MYANMAR

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Statement by Ambassador Hmway Hmway Khyne,
Deputy Permanent Representative
of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the United Nations
at the 63rd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women
under Item 3 - General discussion
(New York, 15-3-2019)

Madam Chairperson,

First of all, allow me to extend my sincere congratulations to you and to the other members of the Bureau. Myanmar aligns itself with the statements delivered by Thailand, on behalf of ASEAN and Palestine, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The Government of Myanmar is undertaking social, economic and legislative reforms for greater gender equality and social protection for women and girls. The Government's efforts are particularly aimed toward achieving Sustainable Development ***Goal 5, target 5.4.***

Madam Chairperson,

Allow me to share some salient facts on what Myanmar has been doing in the provision of social protection, public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and empowerment of women and girls.

The National Social Protection Strategic Plan was adopted in 2014. The Plan included flagship programmes such as cash transfers for pregnant women, child allowance for children aged 3-15, school feeding for children attending school, public employment and vocational education, social pensions for those aged 65 and above. The Government is scaling up the implementation of its Strategic Plan in close cooperation with the United Nations organizations and other development partners.

In 2018, the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP) was adopted which is a comprehensive social, economic and environmental policy reform agenda. MSDP focuses on improving both the quality of and access to a broad range of essential health and social services, tailored to the needs of individuals and most vulnerable groups including women and girls.

Myanmar is also committed to supporting the rights of individuals, especially women and girls, to freely pursue decent work within the environment free from discrimination and abuse, protected by laws.

Economic empowerment of women is a top priority for the Government. The Government's commitment to inclusive growth and poverty alleviation offers potential for women to be regarded as dynamic economic actors rather than passive recipients of social welfare. We are therefore striving for a more systematic inclusion of women as economic actors within the framework of Myanmar's national development policies and plans.

In the political sphere, Myanmar women were the first in Asia and amongst the first in the world to get the right to vote in 1922.

Madam Chairperson,

Myanmar adopted zero tolerance policy toward violence against women and efforts are being made to reform the legislative infrastructure to better protect the rights of the women and girls. In this regard, the **"Prevention and Protection of Violence Against Women Law"** has been drafted and will soon be enacted by the Parliament, strengthening legal protection for women. The Law stipulates the need to protect women from all forms of violence, including domestic abuse, marital rape, sexual violence, harassment by stalking, harassment in work place and public place and violence through tradition and customary practice.

Other important legislative reforms are being made to amend "the Suppression of Prostitution Act" with "The Prostitution Law", and a new comprehensive "Child Rights Law" has been drafted and currently under Parliamentary discussion.

To further its commitment, the Government has formed Inter-Ministerial Committee on the Prevention of Grave Violations Against Children in Armed Conflict in January this year and another Inter-Ministerial Committee will soon be established to implement the Joint Communique which was signed with the United Nations, in December last year, to prevent and to address conflict-related sexual violence.

Madam Chairperson,

Being a responsible member of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) since joining in 1997, the Government has regularly submitted reports relating to actions taken by the Government on protection of the rights of women

and prevention of sexual violence against women and girls to CEDAW Committee, and also included in the UPR process of the HRC.

The Government has also adopted a National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (2013-2022), based on the 12 Priority Areas of the Beijing Platform for Action and the principles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It is reviewed by the National Committee on Women and a new National Strategic plan on the Advancement of Women (2019-2022) was crafted to accelerate the implementation process for the remaining four years.

In February this year, the Myanmar delegation participated at the 72nd Session of CEDAW in Geneva.

Moreover, Myanmar is an active member of the ASEAN Committee on Women and the ASEAN Commission on Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women and Children.

Madam Chairperson,

Despite multitude of challenges, Myanmar will continue to strive to protect and promote the rights of all women and girls in the country.

I would like to conclude by reaffirming our commitment to promote inclusive social protection for all including gender equality and women empowerment towards achieving national objectives as well as the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

I thank you.

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