



BURMA RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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PROGRAM

Ellicott City, MD ---- The Burma Research Institute (BRI), formerly the Chin Association of Maryland (CAM), invites you to join a **Hybrid** Congressional Briefing. “The earthquakes in Myanmar on 28 March have pushed 2 million people into critical need of assistance and protection, intensifying already severe needs in a country that had nearly 20 million people in need of aid before the disaster, . . . the UN and partners launched a \$275 million”, [issued by the OCHA’s Earthquake Response Situation Report No. 2](#). The Burmese military, also known as Tatmadaw, has continued launching airstrikes against places of worship including monasteries and churches despite the ceasefire being declared on April 2. On March 7, 2025, the Christian and community organizations in the United States sent [a letter to Secretary of State Marco Rubio](#) urging him to determine that the atrocities committed against civilians, ethnic and religious minorities, such as targeting Christians, constitute crimes against humanity and war crimes. The briefing will urge the Trump administration and Congress to provide additional humanitarian assistance to Burma and help cease the violence and deter the Tatmadaw’s ongoing airstrikes to protect civilians, the places of worship and religious sites.

We are grateful to Rep. Young Kim (R, CA-40), Chairwoman of East Asia and Pacific Subcommittee of the U.S. House Foreign Affairs for her assistance in securing the briefing room.

Burma: Humanitarian Crisis and Violations of Religious Freedom and Human Rights

Date: Monday, April 28, 2025

Time: 12pm - 2pm ET

Location: Rayburn House Office Building (2200)
45 Independence Ave SW, Washington, DC 20515

Attendance: In-Person and Virtual (Zoom)

RSVP: [Register here](#)

LUNCH - 11:30 AM - 12 NOON

12 NOON: Session I - Remarks and Statements

Moderator: Reverend Dr. Roy Medley, Executive Director, Burma Advocacy Group

- H.E. Duwa Lashi La, Acting President, National Unity Government of Myanmar

- Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Member, the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy
- U Aung Kyi Nyunt, Chairman, Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, Myanmar
- Susie Gelman, Commissioner, U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom
- Patrick Harvey, Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, Office of International Religious Freedom, State Department
- Senator Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), Chairman, the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary
- Rep. Young Kim (R, CA-40), Chairwoman, East Asia and Pacific Subcommittee, the U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs

Testimonial: Ruth Kristi Knutson, Daughter of Reverend Dr. Robert Johnson, A Missionary to Chin Hill, Burma (1947-1966)

12:45 PM: Session II - Remarks and Q and A

Moderator: Reverend Dr. Robin Stoops, BRI Board Chairman

- Ambassador Sam Brownback, former Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, State Department
 - Freedom, State Department
- Reverend Elijah Brown, PhD, General Secretary & CEO, Baptist World Alliance
- Wai Wai Nu, Founder and Executive Director, Women for Peace Network

1:25 PM: Session III - Report Presentation: *India-Burma Border: Strengthening Chin Refugees and Mizo Host Communities*

Prof. Jenny Siegel, Manager of Research, BRI, Esther Par, Coordinator of Research and Advocacy, BRI, Prof. Malsawmliana, Contributor, ad BRI Research Interns: Jairus Par, May Shine, Solomon Biak, and Van Bawi Zi Nichin

1:45 PM: Concluding Remarks - Zo Tum Hmung, President & CEO, Burma Research Institute

Co-sponsors: American Baptist Churches USA, Burma Advocacy Group, International Campaign for the Rohingya, Campaign for a New Myanmar, No Business with Genocide, U.S. Campaign for Burma, and Jubilee Campaign.

