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BURMA | Party Predicts Electoral Majority

Burma's National League for Democracy (NLD) party, led by Aung San Suu Kyi, is reportedly on track to win a majority of the votes in the national elections, having secured 78 of the 88 seats declared so far.

AFP news agency reports that a senior official in the ruling Union Solidarity and Development party (USDP) conceded electoral defeat to the NLD, which has announced its unofficial victory. The Union Election Commission is yet to release the final results.

The elections Nov. 8 were the first openly-contested democratic elections in Burma since 1990. The system was inherently flawed.

Clauses in the constitution bar Aung San Suu Kyi from the presidency, guarantee the military 25 percent of seats in parliament and give the military control over the appointment of various ministers of key departments such as Home Affairs and Border Affairs. An estimated 20 percent of the population was deliberately disenfranchised, in particular Rohingya Muslims and displaced people in Burma's ethnic areas. Muslim candidates were also disqualified.

CSW's Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas said, "This is a truly momentous and historic result. The elections were inherently not free and fair, millions were disenfranchised, NLD candidates in some places were subjected to restrictions, harassment and even violent assault, the constitution will restrict the NLD's ability to govern - and yet, despite all these obstacles, the people of Burma have spoken loudly and clearly for change, for democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and an end to military-backed politics."

"Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD now face the huge challenge of seeking to elect a President through parliament in the coming months and play their rightful – and long overdue - part at the heart of government to lead Burma forward. There are grave issues which the new government must address, not least seeking a lasting peace to end decades of conflict in the ethnic states, taking steps to promote religious freedom and diversity, and ending the dominance of the extremist Buddhist nationalists who have poisoned Burmese society with their politics of hatred. It is right to celebrate the historic developments we have seen in Burma in the past two days, but we must remain vigilant and continue to work and pray for the change which the people of Burma so clearly desire," Thomas said.