

RELEASE IN PART
B6

From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, November 14, 2012 6:48 AM
To: H
Subject: FW: Burma

fyi

From: Jonathan Powell [mailto:]
Sent: Wednesday, November 14, 2012 4:31 AM
To: Sullivan, Jacob J
Subject: Burma

B6

Dear Jake

I thought I ought to update you and the Secretary on what we have been doing in Burma before your visit.

With the support of the British government we have been working to share our experiences from Northern Ireland with the government, ASSK and the armed ethnic groups with the aim of supporting their tentative steps towards a peace process.

In July I took Gerry Kelly and Jeffrey Donaldson to Yangon, Napiyidaw and to Chiang Mai to meet the government including Aung Min, the opposition including ASSK and Generation 88, the ethnic political parties and the leaders of all the armed groups. The sheer show and tell effect of having an IRA leader who blew up the Old Bailey, a hardline Unionist who was in the army and whose close relatives were killed by the IRA and a government figure made an impact and there was quite a lot of interest in the lessons we had learned. We tried to help them focus on moving into a systematic political process with a structure and a timeline once the final ceasefire, with the Kachin, is in place. There is a danger if this doesn't happen swiftly the ceasefires will collapse.

We followed that up with a trip in September by Gerry Kelly to see the military commanders of the armed groups in their bases along the border. As a former leader of an armed group he managed to build some close relationships and help them understand some of the challenges that the IRA and Sinn Fein faced during the Northern Ireland peace process and how they managed to deal with them to reach a peace agreement.

We are following up with teach-ins for the Karen and for all the armed groups in Thailand with Gerry, Jeffrey, Yair Hirschfeld (who negotiated Oslo) and Martin Griffiths (Aceh and ETA) on approaches to negotiation and power sharing. We are also arranging a visit to Northern Ireland for Aung Min and his team (which has now been postponed until the New Year as a result of your visit).

We are also planning to take two retired generals with experience of peace processes including Northern Ireland to Burma to talk to the Tatmadaw. This arises from advice from ASSK on the importance of getting the serving military to open their minds.

If you have any thoughts on what else we should do or what we should prioritise after your visit I would be most grateful if you would let us know.

Given the Secretary's experience of Northern Ireland I thought she would be interested in the impact that peace process is having on thinking on all sides in Burma.

Enjoy the visit.

Jonathan