The Burma Research Institute (BRI) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in the United States that conducts research and advocacy. BRI primarily focuses on freedom of religion or belief, human rights, and protection and assistance of refugees and internally displaced people in Burma. Formerly known as the Chin Association of Maryland, BRI also empowers the local Chin community in Maryland and across the United States to successfully integrate into American society. (www.burmari.org)

Speakers Biographies



H.E. Duwa Lashi La

Acting President, National Unity Government of Myanmar

Duwa Lashi La is a Kachin politician and lawyer, who formerly served as the president of the Kachin National Consultative Council. He was born in Mung Ji village, northern Shan State. He attended secondary school at National Christian School in Kutkhai and graduated from Lashio High School with grade B. Upon graduating from high school, he worked as a teacher at Mung Ji School in his hometown. After working as a teacher, he took the matriculation exam in St. Michael's School (now known as No. 4 Basic Education High School [B.E.H.S]) in Maymyo. In 1970, he went to Rangoon University and studied law. He received his Bachelor of Arts (BA) in 1974 and Bachelor of Laws (L.L.B) in 1975.

After graduation, Duwa Lashi La worked as a prosecutor in Myitkyina and Lashio for two years. From 1978 to 1994, he worked as a law officer for 16 years. After retiring in 1994, he started working with various civil society organizations (CSOs). In 2001, he co-founded the School of Intensive English Program (IEP), now Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences (ILAS). He also took the lead in establishing the World Concern Organization (WCO) in NSS and worked on regional development of NSS. He served at the Metta Development Foundation for seven years from 2004 to 2010. Additionally, he had collaborated with various international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and worked to improve standards of living and health in vulnerable communities in NSS. He oversaw the Hope International Development Agency for four years from 2010 to 2014. In conjunction with the Transnational Institute (TNI) and UNODC, he led strict anti-drug activities and he also served as an elected president of the Kachin Literature and Cultural Organization of Northern Shan State for four years from 2014 to 2018. In 2019, he was elected as the president of the Kachin National Advisory Committee (WMR) and served until January 2021. Duwa Lashi La has been serving as an appointed Vice-President of the National Unity Government (NUG) of Myanmar since April 16, 2021. Duwa Lashi La is proficient in English, Myanmar, and Shan, in addition to his mother tongue Kachin and also well-versed in other Kachin tribal languages such as Zaiwa, Lachaik, and Lhaovo.



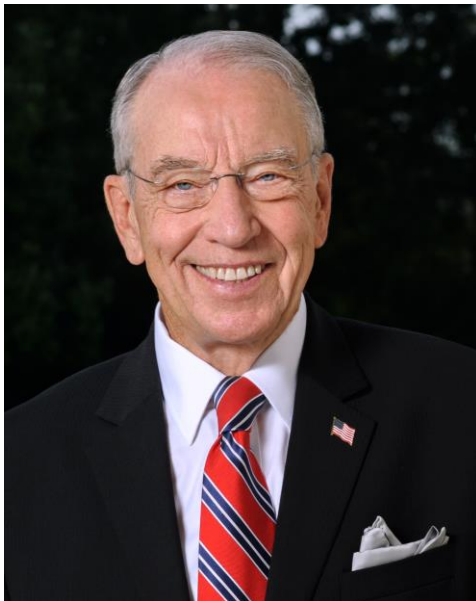
U Aung Kyi Nyunt

U Aung Kyi Nyunt has been serving as Chair of the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH), formed by the duly elected members of parliament after the military coup on February 1, 2021.

Born in Tat Kone Township, Mandalay Region, he received a Bachelor of Agriculture in 1975 and He was a leader during the 1988 Uprising in Chaungzon Township, Mon State and joined the National League for Democracy (NLD) party when it was established. Currently, he is a member of the NLD's Central Executive Committee.

In 1990, he was elected as a member of parliament for the first time. But after the election, he was jailed by the military from 1990 to 1993 on false charges. From 1996 to 1997 he was placed under house arrest with nine other MPs in Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's home and was again detained at Ye Mon Military Camp from 1998 to 2000.

