



MYANMAR

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Statement by

Daw Khin Oo Hlaing,

Member of the Delegation of the Union of Myanmar,

in the Third Committee of the

64th session of the United Nations General Assembly

on Agenda item 62: Advancement of Women

(12 October 2009)

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to commend the Secretary-General for his reports under agenda item 62. The reports not only give comprehensive account of measures undertaken by the UN system but also provide useful recommendations.

My delegation associates itself with the statement of the distinguished representative of Sudan made on behalf of the G-77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

Since 2006, the United Nations has been intensifying efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women. We in Myanmar have also taken measures to empower women. Traditional law and successive State Constitutions guarantee Myanmar women equal rights with men. In our history, women have attained important positions – queen in past eras to heads of department in modern times. The welfare and advancement of women are never overlooked. Today, the Government is striving to ensure that women continue to enjoy their rights unhindered. The United Nations and local and international NGOs are also working together with the Government to sustain the momentum.

The Myanmar National Committee for Women Affairs (MNCWA), an organization for the advancement of women has been carrying out activities based on the 12 areas of concern articulated in the Beijing Platform for Action. The Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation (MWAFF), which has subsidiary bodies down to the grass-root level, has been assisting in the implementation of those activities. With a membership exceeding 4.9 million, it has become an effective vehicle for the promotion and protection of women rights. Its activities include micro-credit scheme for needy women and micro-financing for women affected by Cyclone Nargis that hit Myanmar in May 2008. These activities are contributing to the efforts of poverty reduction, a notable objective of the MDGs.

Other women affairs organizations, such as the Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA), the Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs' Association (MWEA) and the Myanmar Women Sports Federation (MWSF), also play an important role in promoting the all-round development of women.

Mr. Chairman,

Myanmar's tradition and culture provide protection for women and girls from abuse, including sexual and gender-based violence. Necessary legislation has been promulgated. Measures relating to prevention, law enforcement, assistance to victims and rehabilitation have been constituted. Rape is an abhorrent crime. Those found guilty are not only incarcerated but also shunned by society. Gang rape is, therefore, an outrage that is unimaginable in Myanmar. Nothing could be further than the truth to allege that such cases are being carried out with impunity.

Myanmar fully supports the zero tolerance policy with regard to violence against women and girls. Accordingly, social development is accorded priority by the Myanmar authorities. The Government, together with the Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation

(MWAF), the Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs' Association (MWEA), the Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA), promotes policies to ensure that the socio-economic needs and priorities of women and girls are met.

We share the view that integrated measures need to be taken at the national and international levels to prevent and reduce gender-based violence. We welcome the Secretary-General's campaign "UNITE to End Violence Against Women", 2008-2015, which provides a collective platform for global mobilization to engage a wide range of stakeholders to end violence against women. The elaboration by the campaign secretariat led by the Deputy Secretary-General of a framework for action and a communications strategy for the campaign is a notable stride forward.

Mr. Chairman,

Trafficking in persons poses a formidable challenge to countries and communities today. We in Myanmar have been seriously tackling the issue. A comprehensive framework that includes strengthening of legislation, a national plan of action, and increased cooperation at the national and international levels has been put in place. The Penal Code, which provides heavy penalties against perpetrators, is buttressed by the Anti-Human Trafficking Law enacted in September 2005. A Central Body for the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking has been established to address human trafficking. A five-year Plan of Action to Combat Human Trafficking was launched in 2007.

Myanmar is a party to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air.

Myanmar participates in the regional anti-human trafficking process known as the Bali process. Myanmar signed the MoU of Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking (COMMIT) in October 2004 to strengthen multi-sector response to the human trafficking problem among six countries of the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS). In April this year, MoU on the prevention of human trafficking was signed with Thailand. Myanmar and China are working on similar MoU between the two countries and will be able to sign in the near future.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to take this opportunity to affirm that our domestic laws are being reviewed in order to bring them in line with the new State Constitution and Myanmar's obligations under international instruments, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Mr. Chairman,

The full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly require

integration of gender perspectives in social, political and economic development at all levels. Myanmar is endeavouring to achieve the objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action. To this end, we are working closely with UN agencies and local and international NGOs. We are confident that our endeavours will bear fruit.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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