



# MYANMAR

*Check against delivery*

**GENERAL STATEMENT BY**

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**AMBASSADOR/ PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
THE UNION OF MYANMAR TO THE UNITED NATIONS IN NEW YORK**

**ON BEHALF OF THE**

**ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN)**

**AT THE 69<sup>TH</sup> SESSION**

**OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**ON AGENDA ITEM 124:**

**GLOBAL HEALTH AND FOREIGN POLICY**

**11 December 2014**

Mr. President,

I have the honour to deliver a general statement on behalf of the 10 Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam – and my own country, Myanmar, before the adoption of the resolution A/69/L.35 entitled, "Global health and foreign policy" under agenda item 124.

Mr. President,

At the outset, let me commend the delegation of Norway for facilitating this resolution on behalf of the Group of Foreign Policy and Global Health, under this agenda item under the theme "protection of medical personnel and health workers". The adoption of this year's resolution is more timely and relevant, as it comes at a time when the international community is being faced with global health issues on two fronts.

The first one is the current Ebola virus pandemic which has not only claimed thousands of lives of ordinary people but also poses a threat to the lives of medical personnel and health workers who have dedicated in the effort to contain and resolve this outbreak. Apart from this deadly pandemic, thousands of lives of medical personnel and health workers in other humanitarian situations across the globe are also at risk.

Medical personnel and health workers play significant role in the efforts towards the highest attainable standard of health for everyone. To be able to perform their task and duty, they need safe and conducive working conditions and environments. In this regard, we need to continue to strengthen frameworks to address all major health and safety hazards that might be encountered by medical personnel and health workers in hospitals and other health care facilities, or in emergency setting. One of the frameworks that have been developed within Association of Southeast Asian Nations is the ASEAN Guidelines for Disinfection and Sterilization of Instruments in Health Care Facilities.

At the same time, we are currently embarking on a path toward adopting a new development agenda later next year. As such, this year's resolution is yet another reminder to all of us that international political commitment is very crucial if we are to ensure quality health care equipped with professional and dedicated



medical personnel and health workers as well as to realize our ambition for achieving not only the health goals but also the new agenda in its entirety.

Mr. President,

Health is a precondition for and an outcome of all three dimensions of sustainable development, namely social, economic and environment, as reaffirmed by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. Ensuring good health for the population is therefore, among the foremost pre-requisite for the achievement of an inclusive and sustainable post-2015 development agenda during the next 15 years.

It is also clearly stated in the proposed Goal 3 of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG on SDGs) that to “ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages” must be given priority and should, therefore, form the main basis of the new development agenda to be adopted at the Post-2015 Summit in September 2015.

However, Mr. President, many challenges lie ahead. The ongoing Ebola pandemic had raised alarm across the globe with nearly 16,000 cases of Ebola virus disease in 8 countries, spanning 3 continents and causing nearly 5,700 deaths to date. The widespread and intense intermission have posed great challenges and threats to the health systems, both surveillance and response efforts of the three affected Western African countries.

Moreover, the Ebola’s devastation has also adversely impacted the socio-economic progress of the three countries in Western Africa reversing development gains achieved during the last few years. The progress toward the ending of this unprecedented outbreak as well as the full-fledged recovery of affected countries requires our coordinated efforts and global response. ASEAN welcomes the adoption of UNGA resolution and the establishment of United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) as proposed by the Secretary-General which is a manifestation of commendable role of the United Nations. ASEAN members are fully supportive of this concerted effort and stand side by side with our friends in affected countries.

Mr. President,

Ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages require a paradigm shift toward a transformative change with renewed political commitment in the health area and across the board at the national, regional and global levels.

Allow me to further elaborate 3 main areas of work in health sector being undertaken at the regional level in Southeast Asia.

First, since 2010, based on the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community blueprint 2009-2015, ASEAN Member Countries have been implementing the ASEAN Strategic Framework on Health Development 2010-2015. Specific regional activities under this strategic framework includes enhancing food security and safety, access to health care and improving health lifestyle, improving capability to control communicable diseases, and building disaster-resilient nations and safer communities.

Second, ASEAN Member Countries are working toward the ASEAN Post-2015 Health Development Agenda with a vision to create a healthy, caring and sustainable ASEAN Community.

This health development agenda comprises 4 main clusters that aim to maximise people's health potential through healthy lifestyle, universal access to quality health care and financial risk protection, safe food and healthy diet, and healthy living environment with sustainable and inclusive development where health is incorporated across the board.

Lastly, ASEAN is currently finalising two memoranda of understandings (MOUs) to be signed with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to further enhance collaboration between ASEAN and the United Nations system in health-related areas.

Mr. President,

In pursuing the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, ASEAN remains fully committed to strengthen and enhance cooperation and collaboration not only within our region, but also with our dialogue partners and the international community to achieve our common health objectives.

The advent of the Post-2015 development agenda and imminent realization of the ASEAN Community at the end of 2015 as well as the emergence of ASEAN Community's Post-2015 Vision at the same time might seem to be just coincidental. But such parallel developments are the test of our commitment to serve the interest of our peoples and to the world at large.

Thank you.