During a period of reform that allowed the NLD to win by-elections, U Aung Kyi Nyunt was elected in 2012 as a member of Parliament from Taung Dwin Gyi constituency. He was reelected in 2015 and 2020 from the same constituency. He remains fully committed to the Spring Revolution and to representing the will of the Myanmar people. He is married and has one son and five daughters.



Senator Chuck E. Grassley

BORN: September 17, 1933 in New Hartford, Iowa

FAMILY: Married Barbara Speicher 1954

Five children: Lee, Wendy, Robin, Michele, Jay

EDUCATION: B.A. 1955, M.A. 1956 Political Science
University of Northern Iowa, Ph.D. work, University of Iowa

OCCUPATION

Farmer (son, Robin, currently helps run family farm);

Sheet metal shearer 1959-1961

Assembly line worker 1961-1971

Adjunct government professor 1960s & 1970s

Elected to Iowa Legislature 1958

Elected to U.S. House of Representatives 1974

Elected to U.S. Senate 1980



Representative Young Kim

Congresswoman Young Kim is proud to represent California's 40th District, which includes parts of Orange, San Bernardino and Riverside counties, in the U.S. House of Representatives.

An immigrant, small business owner, community leader, former California Assemblywoman, mother, and grandmother, Young is proud to be one of the first Korean American women ever to serve in Congress and is fighting to help all Americans have the chance to achieve their dream just like she did.

In the House of Representatives, Young serves on the House Foreign Affairs Committee – where she serves as Chairwoman of the Indo-Pacific Subcommittee and as a member of the Africa Subcommittee – and on the House Financial Services Committee – where she serves as Vice Chairwoman of the Subcommittee on National Security, Illicit Finance, and International Financial Institutions and as a member of the Financial Institutions and Monetary Policy Subcommittee. Young also serves as co-chair of the Women in STEM Caucus, the Financial Literacy and Wealth Creation Caucus, and the Maternity Care Caucus.

In her first term, Young had nearly 30 bills pass out of the House of Representatives and more than a dozen signed into law. Her record was ranked among the most effective of members of Congress according to the Center for Effective Lawmaking, the Common Ground Committee, the Lugar Center and McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University, and data by Quorum Analytics. She also received the Bipartisan Policy Center's Legislative Action Award. Young and her husband Charles live in Anaheim Hills in CA-40 and are the proud parents of Christine, Kelly, Alvin and Hannah and grandparents of Mia and Caleb.



Senator Chirs Van Hollen

Elected to the United States Senate by the people of Maryland in November 2016, Chris Van Hollen is committed to fighting every day to ensure that our state and our country live up to their full promise of equal rights, equal justice, and equal opportunity. Senator Van Hollen believes that every child deserves the opportunity to pursue their dreams and benefit from a quality education, and that anyone willing to work hard should be able to find a good job. That's why his top priorities include creating more and better jobs, strengthening small businesses, and

increasing educational and job training opportunities for individuals of all ages and in every community. Senator Van Hollen started his time in public service as a member of the Maryland State Legislature, where he became known as a tenacious advocate for everyday Marylanders and someone who was unafraid to take on powerful special interests on behalf of working people. In 2002, he was elected to represent Maryland's 8th Congressional District. In the House of Representatives, he served as a member of the Democratic leadership and was elected by his colleagues to be the Ranking Member of the House Budget Committee and protect vital interests like Social Security and Medicare.

A tireless fighter for the people of Maryland, Senator Van Hollen has also become known for working hard to find common sense solutions to difficult national issues. In January 2015, he released a comprehensive plan to address the problem of growing inequality in America and provide a blueprint for building an economy that works for everyone, a goal that he will continue to fight for in the U.S. Senate.

Senator Van Hollen is proud to have worked successfully with members of both parties to pass bipartisan legislation whenever possible on issues of common concern, including expanding medical research, protecting the Chesapeake Bay, fighting childhood cancer, and passing the ABLE Act to assist families with children with disabilities. Chris Van Hollen is a graduate of Swarthmore College, the John F. Kennedy School of Public Policy at Harvard University, and Georgetown University Law Center where he attended night school. He and his wife, Katherine Wilkens, are the proud parents of three children, Anna, Nicholas, and Alexander.



