



Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL Foundation)

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For Immediate Release

ANFREL Deploys Election Observers in Myanmar

YANGON, 22 March 2017 – Tomorrow, the Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL) will deploy its election observers to the 19 constituencies in Myanmar which will hold by-elections on April 1st. As the only international election observation mission in the country, ANFREL is proud to again extend its long-time commitment to support election integrity in Myanmar.

ANFREL's observation mission, led by Mr. Damaso Magbual, consists of twelve (12) international observers and two (2) election analysts representing various civil society organizations (CSOs) from all over Asia. They will engage with voters, election administrators, civil society, the media, and others to assess the development of the electoral process since 2015, and measure the degree to which past recommendations given by election observation groups have been implemented. ANFREL is also happy to welcome members of national election monitoring organizations that will join ANFREL's observers for part of their time in the field in an effort to strengthen the capacity of domestic CSOs to monitor elections.

ANFREL's observation methodology follows international standards such as the Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections, the Dili Indicators on Free and Fair Elections, and the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation. Analysis of the election situation will focus on inclusivity, freedom and fairness of election laws and procedures, election administration, the role of media and civil society, and the campaign environment.

"We observed a great deal of electoral progress in the 2015 elections," ANFREL Chairman Mr. Magbual said, "and we hope to find in these nineteen constituencies continued improvement and electoral momentum towards improving the quality of elections throughout Myanmar." To show such progress, ANFREL hopes to witness a peaceful election, where candidates do not resort to the use of violence and intimidation. Election administrators are expected to perform their crucial duty to bring about an atmosphere of freedom and fairness by guaranteeing impartial implementation of election laws and providing equal opportunities to compete and vote regardless of political, ethnic, or religious affiliations. ANFREL also wishes to see the media and civil society play an active role in encouraging an election environment characterized by vigilance and active participation by the people. Finally, ANFREL hopes to find a successful implementation of the recommendations of election observation missions from 2015.

ANFREL is delighted to once again return to Myanmar, and looks forward to continuingly support Myanmar's democratic development in the future.

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Afghanistan – FEFA; *Bangladesh* – FEMA, ODHAKAR; *Cambodia* – COMFREL, NICFEC; *East Timor* – Women Caucus; *Indonesia* – KIPP, JPPR, Perludem; *India* – Lokniti, *Japan* – InterBand; *Mongolia* – Women for Social Progress (WSP); *Nepal* – NEOC, NEMA; *Pakistan* – FAFEN; *Philippines* – IPER, PPCRV, NAMFREL; *Singapore* – Maruah; *South Korea* – PSPD; *Sri Lanka* – PAFFREL; *Taiwan* – CCW; *Thailand* – PollWatch