



SASAKAWA USA
Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA

Press Release

October 21, 2015

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New Sasakawa USA Research Report:

“The United States and Japan: Assisting Myanmar’s Development”

WASHINGTON, D.C.: Sasakawa USA today released its latest report, “The United States and Japan: Assisting Myanmar’s Development.” The new publication includes a comprehensive summary of American and Japanese assistance to Myanmar since the mid-1900s, an assessment of the current political conditions in Myanmar, and recommendations on how the United States and Japan can increase cooperation to provide much-needed support in areas critical to the country’s continued progress. [Click here to download the full report.](#)

“Japanese and American objectives for Myanmar reinforce the ambitions of Myanmar itself,” said Adm. Dennis Blair, Chairman and CEO of Sasakawa USA. “As this report shows, Washington and Tokyo can and should take complementary and coordinated actions to help the people of Myanmar achieve the prosperous and free future they deserve.”

The publication includes papers written by top Myanmar experts including:

- **David Steinberg**, Distinguished Professor of Asian Studies, Georgetown University
- **Vikram Nehru**, Bakrie Chair in Southeast Asian Studies, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
- **Priscilla Clapp**, former Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy, Burma
- **Toshihiro Kudo**, Professor, National Graduate Institute of Policy Studies
- **Donald M. Seekins**, Emeritus Professor of Southeast Asian Studies, Meio University
- **Mary P. Callahan**, Associate Professor at the Jackson School, University of Washington

Highlights from the report:

- Despite pressure from the United States to refrain from providing development assistance to Myanmar from 1988 to 2011, Japan continued to provide debt relief and humanitarian grants totaling \$887 million. Japan’s willingness to continue to support Myanmar throughout its tumultuous history has furthered the unique relationship between the two countries forged over the past seven decades.
- Myanmar authorities and bilateral and multilateral donors all agree that the developmental needs of the country are significant—from an inadequately staffed bureaucracy to technical training, capacity building, ongoing ethnic conflicts, and poor civil-military relations.
- Since the goals for both Japan and the United States in the fields of economic, social, and political development in Myanmar coincide, avenues for mutual cooperation should be explored in close collaboration with Myanmar.
- There may be opportunities for the United States and Japan to cooperate in such areas as educating Myanmar’s military, the Tatmadaw, in civil-military relations including through the development of a new War College in Myanmar; training minority groups on legislative systems and democratic engagement; and supporting structural and agricultural reform to ensure the sustainability of Myanmar’s largest export—rice.
- Although assistance to help the country achieve internal peace with ethnic minorities is fraught with political problems due to difficulties over past foreign involvement, Japan carries no such baggage.

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