Ambassador Sam Brownback

Sam Brownback served as Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom from February 2018 to January 2021. He served as Governor of Kansas from 2011 to 2018. Prior to that he represented his home state in the United States Senate and the House of Representatives. While a member of the Senate, he worked actively on the issue of religious freedom in multiple countries and was a key sponsor of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998. Prior to his public service, Ambassador Brownback practiced law and taught agricultural law at Kansas State University. He earned a B.S. from Kansas State University and a J.D. from the University of Kansas. Ambassador Brownback currently serves as co-chair of the International Religious Freedom Summit and chairman of the National Committee for Religious Freedom.



Patrick Harvey

Patrick Harvey currently serves as the Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom. With over 20 years of State Department experience supporting human rights globally, he is proud to contribute to President Trump's and Secretary Marco Rubio's agenda to make America safer, stronger, and more prosperous by promoting the core American value of religious freedom around the world. Prior to this position, Patrick served in the Office of Policy Planning and Public Diplomacy for the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, managing the bureau's press messaging and outreach on priority topics related to Near Eastern and Western Hemisphere Affairs and

those with a focus on the nexus of security and human rights. He has also worked to promote human rights in West Africa through periods of great unrest and in Central Europe following the breakup of Yugoslavia. Earlier in his career, he served as a Provincial Action Officer in Iraq while embedded with the joint Italian/American Provincial Reconstruction Team during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Patrick also served on the Tom Lantos Commission on Human Rights as a Senior Advisor and Georgetown Capitol Hill Fellow, organizing hearings on and boosting understanding of human rights-related topics for the Commission. Mr. Harvey received a B.A. in Classics from the University of Pennsylvania. He followed this education at the Gregorian University in Rome where he studied Latin with Fr. Reginald Foster, then-papal Latinist. Patrick received his J.D. from The Catholic University of America and is an active member of the D.C. Bar Association.



Commissioner Susie Gelman

Susie Gelman, a graduate of Harvard University and Georgetown University Law Center, served as board chair of Israel Policy Forum from 2016-2023. She previously served for three terms as president of the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, one term as Federation's campaign co-chair, and is a lifetime member of the Federation's Board of Directors. She previously co-chaired the Israel Religious Expressions Platform (iRep) of the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA), an initiative that focused on pluralism through freedom of choice of marriage in Israel. Susie was the inaugural chair of the Birthright Israel Foundation and served for many years as a member of its

board as well as the Taglit-Birthright Israel Planning Committee. She served as co-chair of UJC (now JFNA) Israel and co-chaired JFNA's General Assembly in Jerusalem in both 2003 and

2013. Susie is a member of the Board of Governors of The Hebrew University, an honorary fellow of Brandeis University, and is past president of the Georgetown Day School Board of Trustees, where she served on the board for 12 years. She is the past president of the Goldman Environmental Foundation, where she continues to serve on the board. Susie and her husband, Michael, have three adult children, three sons-in-law, and three precious grandchildren.



Reverend Elijah Brown, PhD

Rev. Dr. Elijah M. Brown is the General Secretary and CEO of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA). Founded in 1905, the BWA is a Christian World Communion that draws upon 400 years of shared Baptist history with 253 member bodies in 130 countries and territories representing over 51 million baptized believers and 176,000 churches.

As General Secretary and CEO, Rev. Dr. Brown has the overall leadership responsibilities for the BWA and is its chief representative within the Baptist family and to governments, global organizations and institutions, and other Christian World Communions and faith traditions.

Elected as the ninth General Secretary and the youngest in the history of the BWA, Rev. Dr. Brown brings strategic and visionary leadership as the principal leader to the Baptist movement as well as a ministry passion for the vision of the BWA to “network the Baptist family to impact the world for Christ.”

