



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



15 February 2017 – for immediate release

Myanmar: Workshop on Key Freedom of Expression Issues

On 14 February 2017, UNESCO and the Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD) held a full-day workshop in the capital of Myanmar, Nay Pyi Taw, for officials from the Government, military and both upper and lower houses of Parliament (Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw), as well as the Parliamentary support body, the Commission for the Assessment of Legal Affairs and Special Issues. The focus of the workshop was on international standards relating to the right to information and broadcasting.

“It is important that key official stakeholders, and especially parliamentary bodies, have a good understanding of human rights standards in these areas”, said Toby Mendel, Executive Director of CLD. *“We are hopeful that amendments to the Broadcasting Law and a draft right to information law will come before Parliament soon.”*

“UNESCO has been working on these issues with a range of local stakeholders since 2012”, said Min Jeong Kim, Head of Office, UNESCO Myanmar. *“Raising awareness about international standards in these areas is a core area of engagement for UNESCO, and we hope to be doing more of this in future.”*

Discussions about a right to information law have been ongoing in Myanmar for some time now, including a debate on the matter before the Commission for the Assessment of Legal Affairs and Special Issues which also took place on 14 February, and which Mendel also attended. A strong Broadcasting Law was adopted in August 2105 but implementation has been stymied by the fact that the National Broadcasting Council, the main regulatory body, was not appointed within the six months envisaged in the Law, in part due to the change of government. Technical amendments to the Law are now needed to extend the six months and allow for the appointment of the Council.

For further information, please contact:

Toby Mendel
Executive Director
Centre for Law and Democracy
Email: toby@law-democracy.org
+1 902 431-3688
www.law-democracy.org
twitter: @law_democracy