

Suu Kyi: Charter changes vital

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YANGON - There can be no real political reform in Myanmar without amendments to the country's military-drafted constitution, opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi said on Friday.



Suu Kyi says political reform will happen when there are changes to the military-drafted charter. (AFP photo)

"You can use the words 'reform,' 'transformation,' and 'opening up,' but I cannot consider transformation real and bringing about true democracy until the constitutional amendment," Suu Kyi told a press conference.

Last month, Suu Kyi, a member of parliament, proposed a meeting between herself and President Thein Sein, Lower House Speaker Shwe Mann, and Armed Forces commander-in-chief Min Aung Hlaing to discuss amending the constitution.

But Thein Sein and the ruling Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) said talks should wait until after a parliamentary committee reviewing proposals for revising the charter had completed its work in January.

The current constitution, drafted by a military-appointed committee when Myanmar was under junta rule, stipulates that 25% of the seats in parliament are appointed by the armed forces.

It also excludes Suu Kyi from running for the presidency in elections in 2015, as she was previously married to a foreigner.

"The government has not shown positive signs on amending the constitution," Suu Kyi said. "Nearly all the people want to amend the constitution soon," she said.