Rev. Dr. Brown has brought an entrepreneurial ministry passion across the five ministry areas of the BWA: worship, fellowship, and unity; mission and evangelism; aid, relief and community development; religious freedom, human rights, and justice; and theological reflection and transformational leadership. Since his January 2018 induction, Rev. Dr. Brown has launched:

- **BWA Forum on Aid and Development** – A network of more than 20 Baptist aid agencies collaborating globally and investing annually more than \$20 million USD into aid, relief, and community development;
- **Wilberforce Global Freedom Center** – As a religious freedom and human rights center of the BWA offering training, capacity building, and advocacy around the world;
- **Horizons** – As a global training and education program for children and youth workers in 12 languages with nearly 1,000 enrolled students;
- **Global Baptist Mission Network** – A network of more than 20 Baptist mission agencies and initiatives collaborating together with more than 7,000 missionaries in every region of the world.

As General Secretary and CEO, Rev. Dr. Brown is a frequent speaker and has offered lecture series, commencements, dialogues, plenary sessions, and spoken in churches around the world.

He is often quoted and has participated in a range of print, radio, and television interviews, and is serving on the United States National Association of Evangelicals Board of Directors. He has been recognized by several universities and Baptist denominations for outstanding service. Among his awards, he has been named a Patron of Bowen University, the largest Baptist University in Africa; honored with the Global Leadership Award of the Zomi Baptist Churches of America, a predominant refugee and migrant community from Myanmar and one of the fastest growing Baptist conventions in North America; and received the Campbellsville University Leadership Award from Campbellsville University in Campbellsville, Kentucky.

Rev. Dr. Brown has traveled to more than 55 countries. He often prioritizes visiting refugee camps and hearing from individuals of variant backgrounds who have experienced persecution. He has been on the frontlines of many conflicts in war-affected areas including a February 2022 visit to Ukraine with more than 100,000 troops amassed on the border set to invade. He returned to Ukraine on the one-month anniversary of the war and also traveled to Russia where he met with the Baptist community and stood on behalf of Ukrainians in meetings with Russian government and religious leaders. Across his many travels, Rev. Dr. Brown has met with numerous Presidents, Prime Ministers, Elected Members, and Ambassadors in multiple countries and at the United Nations as well as with numerous religious leaders.

Before being named as General Secretary by a Baptist Global Council of over 400 individuals, Rev. Dr. Brown was the General Secretary of the North American Baptist Fellowship, one of the six regions of the Baptist World Alliance. Prior to that position he had been named an emerging leader of the BWA, which recognized and networked 35 young adult leaders globally. Prior to beginning as General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Brown was the Executive Vice President of the 21st Century Wilberforce Initiative, a Christian religious freedom and human rights organization based in Washington, D.C. While in that role, Rev. Dr. Brown traveled with a team to Iraq and was the primary author of one of the first reports to document ongoing genocide being committed at that time. He also helped conduct a major research project on violence in the Middle Belt of Nigeria and its impact on religious minority communities which led to the first United States Congressional Hearing on rising violence in the Middle Belt, at which Rev. Dr. Brown was one of the three testifying experts.

Rev. Dr. Brown previously served as an Associate Professor of Missions at East Texas Baptist University. While at the University, Dr. Brown was elected as the Chair of the Faculty Senate, voted favorite faculty and staff member by the student body, taught undergraduate and graduate courses, led international student mission trips, and was the founding Director of the Freedom Center, one of the only centers at a Baptist university or seminary in the United States uniquely designed to pursue international religious freedom. While at East Texas Baptist University, Rev. Dr. Brown undertook research among Eritrean refugee camps in Ethiopia and documented

abuses that were later referenced in reports by the United Nations. At the University, Rev. Dr. Brown also served as one of two Faculty in Residence.

