MYANMAR

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Statement by Ambassador Hau Do Suan,
Permanent Representative of
the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the United Nations
at the UN Security Council Open Debate on Children and Armed Conflict
(New York, 2 August 2019)

Mr. President,

My delegation congratulates you for Poland's Presidency of the Council. We are confident in your wisdom and able leadership. I can assure you of our full support and cooperation.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Viet Nam on behalf of ASEAN.

I thank SRSG Ms. Virginia Gamba and NGO representatives for their comprehensive briefings.

My delegation welcomes the Report of the Secretary-General that reflects Myanmar's efforts to end under-age recruitment and violation against children in an objective and constructive manner.

Mr. President,

Myanmar is committed to ending and preventing violations and abuses against children. We have been taking important steps such as establishing domestic preventive mechanisms and cooperating with international partners especially with the UN and the Office of the SRSG for Children and Armed Conflict.

Recently, on July 24, the Union Parliament enacted the much anticipated Child Rights Law. The new Law is the most comprehensive child law in Myanmar with extensive provisions on the rights of children and prevention from all forms of violence against children. Most significantly, the whole Chapter XVII is devoted exclusively on Children and Armed Conflict and criminalizes Six Grave Violations.

The Inter-Ministerial Committee for the Prevention of the Six Grave Violations during Armed Conflict was established on 7 January 2019. Consultations are now underway to develop an action plan for prevention of killing and maiming, and sexual violence against children.

Since the signing of Joint Action Plan with the UN in 2012, almost 1,000 minors had been released and reintegrated into the community. Most importantly, verified cases of new recruitment have dramatically decreased over the years to a few dozen.

In order to accelerate implementation of the Joint Action Plan and to raise greater awareness on the prevention of grave violations, the Government has conducted training workshops in

cooperation with the Office of the SRSG. In June 2019, a total of (14,311) persons including over (7,500) Military personnel and (6,400) family members were given legal training workshops on Geneva Conventions and Six Grave Violations.

Moreover, nation-wide public awareness campaign to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children by the Tatmadaw has been launched since 2013.

Myanmar is now in the process of ratifying the Optional Protocol of the CRC. Moreover, the Myanmar Youth Policy adopted in 2017 specifically identifies former child soldiers as one of the 11 categories of vulnerable youth and children who need special attention and protection.

Myanmar is also cooperating with ILO to end forced labour including establishing a complaint mechanism for underage recruitment for military service.

Mr. President,

The Government of Myanmar has never condoned human rights violations, especially crimes against most vulnerable people, including women and children. Perpetrators have been tried and prosecuted in accordance with the law. Actions have also been taken against military personnel who had been involved in unlawful recruitment activities and violations.

Moreover, the Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICoE) is investigating human rights violations following Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army-ARSA terrorist attacks of August 2017. The mandate of the Commission has been extended and the Commission will soon be submitting its preliminary report to the President.

Mr. President,

We believe that a lasting peace is indispensable to ending the suffering of innocent civilian people, particularly women and children in armed conflicts.

Bearing this in mind, the Government of Myanmar has reconvened the Union Peace Conference- the 21St Century Panglong to deliberate and strife for achieving a lasting peace, and building a democratic federal union. During its third session held in July 2018, the Conference adopted “elimination of Six Grave violations against children and protection of children's rights” as Social Sector basic principles.

Moreover, the Government supports and encourages engagement between the Country Task Force for Monitoring and Reporting of Children and Armed Conflict (CTFMR) and NCA signatory ethnic armed groups to prevent recruitment and use of children.

We shall continue our efforts to find a lasting solution of the on-going armed conflict through political means.

Mr. President,

I would like to express my Government’s appreciations to SRSG Ms. Gamba and her office for their constructive engagement. We believe that protection of children in armed conflict rests primarily with the government concerned. At the same time, the United Nations and the

international community can play a vital role by providing assistance to governments in building their capacity and ability to protect children.

It is also important to acknowledge and encourage positive developments. Only through constructive engagement and cooperation, will we be able to achieve our ultimate aim to end the suffering of children in armed conflict.

I can assure you, Mr. President, we shall continue to work hand-in-hand with the Office of the SRSG, the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict and other international partners to end grave violations against children and build a better future for our children.

I thank you.

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