



# UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI TORINO

## I@UNITO – Visiting Scientists

Scientific area	Scientific responsible	Host Department	Type of activity	Start of mobility	Language
	Stefano Ruzza	Culture Politiche Società			
Type of fellowship	Junior (less than 40 years old) 3 months fellowship				
Title of the research project	Continuity and change: Domestic politics and illiberal peacebuilding in Myanmar				
Description of the research project	<p>The recent general elections in Myanmar have undoubtedly represented a watershed in the country's history, putting behind five decades of uncompromising military rule. With the victory of the National League of Democracy (NLD) led by Aung San Suu Kyi, there are hopes and expectations that Myanmar will start a new phase of democratic politics, economic development, and internal peace. However, aspects of change live together with significant elements of continuity: first, by constitution the military (the <i>Tatmadaw</i>) still holds crucial government positions. Second, it still commands large part of the economy also through the exploitation of natural resources. Third, the NLD shows worrying signs of centralization of power in the hands of its leader, much in line with the historical experience of other 'democratic' countries in South-East Asia. Fourth, ongoing conflicts with ethnic armed groups in several parts of the country reveal how the central government has yet to effectively address demands of autonomy put forward by a large part of the population living in the border regions. Since 2011, Myanmar's central government has embarked on two major rounds attempting conflict resolution with more than a dozen major armed ethnic organizations. This project seeks to analyse the enmeshment of economic incentives in these peace building processes.</p> <p>By co-operating with the team of researchers of the Department of Cultures, Politics and Society working on "illiberal peacebuilding", the winning scholar will analyze the complex dynamics of Myanmar's domestic politics – i.e., the relationship between NLD and ethnic parties, the evolution of the relationship between the Tatmadaw and its party of choice (the Union Solidarity and Development Party and/or its successor), the coexistence in power of the NLD and the Tatmadaw – in relation to the aim, as stated by Aung San Suu Kyi, of bringing internal armed conflicts to the end by convening a so-called 21st century Panlong Conference where all stakeholders should reach a long-lasting peace agreement. In fact, the evolution of domestic politics and of the institutional framework</p>				

	<p>in Myanmar will have a crucial influence on the nature and outcome of all peacebuilding efforts – with elements of illiberalism likely to stay.</p> <p>The project is expected to draw on original research material gathered from field research in order to consider the implications of conflict resolution under conditions of persistent democratic constraint.</p>
Profile Description	<p>The selected scholar will be a highly qualified researcher with an outstanding knowledge of contemporary Myanmar proved by publications based on extensive field research in the country. A wider interest in the link between government control and political conflict in Southeast Asian Region will be appreciated. Substantial experience in research dissemination and advocacy is highly desirable</p>
Research objectives	<p>The project will deliver three main results:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) lay the ground for at least one joint publication with department researchers;</li> <li>2) organization of events designed to offer insights to foreign affairs policy-makers looking to influence the shape of peacebuilding initiatives in highly contested political contexts;</li> <li>3) foster the exchange of experiences about dissemination and advocacy with the host department researchers.</li> </ol>
Website and Contact	<p><a href="mailto:stefano.ruzza@unito.it">stefano.ruzza@unito.it</a>, <a href="mailto:annarita.letizia@unito.it">annarita.letizia@unito.it</a></p>