

## Press Release

The United States Department of State has once again arrogated to itself the moral authority to pass judgment on human rights practices in Myanmar. The report for 2004 issued in Washington, D.C. on 28 February is patently false and is nothing more than a catalogue of allegations. It fails to reflect the true situation obtaining in the country.

The Myanmar Government has not only succeeded in meeting the challenge of restoring peace and stability in the country but in strengthening national unity as well. With the steady improvement of the country's infrastructure, the economy has expanded and living standards of the people have improved.

Any objective observer can see the positive changes in the political, economic and social spheres in Myanmar. The very fact that the 7-step road map to democratization is on track, and that the National Convention which resumed work on 17 February is attended by delegates coming from all parts of the country and all strata of society, including representatives of national races, political parties and armed groups, speaks volumes for the systematic manner in which the aspirations of the people are being met.

With regard to the economy, the country has registered an average growth rate of 8.5 percent annually for the past three years, despite sanctions imposed by some countries. In the social field, notable improvements can be seen as health and education facilities have been enhanced, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

No foreign power can claim to have greater interest in the well-being of the citizens of Myanmar than the government and people of Myanmar. The report of the United States Department of State can only be regarded as a politically-motivated attempt to maintain pressure on Myanmar and to interfere in the domestic affairs of the country.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs therefore categorically rejects the United States Department of State annual report on human rights in Myanmar.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Yangon

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