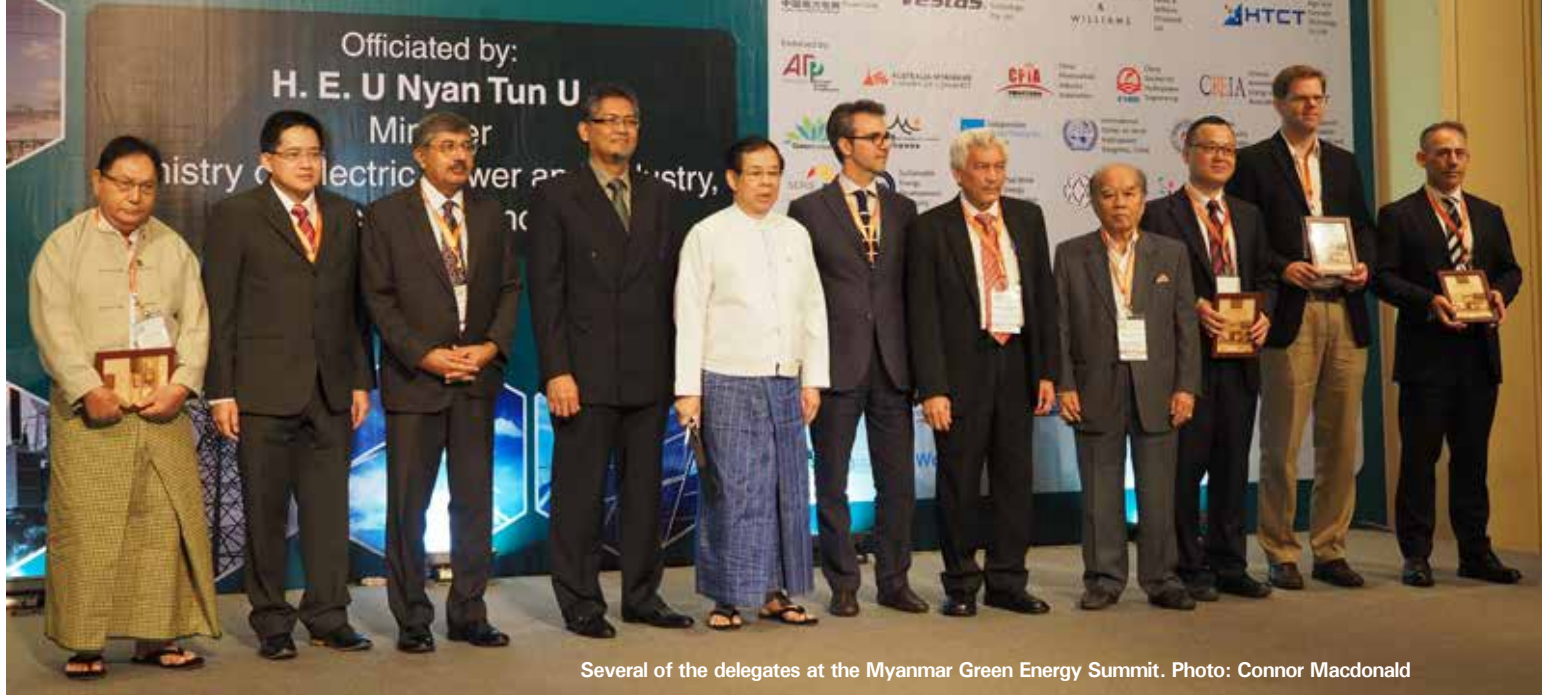


MYANMAR GREEN ENERGY SUMMIT 2015

18 AFFAIRS // REPORT

18 August 2015
Sule Shangri-La, Yangon, Myanmar

Myanmar's Green Energy Mix For A Sustainable Future



Several of the delegates at the Myanmar Green Energy Summit. Photo: Connor Macdonald

Large hydropower dams still on the agenda, despite negative impacts

Connor Macdonald

Large scale commercial hydropower dam projects remain the primary focus of the Myanmar government in its quest to help provide 100 percent universal access to electricity by the year 2030.

In his keynote address U Nyan Tun, Minister for Electric Power, Industry, Science and Technology told the Myanmar Green Energy Summit on August 17 that the government will continue to develop large-scale and micro-scale hydropower projects.

“In order to meet the increasing demand of power supply throughout the whole country, the Ministry

of Electric Power is implementing a large number of various kinds of hydropower projects in the country,” said U Nyan Tun.

Hydropower is controversial in Myanmar. Large-scale hydropower dam projects have seen people from poor rural areas forcibly removed by the government, as well as the destruction of the local natural environment.

Critics claim the negative impacts on river systems and marine life mean that they are too risky an investment. A large hydropower dam can take up to 10-20 years to complete.

At present in Myanmar, 85 per-

cent of the electricity produced by hydropower goes to neighbouring China and Thailand, with only 15 percent supplying local Myanmar domestic needs.

“Ninety-two large-scale hydropower sites on Myanmar’s main river basins have been identified, with an estimated total installed capacity of 46.1 GW...” the minister said.

The Ministry is planning to build an additional 13 hydropower plants up to 2020 with a total capacity of 2,572 MW. Local enterprises will develop another nine hydropower plants with a total capacity of 580 MW. A further