The son of a pastor, Rev. Dr. Brown was ordained to Christian ministry in July 2002 and has served in various roles in the local church. Originally from Texas, he graduated Summa Cum Laude in three years with a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor with a double major in Religion and History and a perfect Grade Point Average of 4.0. He completed his Ph.D. at the University of Edinburgh, one of the top 20 ranked universities in the world at the Center of Christianity in the Non-Western World. His Ph.D. researched the significant role of the church in the development of the comprehensive peace agreement between Sudan and South Sudan. Rev. Dr. Brown has been married to Amy Brown for over twenty years. Together they have three children: Hudson, Sahara, and Keziah. Rev. Dr. Brown continues to maintain his passion for mobilizing the church to engage in the global mission of God and to call people to stand together with those who experience persecution and injustice in anticipatory hope of the fullness of the Kingdom of God with its promise of flourishing freedom in the presence of the triune Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.



REV. DR. A. ROY MEDLEY

General Secretary Emeritus

Rev. Dr. A. Roy Medley was named General Secretary Emeritus of the American Baptist Churches (ABC) in 2015 following 15 years leading the denomination. During that period of time he established with Dr. Sayyid Syeed of the Islamic Society of North America, the North American Baptist-Muslim Dialogue, formed

the ABC Burma Refugee Task Force, served on the executive committee of the National Council of Churches (NCCUS) and was elected chairperson of the board of the NCCUS during which time he advocated for the Council to begin Buddhist-Christian and Hindu-Christian dialogues. He also served as an initial leader in the founding of the Shoulder to Shoulder Campaign to combat Islamophobia in the US. Since 2004, he has served continuously on the executive committee of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) where he has led in the formation of the Baptist World Alliance Commission on Interfaith Relations. In 2015, he was honored to participate in and address on behalf of the BWA the Synod on the Family called by Pope Francis.

Immediately following retirement, Medley served as President of Friendship Press, and chair of its Committee on Bible Translation and Utilization. During his presidency, Friendship Press engaged the Society of Biblical Literature to partner in the update of The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, which eventuated in the publication of The NRSV Updated Edition.

In 2022, the Burma diaspora in the US asked Medley to convene the ABC-related Burma Advocacy Group to unite their voices on behalf of the Burma Act of 2022 as they sought to establish a democratic government which guarantees human rights and religious freedom for all. The Burma Advocacy Group has expanded its efforts to include a focus on humanitarian aid and the education of children in refugee situations.

Medley continued to represent the ABC in interfaith, pan-Baptist and ecumenical settings. In 2016, he was one of 50 Christian leaders invited to Morocco for the unveiling of the Marrakech Declaration and later that year he led training sessions in interfaith relations for community leaders from across Egypt. He has been a consistent participant in the Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace Forum meetings. In May of 2022, he was one of 100 global religious leaders invited to participate in the Muslim World League sponsored “Common Values Forum.” Since 2022, Medley has led the BWA’s efforts to develop its first interfaith dialogue which will focus on the global Muslim faith community in cooperation with the Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace led by Sheik Abdullah bin Bayyah. Most recently he was invited to serve on the Advisory Board to Karamah founded by Dr. Azizah al-Hibri.

Dr. Medley has received several honors during his service to the Church and the world including four honorary doctorates. Upon his retirement in 2015, Dr. Medley was honored by the Islamic Society of North America for his efforts in Christian-Muslim relations; he received the Luke Mowbray Ecumenical Award of the American Baptist Churches; and the Myanmar Baptist Convention presented him its highest honor, the Cross and Crown Award, for his work on behalf of the people of Burma. In 2026 he received the Dahlberg Peace and Justice award for his lifelong pursuit of justice and reconciliation. Rev. Medley studied at the University of Chattanooga (BA); Princeton Theological Seminary (MDiv) and the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches (Diploma in Interfaith Studies). He is married to Rev. Dr. Patricia Stauffer Medley, an ordained Lutheran pastor. They have two sons: Ethan (married to Urbi) and Jordan (married to Natalia) and two grandchildren by Ethan and Urbi- Isaiah and Olivia.

