



# MYANMAR

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**Statement by U Maung Wai**  
**Deputy Permanent Representative**  
**Permanent Mission of the Union of Myanmar to**  
**the United Nations**  
**at the Open Debate**  
**on**  
**Women and Peace and Security**  
**at**  
**the United Nations Security Council**

New York, 23 October 2007

Mr. President,

I wish to thank you for the opportunity to take part in the Open Debate on "Women and Peace and Security". We fully identify with the view that gender equality plays an essential part in promoting and advancing peace and security. We therefore wish to commend the Ghana Presidency of the Security Council for taking the initiative to hold this Open Debate. My delegation also wishes to commend the Secretary-General for his report focusing on the United Nations System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of the Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000).

We note that the report covers a large and diverse area. The implementation review of 2005-2007 Action Plan is a good basis for the way forward. It shows that progress has been achieved in many substantive areas of the 2005-2007 Action Plan. It also confirms the existence of institutional and organizational gaps and challenges in the implementation by the UN system. We also note that the 2008-2009 Action Plan attempts a sharpened focus. The original 12 areas of action contained in 2005-2007 Action Plan are now reconsolidated into 5 thematic areas: prevention; participation; protection; relief and recovery; and normative.

Mr. President,

In our national effort to promote gender equality, organizations such as the Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation, Myanmar Women Entrepreneur's Association and Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, play an important role. Hand in hand with these organizations, the Government promotes policies to ensure that the needs and priorities of women and girls are addressed. In this regard, Myanmar tradition and culture play an important part. Traditional law guarantees equal rights of women, including the right to own and inherit property.

Mr. President,

We subscribe to the view that development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Women and girls are the most vulnerable among the population who suffer from conflicts. More often than not the root causes of conflict are poverty, social economics and gender inequality. In the case of my country which has emerged from over 4 decades of insurgency, the weakness of the constitution imposed upon us at the time of independence has been the main cause. Until recently, Myanmar has had to face the challenge posed by 18 insurgent armed groups. However, the Government's policy of national reconciliation has resulted in the return to the legal fold of 17 insurgent groups. Today we are implementing a political road map, the first crucial stage of which is the adoption of a new constitution that is acceptable to the entire union made up of over 100 national races. Recently, we successfully completed the National Convention which has laid down the basic principles to be enshrined in the new Constitution. On 18 of October, the Government formed a Commission to draft a new constitution. Once completed, the draft constitution will be put to a referendum.

Mr. President,

Myanmar tradition, culture and values which facilitate our national efforts to promote gender equality are important pillars in the Government's commitment to protect women and girls from human rights abuses including sexual and gender based violence.

My delegation therefore takes exception to the unfounded allegations regarding sexual violence leveled against the Myanmar armed forces. We categorically reject the unfounded allegations made by the Representative of the United Kingdom. Let me set the record straight. The Myanmar military has been falsely accused of gang rape based on the reports issued by the expatriate Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN), the Shan Human Rights Foundation (SHRF) and the Kareni Human Rights Group (KHRG). It should be noted that in 2002, the US State Department's country report on Myanmar identified both SHRF and KHRG as organizations which have association with insurgent armed groups. The allegations leveled at the Myanmar Military come from these groups associated with the insurgents. The Security Council has had first hand experience that reports emanating from exiles are at variance with reality. Rape, let alone gang rape, is regarded by the Myanmar people and Government as a most dastardly and abhorrent crime. Whenever such a crime is committed, we make sure that the full force of law is applied against the perpetrators. Three separate investigations regarding these allegations have been carried out by authorities and organizations concerned, including the Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation. In genuine cases, perpetrators were prosecuted and sentenced in accordance with the Law.

Mr. President,

The report of Secretary-General has rightly pointed out that in the implementation of Resolution 1325 (2000), concerted efforts of governments and civil societies at the country level are vital for success. We are encouraged that among recommendations to further accelerate the implementation of Resolution 1325 (2000), the need for the international community to support national implementation is included. We also look forward to the early establishment of a data base of good practices envisaged in the Secretary-General's report. Both the United Nations and its national partners can put to good use the knowledge resulting from good practices and lessons learned on the implementation of Resolution 1325 (2000).

I thank you.

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