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Statement

By

Ms. Sann Thit Yee,

Advisor of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

on Agenda Item 55: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

before the Special Political and Decolonization Committee

(Fourth Committee) of the

72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly

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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR TO THE UNITED NATIONS
10 EAST 77TH STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10075 • TEL. (212) 744-1271 • FAX (212) 744-1290

Statement by Ms. Sann Thit Yee, Advisor of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on Agenda Item 55: Comprehensive Review of the Whole Question of Peacekeeping Operations in all their Aspects before the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) of the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly (30 October 2017)

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to thank the Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Field Support (DFS) for their comprehensive briefings.

My delegation associates itself with the statements made by the distinguished representatives of the Kingdom of Morocco and Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and ASEAN respectively.

Myanmar recognizes the key role that the United Nations plays in the maintenance of international peace and security. We are in the same view that the work of the UN needs to shift from sequential to a continuum of responses so as to contribute to realizing the ultimate goal of sustaining peace.

Myanmar welcomes the reform process that the Secretary-General has taken steps on preventing war, sustaining peace and long-term development. We firmly believe that peace should be our goal and our guide. In this regard, we commend the noble vision of the Secretary-General to make 2017 a year for peace. Myanmar is very supportive to that since the Government of Myanmar has placed peace and national reconciliation at the heart of nation building efforts.

In her very first major speech following the transfer of power, the State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi made it clear that the government would aim to bring remaining organizations into the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, and through peace conferences, it would continue to be able to build up a genuine, federal democratic union. A significant development of the peace process includes successful holding of the two Union Peace Conferences (Panglong conferences). At the 2nd Conference, we were able to discuss and define key principles that will form the foundation of our future democratic, federal union. Thirty-seven agreements were approved and signed.

While there is still much to be done, progress is being made. The Panglong conferences place a new focus on dialogue and finding political solutions to Myanmar's challenges.

Mr. Chairman,

We recognize that peacekeeping operations, despite its challenges and handicaps, remain a vital tool of the UN for promoting international peace and security in this turbulent world. We pay tribute to their noble work and to those who lost their lives in the line of duty.

Regardless of changing nature of environment and complexities of peace operations, the basic principles of UN peacekeeping, namely, consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force

except in self-defense and defense of the mandate must remain as the bedrock values of the mechanism to ensure the credibility of all peace missions.

As there is no one-size-fits-all approach, peacekeeping mandates and operations need to be in line with the needs and emerging challenges on the ground leading to the sustaining peace and long-term development. The voices on the ground must be heard and fully taken into account in designing the mandates of the missions in order to ensure effective protection of civilians. It is also very important that these mandates need to be clearly defined and achievable. Bearing in mind that the primary responsibility for protection of civilians lies with the host government, the mandated troops should also be supportive of the efforts of national authorities.

Mr. Chairman,

The establishment of a peacekeeping mission should not be used as an easy alternative to replace or to prolong pursuit of negotiated political settlements. It should only be interim solution. Negotiated political settlement must remain the fundamental objective of the peace operations.

Sexual exploitation and abuse can undermine the noble task of the peacekeeping operations. It undermines the trust between the missions and the people they are sent to serve. Therefore, Myanmar supports the successful implementation of the Secretary-General's zero tolerance policy to prevent all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse. And, we welcome the new approach to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) was launched by the Secretary-General during the High-Level Week of the 72 Session of the UN General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

Women are underrepresented in UN peace and security efforts. At present, peacekeeping missions worldwide are male dominated and the ratio of women's participation in these operations is at the undesired level. We believe that raising the deployment ratio of women peacekeepers will make peacekeeping operations more effective and inclusive.

With regard to decision making on the acceptability of the peacekeepers, it must be based on individual's history of conduct, not on his or her country of origin. Every UN member state wishing to contribute troops to peacekeeping missions must be given equal opportunity to do so.

In concluding, despite a least developed country, Myanmar has regularly fulfilled its share of financial contribution without fail. Moreover, Myanmar rejoined the club of troop contributing countries starting from 2015. We look forward to receiving more opportunities to contribute more military observers to the peacekeeping operations at this stage. Furthermore, we look forward to sharing best practices and experiences and training opportunities from TCCs and UN to enhance our capacity in contributing troops to peacekeeping operations.

I thank you.

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