



MYANMAR

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

STATEMENT BY
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AT THE HIGH LEVEL PLENARY MEETING ON
MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs)

(New York, 21 September 2010)

Mr. President,
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

At the outset, I would like to join other speakers in congratulating to Your Excellency on your assumption as the President of the High-level Plenary Meeting.

Since the adoption of Millennium Development Goals in 2000, we have spent almost one decade for their implementation. Yet, the progress towards reaching the targets remains uneven and varies from region to region. With only five years away to go, we need to step up our efforts to achieve the goals set for 2015.

While national governments have the primary responsibility to ensure progress, the international community must help by creating an environment that would enable developing countries to make firmer stride in their road to development. In this regard, we share the view of the Group of 77 that without substantial international support, many of the MDGs will likely to be missed in many developing countries by 2015.

I am pleased to note that our own region, the Asia Pacific, has been able to make significant progress towards achieving the MDGs. However, not all the developing countries in the region are making strong progress on all the targets. Some are facing challenges in attaining these goals. On the other hand, despite the economic slowdown and challenges, we are encouraged to see the developing world being on the right track to meet poverty reduction target by 2015.

Mr. President,

In Myanmar, the Government is striving to promote better living standards for its people through the implementation of its National Development Plan which is inextricably linked to MDGs. The targets of MDGs have been accorded priority in the context of national development and poverty alleviation. The National Plan focuses on the promotion of equitable and balanced socio-economic development of both rural and urban areas. The three ongoing development programmes, namely border areas development programme, the 24 special development zones and the integrated rural development plan were incorporated to the national plan of action for the MDGs. The results from those programmes encompass wide scope of MDG targets.

In ensuring environmental sustainability, Myanmar has been formulating the Myanmar Agenda 21, with the aim to facilitate the integration of environmental sustainability. Reserved forest area in Myanmar has increased from 38,876 square miles in 1998 to 62,002 square miles in 2009. Moreover recently on 3rd August 2010, Myanmar Government has designated the Hukaung Valley as an inviolable wildlife sanctuary. The valley is now the world largest tiger reserve stretching 6,748 square miles where some endangered mammals, bird species and plant species inhabits.

Mr. President,

Despite challenges, Myanmar has made progress in achieving most of the eight MDGs in varying degrees, especially in such areas as poverty alleviation, food security and promotion of

education and health. Myanmar's food security programme, which is focused on expanding production of agriculture, livestock and fishery, has enable us to achieve not only food self-sufficiency, but also to contribute to fulfill the needs of others in the region and beyond.

Education occupies a place of high priority in Myanmar in our drive for human resource development. A large number of school, colleges and universities were expanded to various regions to provide better access to education. The targeted goals of *Education for All National Action Plan (2003-2015)* fall in line with MDGs and contributed to its implementation.

School enrollment ratio has been drastically increased from 67.13 percent in 1988 to 98.13 percent in 2009 due to the nation-wide activities such as *All School-Age Children in School Project*. Literacy rate has also grown to 94.83 in 2009. In term of gender equality, the ratio of girls to boys in primary education increased to 97.43 per cent in 2009. The ratio is even higher in secondary and higher education.

Similar progress was also recorded in maternal health and mortality, attributing to our 30-year national health plan that accords priority to eradication of major diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. Thanks to the HIV/AIDS prevention and care activities being conducted under National AIDS Program, the prevalence among pregnant women aged 15-24 years has been reduced from 2.78 in 2000 to 0.91 in 2009.

The under-five mortality rate has also been reduced by half, from 130 deaths per 1000 live births in 1990 to 66.1 per 1000 live birth in 2003. It is still declining further. We are also on the course to achieve the MDG target of reduction of maternal mortality by three-quarters.

The death rate caused by malaria also declined from 4.5 per 100,000 in 2003 to 1.8 per 100,000 in 2008. In Tuberculosis Control, we have already achieved the TB control target of MDGs since 2006. TB prevalence and death rate, which was 162 per 100,000 before, has been sharply brought down to 13 per 100,000 in 2008.

Mr.President,

The international assistance could serve as an important catalyst for developing countries' efforts to achieve their development goals. Therefore, indiscriminate fulfillment of the ODA commitments, increased investment flows, market access and resolution of debt problems are essential to enable the developing countries to realize the MDGs targets.

In conclusion, I wish to assure that Myanmar will continue to strive to achieve the MDGs through our national plan and strategy. At the same time, Myanmar stands ready to work closer with the United Nations, international development partners to fully attain the MDG targets. We sincerely hope that this high-level Meeting today will come up with new approaches and concrete steps to accelerate progress on achieving MDGs by the next five years.

Thank you.