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## Mandalay CSOs Join National RTI Coalition

On 23 July 2015, a group of 40 civil society representatives from across Upper Myanmar came together in Mandalay to discuss the importance of the right to information (RTI) to the country's democratic transition. The participants agreed to form an Upper Myanmar RTI Working Group and to select members to join the central RTI Working Group, which is coordinating advocacy on this issue nationwide. The participants also unanimously endorsed the joint statement which was adopted at a November 2014 workshop on this issue.

*"We are thrilled to see that Myanmar's civil society has embraced this issue so enthusiastically",* said Toby Mendel, Executive Director of CLD. *"While Myanmar's democratic transition still has a long way to go, this level of energy certainly bodes well for the country's future."*

*"Passing a right to information law would be a key milestone for Myanmar."* said Esben Harboe, Programme Manager for IMS' work in Myanmar. *"We are happy to support civil society in pushing towards this goal."*

The workshop, which featured in-depth discussion on the benefits of RTI and the elements of a strong RTI law was the latest in a series of workshops on RTI which have been hosted by the Centre for Law and Democracy, with the support of International Media Support. Future workshops in Myanmar's Shan region are planned for later this year.

The Workshop Statement is available in English and Burmese at: <http://www.law-democracy.org/live/mandalay-csos-join-national-rti-coalition>.

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