



MYANMAR

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Statement by

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in the Third Committee on

Item No. 71(b) & (c) & (e): Human Rights

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Mr. Chairman ,

In a world where one billion people live on less than a dollar a day, where 6 million children fall victim to diseases that could have been prevented or treated and where 40 percent of the world's population account for only 5 percent of global income, the question of where the focus and emphasis on human rights is to be placed is a matter of vital importance for us.

Developed countries generally give more emphasis to civil and political rights where as in the developing world, the focus is naturally on rights, such as the right to development and the right to food, although all subscribe to the ideal of the principle of universality and indivisibility of human rights.

Mr. Chairman ,

The right to food and the right to development are crucial rights which need urgent attention of the international community. We welcome the G-8 Summit in Scotland this year, which reached an important decision to increase the official development aid for the developing countries. We also believe that the endorsement of the proposal made by the G-8 Finance Ministers to cancel the debt of the 18 deeply indebted developing countries is a note worthy contribution to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals in developing countries. However, much more needs to be done.

Mr. Chairman ,

Promotion and protection of human rights must be addressed in a global context through a constructive, dialogue-based and non-confrontational approach. The selective targeting of some developing countries, in the name of human rights for naming and shaming and for punitive actions , has only widened the gap of mistrust between those criticizing and the criticized. We believe that only cooperation rather than politicization of human rights issues could bring about better improvements in remedying the human rights situations in the world. It was politicization, double standards and lack of impartiality that has led to questioning the credibility of the Human Rights Commission. Let us not make the same mistakes again with the Human Rights Council. My delegation fervently hopes that the present deliberations on the establishment of a Human Rights Council would lead towards creation of a Council that could truly address human rights issues based on objectivity, respect for sovereignty , territorial integrity, political independence and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

Mr. Chairman ,

My delegation is of the view that embargoes and unilateral sanctions as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries do not serve any meaningful purpose. Not only does it affect the countries and peoples it professes to help, it denies them enjoyment of their basic human rights including the right to development. We express solidarity with those countries facing such embargoes and unilateral sanctions and urge the countries that have imposed these sanctions to lift them.

Mr. Chairman,

Myanmar has been unjustly accused of "systematic" violations of human rights, by some Western quarters, aided and abetted by exiles and expatriates , at a time when she is endeavouring to build a modern democratic state through the adoption of and step by step implementation of a 7-step Road Map where all citizens can fully enjoy human rights. It is not for one party or an individual. No country is perfect in human rights. Neither is Myanmar. However, contrary to the allegations, the policy of the government is to promote and protect human rights, not violating them.

I would like to recall here that when in 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by an overwhelming majority, as demonstration of our faith in the principles enunciated in the Declaration, Myanmar unswervingly voted in the affirmative for the adoption of the Declaration. I may mention here that Myanmar, by choice of lot, had to cast the first vote in taking that important decision on the Declaration.

Today, Myanmar is already a party to many UN Human Rights instruments. To mention some, Myanmar is a party to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women(CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child(CRC). The Government has established the National Human Rights Committee which is actively engaged in the promotion of human rights through dissemination of knowledge and information by holding workshops and seminars widely throughout the country. Myanmar is a State Party to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementary Protocols 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. The Government has enacted legislation to control money laundering and to render mutual legal assistance to combat transnational crimes. It is also a State Party to almost all of the United Nations Conventions on terrorism. We will, however, not remain complacent but continue to study assiduously the remaining conventions with a view to becoming a party.

Mr. Chairman ,

Factual, objective and unbiased reporting is crucial in dealing with country specific human rights situations. Reports based on unfounded allegations and political bias can only add confusion to and further compound the already difficult situation. This is especially so, when the reports emanate from the United Nations quarters. I would here like to point out that the Secretary-General's report on the Situation on Human Rights in Myanmar(A/60/422) not only contains glaring errors and inaccuracies but wrongful assertions, contrary to the real situation prevailing on the ground. I would like to cite one such example, among others, concerning the situation in Myanmar and Bangladesh border which the report describes as : " Conflict ha also escalated along the Myanmar-Bangladesh border" Nothing could be further from the truth, for peace and tranquility prevail in the border.

The report of the Secretary-General seems to have given the impression that the UN which is supposed to remain neutral and free from involvement in issues concerning Member States have joined hands with the critics of my country. The thrust of the report is too negative although there have been some significant developments and instances of co-operation with the UN, the report has conveniently chosen to ignore them. This methodology is contrary to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and my delegation takes strong exception to it. Due to time constraint, I shall refrain from refuting them here in detail. Suffice it to say that the Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations, in an official letter, has drawn this matter to the attention of the Secretary-General, requesting him to issue the letter as an official document of the General Assembly under Agenda Item 71 (c). Similarly, the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar contains many unfounded allegations which my delegation firmly rejects. Any such references in the draft resolution on Myanmar will be strongly opposed by my delegation.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to conclude by stating that Myanmar remains committed to co-operating with the UN as long as it is not one sided, objective and free from political pressures.

I Thank you Mr. Chairman.
