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## RFA – Radio Free Asia (Author)

### Ex-junta official says Shan state ceasefire is 'not sustainable'

**Updated Jan. 12, 2024, 3:31 p.m. ET**

Junta officials and a resistance alliance agreed to a temporary ceasefire during talks in China, a person attending the meeting told Radio Free Asia on Friday morning.

The Three Brotherhood Alliance and regime representatives reached the decision during peace talks in China's Kunming on Thursday. The agreement was signed into effect at 10 p.m., the anonymous source said, asking RFA not to disclose his name because he was not authorized to talk to the media.

As a result of the discussion, the allied Arakan Army, Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, and Ta'ang National Liberation Army agreed to cease capturing cities and military camps in northern Shan state. Junta officials agreed not to instigate aerial attacks and operate heavy weaponry.

Representatives from all three of the resistance groups attended the meeting, said the anonymous source. Lt. Gen. Min Naing and five members from the military council also attended, he added, as well as China's special representative Deng Xin Jun.

China's border with Myanmar would be re-opened after renegotiation among the three northern alliances, junta officials and China when the area is more stable, the meeting attendee said.

The agreement did not specify a given length of time, a senior northern alliance official who attended the talks told RFA.

This decision is a result of Chinese pressure and would not be sustainable in the long run, said an ex-military official, who asked RFA to protect his identity for safety reasons.

"This ceasefire is due to pressure from China. China definitely put pressure on both sides, because Yunnan's industrial products are affected. Because of this, a ceasefire agreement was reached before the resolution was clear," he said.

"This halt is a breather for the junta council. The Three Brotherhood Alliance also breathed a sigh of relief. And China also breathes a sigh of relief. But I want to say that this is not a long-term, stable situation."

Junta regime spokesman Zaw Min Tun confirmed through junta controlled-state media that a ceasefire agreement was reached.

"We will continue discussions, and will work to maintain the ceasefire," he said. "Myanmar and China will discuss the resumption of bilateral border trade."

### **Consideration for China**

Neither party could deny it was a result of Chinese pressure, said Dr. Hla Kyaw Zaw, a political and military analyst based in China.

"There are pros and cons. Some say this could set back the Spring Revolution. I don't think so. As for the northern group, they still need to rest in order to prepare their armies in peace, and the ceasefire is temporary," she told RFA.

"It's a good thing to stop temporarily and politically discuss. They also need to be free to discuss. There may be some consideration for what China wants [from the Three Brotherhood Alliance] when China intervenes."

The shadow National Unity Government, or NUG – made up of former civilian leaders and other anti-junta activists – will continue efforts elsewhere in the country to end the military dictatorship in collaboration with other resistance forces, NUG spokesperson Nay Phone Latt said.

"Fighting might be halted in a specific area due to certain reasons, but no place will be peaceful under the military regime," he said.

Later on Friday, the Three Brotherhood Alliance issued a statement reaffirming its commitment to ending the junta's rule.

"Significant progress made," [the alliance said on X](#), formerly known as Twitter. "But achieving our complete goal needs more time and ongoing

efforts. Our dedication remains strong with the entire Myanmar population.”

Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning voiced Beijing’s support for the ceasefire at a regular news conference Friday.

“China hopes the relevant parties in Myanmar can conscientiously implement the agreement, exercise maximum restraint toward each other and solve the issues through dialogue and consultations,” she said, adding that the ceasefire was also in China’s interests.

“The two sides promised not to undermine the safety of Chinese people living in the border area and Chinese projects and personnel in Myanmar,” she said.

### **‘Cannot be fully trusted’**

A previously reported cease-fire was not honored by either side.

Ko Sai, a resident of The Baw township, told RFA that artillery shelling could be heard in Lashio and The Baw Thursday night and Friday morning.

“They need to keep their promise,” he said, referring to the ceasefire signatories. “I have a positive view on these agreements, although it cannot be fully trusted.”

The result of this week’s discussion is only for northern Shan state and would not apply to Rakhine state, added the meeting attendee. The Arakan Army’s attacks have also impacted Chinese development projects in Rakhine. On Monday morning, the Arakan Army [launched an offensive](#) on a junta naval base in a Chinese special economic zone.

Since Operation 1027 launched on Oct. 27, 2023, 15 out of 22 townships in northern Shan state have been occupied by northern resistance groups, according to data compiled by RFA.

Combined troops from the Karenni National Defense Force, the People’s Liberation Army and the Bamar People’s Liberation Army have captured six cities across Shan state, including Chinshwehaw, Kunlong and Hsenwi.

The United Wa State Army has since captured Hopang and Pan Lon cities.

The Ta’ang Liberation Army also seized Namhsan and Manton, in addition to other cities in Ta’ang Self-Administered Zone, including Namhkam, Mongngawt and Namtu cities.

***Translated by RFA Burmese. Edited by Mike Firn, Matt Reed and Malcolm Foster.***

*This story has been updated to add comments from the junta's spokesman and a statement from the Three Brotherhood Alliance.*

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