MYANMAR

As delivered

Statement by H.E. U Hau Do Suan,
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the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to United Nations

at

the NAM High Level Meeting on Human Rights and Cultural Diversity
(30 November 2017)

"Solidarity, Dialogue and Tolerance in
a Diverse World: Towards a Culture of Peace"

Mr. Chairman,

- My delegation congratulates you for holding today's High level meeting of the NAM on Human Rights and cultural Diversity – Tehran + 10.
- My delegation highly commends the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for preparing the Political Declaration and Programme of Action on Human Rights and Cultural Diversity that we have adopted today. We believe that adoption of these important documents by the Movement today will contribute to strengthening our principled position on human rights and enhancing dialogues among civilizations for building peace and harmony,
- As a founding member of the NAM, Myanmar faithfully adheres to the founding principles of the Movement. We believe that these principles and the Charter of the United Nations are the corner stone of international law governing the inter-state relationship of sovereign nations.
- My delegation welcomes the reaffirmation of NAM's principled position in addressing human rights issues. We strongly oppose selectivity and using of human rights as a political tool to exert pressure on a country.
- As we are now living in a highly globalized world, it is crucial more than ever that we stand together to safeguard and abide by the founding principles, ideals and purposes of our Movement to achieve peace and development, justice and equality for all countries in the world.
- Respect for diversity, tolerance and social harmony among different faiths and culture are prerequisites to building peace and sustainable development.
- Myanmar is a land of over a hundred different ethnic national races with their own cultural identities and languages. It is also a multi-religious country where all four major religions thrive with all their faithful living in peace and harmony. Freedom of religion and the right to preserve cultural identity and heritage have been guaranteed by the Constitution.

Mr. Chairman,

- As I speak today, His Holiness Pope Francis is in Myanmar on an official visit. The visit is yet another testimony of religious tolerance and freedom of faiths in the country despite the fact that 87 percent of the population profess Buddhism. It is also the first ever Papal visit to Myanmar in 500 years of Catholic mission in Myanmar. The historic visit takes place within a few months after Myanmar and the Holy See establish diplomatic relations.
- In her welcoming address State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said, "Our nation is a rich tapestry of different peoples, languages and religions, woven on a backdrop of vast natural potential. It is the aim of our Government to bring out the beauty of our diversity and to make it our strength, by protecting rights, fostering tolerance, ensuring security for all."

- To promote religious harmony and peace among different communities, we have established Interfaith Friendship Group at national level representing all major religions, i.e. Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. There are 127 interfaith friendship sub-groups across the country. In 2017 alone, 112 interfaith dialogues, awareness talks and combined prayers services have been held for peace and national reconciliation.

- Building peace is, of course, the most cherished efforts that we are undertaking today. The 21st Century Panglong peace conference is being held to forge a lasting peace. All the ethnic armed groups, the Armed Forces, political parties and the Government gather together around the table to pave the road to peace and a democratic federal union. The road to peace will not be an easy path but this is the only way that will lead the people of Myanmar to their long-held aspiration of a peaceful and prosperous country.

Mr. Chairman,

- The Non-aligned Movement was founded over sixty years ago with the aim to establishing a peaceful and prosperous world and a just and equitable world order. Sadly, we must admit the reality of today. The world is still longing for peace in the midst of conflicts and confrontations and millions of people are still living under acute poverty. Establishing a just and equitable world order is still a distant dream as the world is facing new and more complex security and political challenges.

- Nevertheless, the Movement's principled positions such as development of friendly relations based on equal rights, respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of other states, peaceful settlement of disputes, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedom for all without distinction e.t.c are still relevant and valid today.

- Therefore, let us reaffirm our commitment to uphold the founding principles of the NAM and stand united to strive for achieving the purposes and objectives of our Movement in the interest of all nations of the world.

- Thank you.

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