MYANMAR

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Statement by Ambassador H.E. U Aung Lynn,

Representative of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

on Agenda Item 54: "Questions relating to Information"

at the Fourth Committee of the 74th 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
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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, my delegation wishes to join the previous speakers to congratulate you and members of the Bureau on your election to guide our Committee. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation in fulfilling your important task for the success of this Committee.

At the same time, we would like to congratulate Mrs. Melissa Fleming on her assumption as the Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications. We wish to express our appreciation to you for your comprehensive briefing on this agenda too.

My Delegation associates itself with the statements made by the distinguished representatives of State of Palestine and Indonesia on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and ASEAN.

My delegation also wishes to express its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his reports to the Committee on Information, including the report on this agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

Myanmar values the important role of the Committee on Information in conducting the United Nations public information policies and activities. Taking this opportunity, we would like to congratulate Ambassador Omar Hilale on the assumption as the Chair of the Committee on Information for the term 2019-2021. We further commend the successful holding of the 41st session of the Committee under your able leadership.

Myanmar also recognizes the indispensable role of the Department of Global Communications (DGC), formerly known as the Department of Public Information (DPI), for informing and empowering people to deliver on the promise of the Charter of the United Nations for creating peace, human rights, dignity and freedom for all. Taking this opportunity, Myanmar would like to join others in commending the commitment, professionalism and the work of the Department for the progressive reforms that enable the communications needs of the United Nations to meet the rapidly changing information landscape of the 21st century.

Mr. Chairman,

Myanmar noted with appreciation the efforts of the Department for expanding the social media to reach wider audience to inform the up-to-date activities of the United Nations, including the reforms of the organization.

We further recognize the efforts of the Department in prioritizing multilingualism to reach the global audience and encourage them to take action on the priority issues of the United Nations, especially in terms of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We also noted the endeavours of the United Nations Academic Impact initiative to continue its outreach work to universities, researchers and educators through its multilingual platform.

We would also like to support and encourage the Department's efforts in investing in both digital platforms and traditional media to bridge the digital divide for the developing countries. In this regard, Myanmar calls upon all stakeholders to continue to work together within their mandates and resources for further developing our information and communications technology to bridge the digital divide.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation would like to express our appreciation of the efforts made by the Department in promoting the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly during the United Nations Climate Change Conference in December 2018 and the Economic and Social Council Youth Forum in April 2019 at the Headquarters.

We also appreciate the efforts of Department in developing a communication strategy for the high-level week of the General Assembly, including an umbrella website as a point of entry to the summits and high-level events taking place during the week.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation fully acknowledges the Department's engagement with the youths by creating communications strategies that are more focused on them with the youth-friendly tools. In this regard, Myanmar welcomes the efforts of the Department in holding the inaugural Model United Nations Youth Summit on 12 April 2019 in New York, where student leaders and UN experts shared their experiences and ideas on how to transform the Model UN into a force for positive change to achieve the SDGs.

We further recognize the efforts made by the Department, in coordination with the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance (DMSPC) and other UN entities with the emphasis on peace and security including crisis communications training, counter-terrorism and combating sexual exploitation and abuse. We noted with appreciation the Department's activities with the DPO at the Headquarters under the theme of "Protecting civilians, protecting peace" for the 2019 International Day of the UN Peacekeepers.

Mr. Chairman,

Receiving and dissemination of accurate and credible information is critical in every sector as information connects people across the world without boundaries. In this regard, we must be fully aware of the adverse consequences resulting from the "fake news" that can spread words of intolerance, hatred and hostility as well as extremist ideas. Therefore, the role of the Department of Global Communications is crucial as it needs to act as a responsible messenger of the UN for disseminating the accurate and credible information to the global audience. Moreover, we note the pivotal role of the UN Information Centres (UNICs) for disseminating information on the up-to-date activities of the UN. In this respect, the Department of Global Communications, particularly the UNICs, should uphold its principles of objectivity, impartiality and neutrality to distribute accurate and credible information.

Mr. Chairman,

The telecommunications sector in Myanmar has grown rapidly with the increase of mobile phone penetration to 126 percent from about less than one percent six years ago. The development in the communication sector has provided greater access to conventional and social media to the people. Furthermore, the media and press censorship had been abolished since 2012. Moreover, under the current government's reforms, the telecommunications sector is liberalized to attract foreign investment, create employment, promote development of local IT and lCT industries for economic development. With a view to strengthening the media sector, the 7th Conference on Media Development was held in Nay Pyi Taw in December 2018 under the theme of "Building Effective Partnerships in Myanmar's Media Development" that emphasized on legislation, freedom, safety and sustainability of the media.

In the effort to the develop the e-government programmes in Myanmar, the government has set up over 40,000 km of internet fiber cable during the past two years and built 15,000 mobile telecom stations with over 50 million mobile phone users.

Moreover, Myanmar government has launched migration of Unicode standard across the country in line with the international norms and Myanmar language writing system. State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, patron of the e-Government Steering Committee, has said at the launching ceremony of Myanmar Unicode migration that the use of Unicode standard system is an important stage under Myanmar's e-governance master plan. The Unicode Standard system would help for a wider use in online applications such as online shopping, mobile money and mobile health as well as e-visa, e-passport and e-ticketing.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, Myanmar wishes to reiterate its support to the Department of Global Communications that is the public voice of the United Nations and responsible for disseminating the accurate, reliable and timely information to the global audience. We are confident that the Department discharges its duties with professional integrity.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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