

Mr. Hau Do Suan (Myanmar):

First of all, let me thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important open debate. My delegation extends its best wishes for the success of the United Kingdom presidency of the Security Council.

Trafficking in persons has become a dire threat to millions of vulnerable and fragile people across the world. The problem of trafficking is woven into many other challenges: conflict, terrorism, organized crime, extreme poverty, sexual violence against women and young girls and migrant smuggling. In view of the seriousness of the problem, the international community has committed itself to ending human trafficking through the implementation of Goals 5,8 and 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

As part of national efforts to combat trafficking in persons, Myanmar is a State party to various international legal instruments including the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime; the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime; the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime; and the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters among Like-Minded ASEAN Member Countries.

Myanmar enacted a law against trafficking in persons in September 2005. We are now reviewing the law to bring it in line with the changing circumstances. Myanmar thanks the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for being a strong partner in the fight against transnational crimes in close collaboration with INTERPOL. Myanmar has been tackling this issue through a comprehensive framework that includes domestic legislation — a five-year national plan of action. We have recently launched the third five-year national plan of action to combat trafficking in persons. Yearly work programmes are developed to implement the plan in the five key areas — namely, policy and cooperation, prevention, prosecution, protection and capacity-building.

Myanmar is also actively taking part in regional efforts to combat human trafficking. We have been working closely with our regional partners on issues through regional mechanisms such as the Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking and the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime.

The cessation of conflict and peacebuilding are some of the most effective ways to solve the problem of human trafficking. The democratic Government of Myanmar has made national reconciliation and peace one of the country's most important priorities and is fully committed to achieving that objective. It has advanced the peace process by establishing a regular timetable for negotiation through the Union Peace Conference and opening the dialogue to all ethnic armed groups. The first session of the Peace Conference, also known as the 21st-Century Panglong Conference, was held from 31 August to 3 September 2016. The second session is expected to convene soon, upon the conclusion of political discussions at the national level. Recent clashes in Northern Shan and Kachin States have highlighted the importance of achieving peace and have even strengthened our firm resolve to move ahead with the peace process to end the conflict.

We have also taken appropriate measures to prevent potential human trafficking, slavery and labour exploitation in conflict areas. As part of those measures, information sharing campaigns, workshops, and awareness-raising seminars about people smuggling and trafficking in persons are being held. Awareness-raising pamphlets, published in local languages, have been distributed. All of those activities were carried out in collaboration with Government and United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international NGOs and religious groups.

With the rapid inflow of foreign investments into Myanmar, we have been taking measures to avoid labour exploitation and abusive labour practices. In order to better promote and protect the labour rights of our workers, the Government introduced legislation, policies and regulations, in conformity with the provisions of relevant International Labour Organization conventions.

Myanmar will continue to make every effort to combat the menace of human trafficking in a comprehensive and coordinated manner, combining law enforcement, human rights and social development perspectives, as reaffirmed by the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. Let us all continue our collaborative efforts and cooperative action to address the issue of human trafficking in order to make our world a safer and more secure place for all.