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 United Nations General Assembly Plenary Meeting on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and the prevention of Genocide, War Crimes, Ethnic Cleansing and Crimes Against Humanity
(27 June 2019)

Madam President,

My delegation thanks the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report of 2019 entitled "Responsibility to Protect: Lessons Learned for Prevention."

Myanmar shares with many delegations the concern over the lack of progress and reaching consensus on the concept of R2P while recognizing the importance of the prevention of atrocity crimes.

We have been engaged in intensive debates on the concept over a decade. But, we have yet to agree on how to translate it into practice. There remains serious divergence among member states even on the interpretation of the principle of the Responsibility to Protect.

Madam President,

The SG's report this year emphasizes the importance of prevention. My delegation could not agree more. Preventive measures can be in many forms. Any potential cause for possible atrocity crimes should be prevented.

In this regard, I would like to underline the primary responsibility of the state in taking necessary measures to prevent the imminent threats of atrocities. These measures would include, but not limited to, peaceful resolution of conflict, strengthening rule of law, promotion of human rights, building peace and harmony among citizens, and socio-economic development. Regional and international community should render assistance or expertise to countries that need to strengthen their domestic capacity in fulfilling their responsibility.

In this respect, countries should develop policy and mechanism best suited to their condition to prevent conflict and peaceful settlement of disputes. National ownership must be ensured in preventing atrocity crimes.

In the application of the principle of R2P, the universally accepted principles of respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, and political independence of states, the UN Charter and

the international law must be upheld. We must not allow the principle of R2P to be abused or hijacked by any particular country or group of countries for their political purposes.

The Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit clearly states that the application of the "responsibility to protect" is strictly limited to genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. It is crucial that judgment or categorization of a situation as a specified atrocity crime, or decision to invoke R2P must be made on well-founded, unbiased, factual information with impartiality, accuracy, and objectivity.

Moreover, overemphasizing the role of the international legal institutions would undermine the role of the national institutions. The role of international institutions should complement rather than competing the duty of the government and the interest of the people in that particular nation.

Madam President,

Addressing hate speech is one of the most essential measures for preventing tension and conflicts. Therefore, my delegation welcomes the launch of the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech. The international community and the global network of main stream or social media should also act responsibly not to promote hatred and conflicts.

Madam President,

Individual state has the primary responsibility to protect, and to prevent atrocity crime. The international community also can help states in a constructive and positive manner in the implementation of state responsibility in good faith. Invoking the concept of R2P for political purpose with mal-intent will undermine the very core value and purpose of the Responsibility to Protect.

I thank you, Madam President.