

## Statement of 7<sup>th</sup> Ethnic Media Conference

September 18, 2019

The 7<sup>th</sup> Ethnic Media Conference was organized with the slogan “Ethnic Media for Justice” by the BNI Multimedia Group at Majoi Hall in the Manau field in Myitkyina, Kachin State from 16-18 September 2019.

The Conference was joined by a total of about 200 people including the Kachin State Chief Minister and members of the State Government, Union-level Ministry of Information, State Information and Public Relations department, members of BNI, Myanmar Press Council, political parties in Kachin State, traditional indigenous cultural organizations, civil organizations, religious leaders, elders from refugee camps, media outlets in Myanmar and news media networks, donors and representatives from embassies.

During the three-day long conference, participants discussed and gave recommendations on Media Freedom, Freedom of Speech, safety of journalists, sustainability of ethnic media, conflicts in Kachin areas, mega development projects and negative impacts on environment and people, hardships faced by locals in IDP camps, rule of law and issues of justice, recommendations on ethnic media policies, and democratic transition and the future of media.

BNI together with respective ethnic state-based member news organizations have convened ethnic media conferences annually starting from 2013 in Mon, Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayah (Karenni) and Karen States.

### **The 7<sup>th</sup> Ethnic Media Conference has decided:**

- 1) to collaborate to work on issuing an ethnic media policy draft paper
- 2) to produce more local ethnic journalists and to build the capacity of existing journalists so that they can produce specialized news on different issues
- 3) to work to strengthen the flow of accurate information between news media and news sources including civil based organizations.
- 4) to produce more media articles reflecting voices of ethnic people in establishing federal democracy in Myanmar.

### **Demands**

1. A law related to the Right to Information should be drafted and issued.
2. Media laws and by laws should be translated into ethnic languages and distributed.



# BNI Multimedia Group

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3. Supporters of media are requested to continue to provide local media organizations with technical and financial assistance.
4. The government should have more effective policies to control mega development projects and there should be transparency to media so that the general public can get information.
5. Every group concerned with establishing a federal democratic country should have media policies which are just.
6. There should be freedom of movement for journalists without restrictions in any areas so that they can go and get information freely in the upcoming 2020 general elections

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