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## Myanmar: Workshops on Media Law Reform

The authorities in Myanmar are drafting three pieces of media legislation as part of the process of transition to democracy: a print law (currently being prepared by the Interim Press Council); a broadcasting law (currently being prepared by Myanmar Radio and Television, MRTV); and a public service media law (currently being prepared by the Ministry of Information, MoI). Over the last week, the Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD) and Mizzima Media jointly hosted three workshops for different stakeholders – the media, civil society, political parties and members of parliament – to discuss international standards relating to freedom of expression and principles on media regulation.

*“The huge interest in these workshops shows that different stakeholders in Myanmar appreciate the important role of freedom of expression and a free media in a democracy,”* said Toby Mendel, Executive Director of CLD. *“I was particularly impressed that over 40 parliamentarians attended the workshop in Nay Pyi Taw, most of whom stayed for the whole day.”*

The workshops are part of a broader programme of providing support for the development of democratic media legislation, which CLD has been undertaking jointly with International Media Support (IMS), and which has involved workshops, technical advice meetings and written submissions on the three laws and related issues (such as the constitutional guarantees for freedom of expression and the draft code of ethics being prepared by the Press Council).

*“Raising awareness about democratic systems of media regulation is a crucial part of the transition process”,* said Thin Thin Aung, Director, Training and Education, Mizzima Media. *“Without such understanding, the different stakeholders will not be able to play their part in ensuring that the laws which get adopted help to foster a strong, independent and diverse media in Myanmar.”*

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