



# MYANMAR

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**Statement**

**By**

**Ms. Hmway Hmway Khyne,**

**Alternate Representative of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar**

**on**

**Agenda Item 26: Agriculture Development, Food Security and Nutrition**

**Before the Second Committee of the**

**70<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

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**2 November 2015**

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**Mr. Chairman,**

My delegation aligns itself with the Statements made by South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and Bangladesh on behalf of the Group of LDCs as well as the Statement made on behalf of ASEAN.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Since the World Food Summit held in 1996, the global efforts to reduce hunger has made significant progress over the past decade. Yet, it is still alarming to note that nearly 800 million people remain malnourished and over 1 billion people still struggling to get out of extreme poverty.

Therefore, daunting challenges remain for the international community to ensure food security for the rapidly growing world population which is estimated to reach 9.6 billion by 2050.

In addressing this, my delegation believes that agricultural development, particularly promotion of sustainable agriculture is the key to eradication of poverty and hunger, creating employments, rural development and more importantly, promoting food security for developing countries.

In my own country, Myanmar, agriculture is the backbone of its economy. Recent FAO figures indicated that agriculture generates 23 percent of GDP and 20 percent of total export earnings and employs 61.2% of its labour force. As agriculture is the main source of livelihood of the rural population which makes over 70% of the total population, enhancing agricultural production, productivity and rural livelihoods is the main objective of the government of Myanmar. Therefore, the Government of Myanmar is making every effort to bring quick benefits to the people by focusing on poverty alleviation, and equitable development through providing assistance to promoting sustainable agricultural development.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Also at the global scale, rural farmers make up 78 percent of about one billion people living under extreme poverty. As such, concerted efforts must be made to emancipate peasant farmers from the cycle of poverty by improving their socioeconomic lives.

Major hindrances in lifting small scale farmers out of poverty include global warming and agricultural labour shortages. It would therefore require governments to take effective measures to create sustainable markets for agricultural products and social assistance and protection programmes for farmers. In this regard, the Government of Myanmar is making efforts to accord farming rights and land ownership to farmers, while increasing loans and providing research, modern techniques and high-yield seeds to farmers.

As part of its efforts to meet MDG target, the Government made efforts to bring down poverty index to 16% in 2015 by providing farmers with agricultural loans, allocating farmlands and land use and extending technical assistance including scientific farming methods.

**Mr. Chairman,**

One of the targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was to halve the number of people suffering from hunger by 2015. My delegation is proud to say that at the 39th conference of the FAO in June 2015, Myanmar was recognized as one of the 72 countries that could work towards that goal.

According to the report of the State of Food Insecurity in the World (2015), we are encouraged to note that the number of undernourished people has decreased 167 million than over the last decade and dropped by 216 million since 1990. Despite this progress, we are concerned that nearly 800 million people are still malnourished and over 1 billion people remain in extreme poverty.

Supplying adequate food, human needs and resources to the rising population is also a major challenge for many developing countries including Myanmar, which has seen an increase in population from over 40 million in 1990 to 51.4 million today. With the rapidly growing world population, it becomes essential for the international community to join hands in eliminating food shortage and in ensuring food security when the need arises.

Therefore, Myanmar has joined the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) which is the successful example of a regional rice reserve mechanism collectively set up by ASEAN member states and its three Partners (China, Japan and ROK) to ensure food security in times of emergencies or shortage crises.

**Mr. Chairman,**

My delegation commends the Secretary-General's commitment to continuing to use the Zero Hunger Challenge to mobilize the political leadership and coordinated action needed to deliver sustainable, inclusive and resilient food and nutrition system within the wider context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Myanmar is actively cooperating with regional countries in the fight against hunger. National Zero Hunger Challenge of Myanmar was launched on World Food Day in 2014 with the support of FAO. Myanmar has prepared National Action Plan for Myanmar Zero Hunger Challenge and National Plan of Action for assuring the nutrition security in Myanmar. We thank the FAO for its assistance in our efforts to fight against hunger.

We are proud to note that Myanmar is now listed as one of those countries on track to achieve its 2025 target for the Zero Hunger Challenge. We hope that Myanmar will be able to contribute to moving toward the goal of a hunger free world by 2025. We are pleased to inform that Myanmar has also adopted long term plans to eradicate hunger and ensure food security in coordination with relevant line ministries.

**Mr. Chairman,**

While we are exerting efforts on agriculture development and improving food security, we must also not forget the critical impact of climate change which can cause natural disasters. Myanmar was hit by unprecedented devastating floods in late July and August in the wake of Cyclone Koman. It affected 1.5 million people across the country and inundated more than 1.4 million acres of farmland. The calamity has dealt a major blow to the country's agricultural livelihoods and the deluge also destroyed many acres of standing crops, lots of acres of fish and shrimp ponds, and cattle. My delegation takes this opportunity to express its appreciation to the United Nations and international community for providing emergency and humanitarian assistance to the people affected by the natural disaster in Myanmar.

The Government in collaboration with World Food Programme (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and other organizations has conducted an 'Agriculture and Livelihood Flood Impact Assessment' in the six most-affected states and regions where families are heavily dependent for their livelihoods. The key findings of the assessment show that there had a severe impact on the livelihoods of families that rely on agriculture.

The Government is therefore taking immediate effective measures after setting priorities for response and recovery to restore the livelihoods of the affected people. Of the 100,000 acres of rice fields that were totally destroyed, more than 70,000 acres have been replanted. The government assisted farmers in ploughing their lands, provided them with paddy seeds, tractors and other agricultural items in a timely manner.

**Mr. Chairman,**

My delegation would welcome the continuous assistance of the international community for the on-going efforts of Myanmar in providing livelihood rehabilitation in the affected areas not only in the agriculture and livestock sector as well as for reconstruction of the devastated areas.

In concluding, Myanmar wishes to express its readiness to work together with the United Nations and the international community towards achieving zero hunger and to address the challenges of agriculture development, food security and nutrition. We hope that such partnership will also contribute to Myanmar's future endeavours to implement Sustainable Development Goal 2 of the 2030 Agenda.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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