



MYANMAR

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Kyaw Moe Tun,
Permanent Representative of Myanmar**

**Item 4: Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Situation of
Human Rights in Myanmar
at the 45th Session of Human Rights Council**

Geneva, 22 September 2020

Madam President,

The unforeseen circumstance of Covid-19 pandemic around the globe has affected the works, one way or another at our respective capitals, as well as, here in Geneva. At the 45th Session, there are 3 dialogues specifically on Myanmar. Just last week, I have briefed the council during the Enhanced Interactive Dialogue with the High Commissioner focusing more on the development in Rakhine State. Due to the limited time I have, I will focus only on the some other recent developments in Myanmar, namely our efforts to fight against COVID-19, preparation for the upcoming elections, and the peace process.

I mention over time that the challenges we face in Myanmar are multiple, complex and sensitive and the government is addressing them in a comprehensive manner. We always welcome all suggestions to help our efforts for overcoming the challenges. We are of the view that only with thorough understanding of our history and culture and the background and complexity of the issues, the suggestions will be more relevant and helpful for us. I wish to remind that any suggestion made and any point raised should not be in any way to fan the flames. Instead it should be part of the solution.

Madam President,

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the existing challenges and has negative impact on the socio-economy of our country. From the beginning, the Government has taken timely actions for preventive measures with a “whole-of-nation approach and principle of “no one left behind”. Political leadership, Preventive measures, People’s participation and Partnership, these “four Ps” are the most important components of Myanmar’s response to contain the virus and to lessen socio-economic implication.

The Government has set up a COVID-19 Fund to respond to the new challenges. COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan (CERP) was developed to stimulate the economy and employment. Essential food items and cash transfers have been made to individuals who are in need.

During the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, migrant workers are facing difficulties abroad. Despite various constraints, the Government has made vigorous efforts to bring all its stranded citizens back and provides necessary assistance at their arrival and at the quarantine centres until they can return their home safely.

We received the support in cash and kind from domestic and international well-wishers and volunteers to fill the resources gap. I would like to express our deep appreciation to the well-wishers including the UN.

Madam President,

After weeks of no local transmission of Covid-19 cases in Myanmar, the surge of new cases in recent days is at the alarming level. As of 21 Sept 2020, there are 6151 confirmed cases and 98 deaths. Now strict “stay at home” measure has been applied in Yangon Region where the new cases soared. Yesterday, in her regular updates to the public on the Government’s efforts to fight against the pandemic, the State Counsellor stressed that how much importance the Government

has given to this matter and how much efforts has been put in for the health and security of the people and the collaborative efforts would turn into great strength for all of us. She also thanks all people for working together in this important endeavour.

Madam President,

Let me turn on our preparation for the 2020 general elections. In continuation of the path of democratic reforms, the General elections will be held on 8 November this year, in line with the Covid-19 health guidelines. The Union Election Commission (UEC) has set five criteria for the elections – to be free, fair, transparent, trustworthy and reflective of the desire of voters. The voting is expected to be held in most constituencies except in areas where armed conflict is raging. There will also be advance voting for citizens abroad at Myanmar Embassies and Consulates. According to the initial voter list, there are over 37 million (37,571,714) voters. The official campaign by political parties has already begun since 8 of September.

Every citizen, without any discrimination, who meets the criteria, set in the election laws can run for a public office. The UEC has scrutinized all applications in accordance with the election laws.

To ensure equal participation of all, the relevant stakeholders are working together in a coordinated manner for prevention of discrimination. The UEC, in coordination with Myanmar Press Council is monitoring online and printed media to prevent hate speech and fake news as well as to preserve the national unity and maintain the peace and stability in the country while respecting freedom of expression. The UEC has also met with Facebook team in order to tackle hate speech and fake news. Press meetings are held every two weeks at the UEC office.

Application for local and international election observers can be presented to the UEC, to participate in observing the General Elections until 15 October. As of 4 September, certificate of accreditation have been issued to 2 international organizations. And as of 3 September, 8,156 people from 9 organizations from local observers have been issued IDs.

Madam President,

Allow me to touch briefly on the Myanmar's peace process. The people of Myanmar are longing for the sustainable peace and stability throughout the country due to experiencing of the decades of internal armed conflicts since the time of independence. The incumbent Government has emphasized peace as one of its priorities and made all out efforts for achieving the sustainable peace in the country. During 4th Session of the Union Peace Conference- 21st Century Panglong held last month, significant milestone has been achieved with the signing of the Part III of the Union Accord. It is a crucial step for establishing a democratic federal union.

To conclude, **Madam President**, last 4 and half years, we have witnessed many positive changes taking place on our path towards a democratic federal union. However many challenges remain. The present Government is committed to continue its efforts to create a democratic state and resolute to overcome the ongoing challenges with the collective strength of the people of Myanmar. At the same time, we welcome constructive cooperation, helping hands and understanding from the international community for achieving our goal of building a democratic federal Myanmar in a fast and smooth manner.

I thank you.
