

October 27, 2020

To

Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor

Office of the State Counsellor

Naypyidaw

**Subject: Open letter appealing to stop the ongoing construction of dams on the Namtu or Myitnge river**

There are currently four new large dams being planned on the Namtu/Myitnge river. Three are in Shan State: the 735 megawatt Middle Yeywa dam, invested in by Norway's state-owned SN Power company; the 280 megawatt Upper Yeywa dam, involving Chinese, Japanese, Swiss and French companies; and the 210 megawatt Namtu (Hsipaw) dam, invested in by the Natural Current Energy Hydropower Company. These dams are located in contested areas where fighting is ongoing until today.

The Namtu or Myitnge river has been the lifeblood of thousands of residents living along its banks for generations, nourishing agriculture, fisheries, transportation and other livelihoods.

We, local residents, were not consulted when the construction of the Upper Yeywa dam began in 2008. We were only informed in 2014 that the dam would flood our villages, lands, gardens and crops. Not wanting our communities to be destroyed, we have many times sent protest letters to the relevant authorities, held mass gatherings, and organised blessing ceremonies for the river to flow freely forever. However, there has been no response from the authorities.

The two Talong villages, housing 700 people, will lose their main livelihood of organic orange growing if the Upper Yeywa dam is built. A Talong East villager, Lung Sai Kyaw Aye, currently earns an annual income of 19,600,000 kyat (approx 15,000 USD) from two acres of orange plantations which produce 28,000 viss of oranges a year.

The planned dams will devastate our communities along the river. We have therefore collected (2,000) signatures of local residents and entreat you:

- 1. To stop the construction of all dams on the Namtu/Myitnge river**
- 2. To heed and respect the voices of local people**

Sai Thumai +95: (0)9 453 132 755

Nang Lao Kham +95: (0)9 262 108 062

Sai Thein Myint +95: (0)9 667 356 474

Sai Kyaw Saw Harn +95: (0)9 696 4568 48