



# MYANMAR

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Statement

by

H.E. U Kyaw Tin

Permanent Representative

of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the United Nations

at the 59<sup>th</sup> Session of

the Commission on the Status of Women

in General discussion

under agenda item: 3

Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women  
and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,  
entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace  
for the twenty-first century"

(New York, 12 March 2015)

**Madam Chair,**

At the outset, my delegation congratulates you for your election to steer this session of CSW. I am particularly pleased to see one of our ASEAN friends in the chair.

Myanmar associates itself with the statement made by Brunei Darussalam on behalf of ASEAN and the statement by South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

**Madam Chair,**

Through out the past 20 years, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action has been guiding us as the useful blue print in our efforts to promoting gender equality and empowering women. Thanks to the follow-up actions to this landmark document, significant progress has been made over the past decades in attracting the world's rising attention to the gender issues. This has resulted in growing recognition of women's rights as human rights and the critical role of women and gender equality in attaining sustainable development.

However, the progress has been uneven and no country has fully achieved equality and empowerment of women. Varying levels of gender inequalities, discrimination and violence against women still persists in many parts of the world. My delegation therefore welcomes the adoption of the Political Declaration on the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, calling for further concrete action to ensure full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

As the United Nations is now working energetically on formulating the Post-2015 Development Agenda, we must make sure that advancing gender equality and empowerment of women and girls must find a rightful place in the transformative Development Agenda. The national efforts of developing countries must be provided enhanced support for addressing challenges and remaining implementation gaps in such critical areas as women and poverty, education and training, women and health and preventing violence against women.

**Madam Chair,**

In my own country, Myanmar, women and girls constitute more than half of the total population of 51.4 million people. As such, women play a crucial role in the country's socio-economic life. Promoting their welfare and advancement are obviously of utmost importance to the government.

We are proud to say that women in Myanmar are fortunate in term of gender equality. Myanmar is listed among countries of medium inequality in the Human Development reports. Myanmar women traditionally enjoy equal rights as their male counterparts. It is a little known fact that Myanmar men and women enjoy equal pay for equal work. Women can keep their own name even after marriage. All the successive State Constitutions (1947, 1974 and 2008) guarantee equal rights for women in accord with law, including the rights to vote and to run for elections as well as the rights to own property and inheritance.

As a State Party to the CEDAW, Myanmar has taken concrete steps for elimination of discrimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women. We are implementing the 10-year National Strategic Plan for Advancement of Women (2013-2022) with a view to ensuring that all women are empowered and able to fully enjoy their rights. It was designed to focus on 12 critical areas of Beijing Platform for Action through 4 strategies, namely research and survey, awareness raising, implementation, budget and policy making.

Since Beijing, institutions have been put in place to address gender issues. Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs (MNCWA), established in 1996, was once again reorganized more effectively in 2011 and extended its Committees to the Regions and State Levels. The focal Ministry has set up the Women's Development Division to focus on provision of welfare services in eight different areas of social needs of women and girls. Myanmar has already submitted the combined fourth and fifth reports to the CEDAW Committee.

Furthermore, a National Social Protection Strategy was also formulated with the technical support of UNICEF in December 2014, incorporating social protection measures for women and children.

Myanmar's recent reform measures embracing democratic values have created even more conducive environment for protection of women and girls. The new policy ensures that every child receives at least middle school education programme by 2015. The increase in State budget allocations for education and health will also benefit women and children to some extent.

As part of its effort to address conflict-related sexual violence, Myanmar has endorsed the Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict in June 2014. The Government is also working closely with the UN-Women, UNFPA and Gender Equality Network for protection of women from violence. The drafting of the Law on Anti-violence against Women has reached at its final stage for enactment within the year. Strong legal action is taken against all perpetrators, be they civilian or security personnel, in accordance with the existing laws. The government is conducting surveys and research projects to obtain reliable data to facilitate effective measures against sexual violence.

Myanmar is the first country in Mekong Region to have enacted Anti-human trafficking law. The Government is also launching awareness campaign across the country to promote understanding about the gender equality, women's rights, menace of human trafficking and sexual violence in cooperation with INGOs and NGOs.

**Madam Chair,**

Although women's participation in Myanmar's politics may still be at a low level in number, their involvement is obviously on an upward trend following the political changes in Myanmar. Their participation in government, legislature and business sectors is growing drastically compared to recent past. Today, women made up of 52.39 percent of the total number of employees in the government sector, auguring well for the women's role in near future. We now have larger number of female members both in legislature and

the executive branch than ever before. Myanmar does recognize the need to do more to empower women to further increase their participation in these areas.

With this in mind, International Day of Women is widely celebrated every year in major cities to raise awareness on advancement of women. As the Chair of ASEAN last year, Myanmar organized Meetings of ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) and ASEAN Committee on Women (AWC) in our country. Myanmar has also hosted Global Women's Forum last December to promote the role of women in societies in transition.

**Madam Chair,**

In concluding, my delegation wishes to reiterate its support for strengthening our collective efforts to continue effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action with the enhanced support of the international community.

I thank you, Madam Chair.

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