion, race or gender.

### **Interference in Campaigns**

#### Do candidates say they are facing problems?

In candidate interviews, PACE candidates if they faced any problems in the campaign (like interference in campaign activities, problems with job/business, physical threats/harm, property/campaign material damage, problems with friends/family or bribes, etc.)).

- Nearly all (96%) candidates said they did not face problems.

#### Is there interference in rallies?

- At all rallies observed, PACE LTOs did not see interference or disruption of the event. PACE did not note a difference in levels of interference among the four party categories.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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### **To Political Parties**

- Political parties continue to follow Code of Conduct all the time until the cooling-off day
- To mitigate campaign disputes and to reduce post-election disputes, political parties should promote and use mediation committees formed at every state and region where by-elections are scheduled.

## **METHODOLOGY**

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Between February 1 and March 5, PACE's 22 LTOs conducted 405 interviews with candidates from four party categories: The Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP), the National League for Democracy (NLD), other big parties in the township<sup>1</sup>, and small parties and independent candidates<sup>2</sup>. In weekly interviews, PACE asked candidates questions about their campaign activities and challenges that they faced.

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<sup>1</sup> Depending on the township, "Other Big Parties" could be other national parties that are popular, like the NLD or USDP, or could be local or state level parties that are strong in that township.

<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of analysis, PACE places independents and small parties in the same category as they lack the support and structure of a big party apparatus.

PACE also observed 190 rallies of candidates from the same four party categories. PACE did not observe informal party gatherings or other political events conducted by other actors. In some cases, PACE was unable to observe rallies in very remote locations due to logistical challenges. PACE did not directly observe other political events or speeches by those not formally affiliated with the candidate.

PACE LTOs conducted these interviews and rally monitoring in all 22 townships where elections are scheduled to take place on April 1. In addition, PACE conducted to candidate interviews and rally observation, LTOs interviewed voters and election sub-commission members. Findings from those interviews will be shared in a later report.

PACE's methodology is designed to identify trends in the overall campaign environment. It does not focus on particular candidates, political races or incidents, which have been covered by media reports.

### **Period of the Observation**

First five weeks of the campaign period: February 1, 2017 - March 5, 2017

### **About PACE Observers**

22 long-term observers. Observers were trained in mid-January on PACE's nonpartisan code of conduct, conducting interviews and observing rallies, and completing observation forms. PACE's LTOs are accredited as election observers with the UEC.

### **Location of the Observation**

PACE LTOs observed the campaign environment in all 22 townships where by-elections are scheduled:

<b>State/Region</b>	<b>Number of LTOs</b>
Bago East	2
Chin	1
Kayah	1
Mon	1
Rakhine	1
Sagaing	1
Shan East	1
Shan South	3
Yangon	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>

## **ABOUT PACE**

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The People's Alliance for Credible Elections (PACE) is an independent, non-partisan, non-government 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 mainly works on civic and voter education, election observation and electoral reform.

Upholding the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, PACE's conducts its work regardless of race, religion or gender. Moreover, PACE has signed the Declaration of Global Principles for Nonpartisan Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations, which has been endorsed by more than 260 organization from 75 countries.

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