

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910714537403321
Autore	Martin Michael F.
Titolo	Burma's 2010 elections : implications of the new constitution and election laws // Michael F. Martin
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Washington, District of Columbia : , : Congressional Research Service, , 2010
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (19 pages)
Disciplina	342.07
Soggetti	Election law
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di contenuto	The road to the 2010 elections -- The 1990 Parliamentary elections -- The Constitutional Referendum of 2008 -- Key features of the 2008 Constitution -- The 2010 elections -- The Obama Administration's Burma policy -- Congressional concerns.
Sommario/riassunto	"On an undisclosed date in 2010, Burma plans to hold its first parliamentary elections in 20 years. The elections are to be held under a new constitution, supposedly approved in a national referendum held in 2008 in the immediate aftermath of the widespread destruction caused by Cyclone Nargis. The official results of the constitutional referendum are widely seen as fraudulent, but despite significant domestic and international opposition, Burma's ruling military junta--the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC)--has insisted on conducting the polls as part of what it calls a path to 'disciplined democracy.' On March 9, 2010, the SPDC released five new laws for the pending parliamentary elections. Three of the laws are about the three main types of parliaments stipulated in the constitution--the two houses of the national parliament (Pyidaungsu Hluttaw) and the Regional or State parliaments. The fourth law--the Political Parties Registration Law--sets conditions for the registration and operation of political parties in Burma; the fifth law establishes a Union Election Commission to supervise the parliamentary elections and political parties. The new laws were quickly subjected to sharp criticism, both domestically and overseas. In particular, the law on political parties was

widely denounced for placing unreasonable restrictions on the participation of many opposition political leaders and Burma's Buddhist monks and nuns. U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Philip J. Crowley said the Political Parties Registration Law 'makes a mockery of the democratic process and ensures that the upcoming elections will be devoid of creditability.' There have also been objections to the terms of the Union Election Commission Law and the 17 people subsequently appointed to the commission by the SPDC. In late September 2009, the Obama Administration adopted a new policy on Burma. The policy keeps most of the elements of the Burma policies of the last two administrations in place, but adds a willingness to engage in direct dialogue with the SPDC on how to promote democracy and human rights in Burma, and greater cooperation on international security issues, such as counternarcotics efforts and nuclear nonproliferation. The Obama Administration accepts that little progress has been made during the seven months that the new policy has been in effect, but has indicated that it will remain in place for now. There are signs of concern among Members of Congress about the dearth of progress in Burma towards democracy and greater respect for human rights. Nine Senators sent a letter to President Obama on March 26, 2010, urging the imposition of additional economic sanctions on the SPDC in light of 'a set of profoundly troubling election laws.' However, another Senator perceives 'several substantive gestures' on the part of the SPDC, and suggests it is time to increase engagement with the Burmese government. The 111th Congress has already taken action with respect to Burma, such as renewing the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003. If it were to determine that additional actions should be taken, there are several alternatives available. Among those alternatives are holding hearings or seminars on the political situation in Burma, pushing the Obama Administration to implement existing sanctions on Burma more vigorously, and adding or removing existing sanctions. This report will be updated as circumstances warrant."