**Wai Wai Nu**

Wai Wai Nu is the founder and Executive Director of the Women's Peace Network and a counselor to the National Unity Consultative Council in Myanmar. A former political prisoner, she has dedicated her life to advancing democracy, human rights, and interethnic peace since her release in 2012.

Through WPN, Nu advocates for justice and accountability for mass atrocities, empowers marginalized women, and promotes inclusive

peacebuilding across Myanmar's diverse communities. She founded the Yangon Youth Center to foster youth leadership and launched the "My Friend Campaign" to combat discrimination and build intercommunal tolerance.

Nu is a UN Champion of Prevention, a prevention fellow at the The Simon-Skjoldt Center of Genocide Prevention at USHMM, Bush Institute Liberty Leadership Fellow and an Obama Foundation Scholar. Her global recognitions include the International Religious Freedom Award, and honors from the BBC, TIME, Foreign Policy, and the World Economic Forum. 'She holds a law degree from the University of Yangon and an LL.M. from UC Berkeley, where she also served as a visiting senior research fellow at the Human Rights Center.

**Reverend Dr. Robin Stoops**

Board Chairman, Burma Research Institute

Rev. Dr. Robin Stoops is currently serving as the Transitional Lead Pastor of First Baptist Church of Topeka, KS. He is also working part-time with ABCUSA as the Mission Resource Coordinator, and the Coordinator of the Burma Refugee Commission.

The Rev. Dr. Robin D. Stoops has been a pastor for thirty-nine years. He served as Executive Minister of the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska for twelve years. During his ministry he has pastored churches in South Dakota, Kansas, Iowa, and Nebraska. Stoops is a graduate of Ottawa University, Ottawa, Kan., with a bachelor's degree in education, North American Baptist Seminary (now Sioux Falls Seminary, Karios University) with a Master of Divinity degree, and completed a doctoral degree in Missional Leadership/Contextual Theology at Northern Seminary in Lisle, Ill. He also completed a professional certificate in Negotiation and Mediation from the Naveen Jindal School of

Management at the University of Texas at Dallas and received a certificate in Religious Fundraising from the Lake Institute at Indiana University. He was awarded the Pastor of the Year award in 2008 by the American Baptist Men of Nebraska.

His work with the American Baptist Churches has included preaching, pastoral searches, leadership training, conflict transformation, and consultation with churches in mission giving and development. He has also led multiple Mission Study Trips in South America, Europe, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Africa with pastors from ABC of Nebraska to visit missionaries and partners. Stoops has been a Special Assistant to Theological Education for Burma with International Ministries. He has also served as the Treasurer for the Regional Executive Ministers Council, one of three officer positions in the REMC. He is the founder and director of ChurchHelp.net, a ministry working with unaffiliated churches to provide pastoral searches, leadership training and conflict transformation on a fee basis. Stoops and his wife Kathy Stoops will celebrate 50 years of marriage in July of 2025. They have three grown children, eight grandchildren and two miniature dachshunds.



Zo Tum Hmung

President & CEO, Burma Research Institute

Zo Tum Hmung, President and CEO of the Burma Research Institute (formerly known as the Chin Association of Maryland, Inc.), previously co-founded and served as the Executive Director of the Ethnic Nationalities Affairs Center-Union of Burma (ENAC), a research center that supports the peace process and development of democratic institutions in Burma. Mr.

Hmung completed his master's in public administration from Harvard University's Kennedy School focusing on foreign policy and negotiations and also finished his Master of Theological Studies with a concentration in Christian Faith and Public Policy from Eastern University's Palmer Seminary. He also graduated with a bachelor's in theological studies in Burma. He was born in Chin State, Burma, and currently lives with his family in Ellicott City, Maryland.