

## **PRESS RELEASE**

The United States Department of State released on 25th February 2009 its 2008 Country Report on Human Rights Practices of over 190 countries, including Myanmar. As in the past, the report repeated its unfounded and unsubstantiated allegations of human rights violations in Myanmar.

It is saddening to find that the report contained the usual sweeping accusations of human rights abuses in Myanmar without verification of the validity and accuracy of the information and reliability of its sources. Instead of making false allegations at other nations regarding human rights matters, the United States should concentrate on uplifting its own human rights records.

Myanmar has long been a victim of a systematic disinformation campaign launched by anti-government elements, generously funded by their foreign supporters. The rootless allegations of human rights violations which invariably emanated from anti-government elements have found their way into the reports of the US State Department. Thus, there is a need to verify all information before it is judged fit for inclusion in official reports.

Myanmar believes that the promotion and protection of human rights should be conducted in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter and international law. Human Rights issues must be addressed based on cardinal principles of objectivity, respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. There should be no double standards or politicization of human rights issues. It is only cooperation, rather than politicization of human rights that can bring about improvement in human rights situations around the world.

Pursuant to its Foreign Policy, Myanmar has been cooperating with the United Nations in many fields including promotion of human rights. Myanmar has welcomed the visits of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Mr Ibrahim Gambari for a total of seven times. Likewise, the current Human Rights Rapporteur for Myanmar, Thomas Ojea Quintana has already visited Myanmar twice since his appointment last year. The Supplementary Understanding on the Treatment of Complaints regarding Forced Labour between the Government of the Union of Myanmar and the ILO was also extended again on 26 February 2009.

Like other developing countries, Myanmar accords high priority to the right to development. It has been striving for the all-round development of the country, paying attention to narrowing the gap between

urban and rural areas, especially the border areas where the majority of the ethnic nationalities reside. The report ignored such positive developments taking place in the area of promoting the right to development of the people in Myanmar.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar therefore categorically rejects the biased assessment on the human rights situations in Myanmar contained in the United States Department of State's 2008 Country Report on Human Rights Practices.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Nay Pyi Taw  
Dated. 4 March 2009