



# MYANMAR

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**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**HIS EXCELLENCY U MYA THAN**

**PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR**

**TO THE UNITED NATIONS, GENEVA**

**IN THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE,**

**AT THE FIFTY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

**NEW YORK  
13 October 2003**

**Mr. Chairman,**

**On behalf of the delegation of Myanmar as well as on my own, I should like to extend our warmest congratulations to you on your unanimous election as the Chairman of the First Committee of the fifty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly. Our tribute also goes to the other members of the Bureau. I also wish to offer my personal felicitations and best wishes to Dr. Suriya Chindawongse, an up-and-coming diplomat and a close friend from a fellow ASEAN country on his election as the Vice Chairman of this esteemed Committee. We will cooperate with you fully, Mr. Chairman, in your endeavours to advance the work of the First Committee.**

**I should also like to take this opportunity to offer our warmest congratulations to His Excellency Mr. Nobuyasu Abe on his assumption of duties as the Under Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs. We are fully confident that he will be able to give strong and effective leadership to the Department for Disarmament Affairs in the challenging years ahead. We wish him every success in his future endeavours.**

**Mr. Chairman,**

**This year's session of the First Committee is taking place at a time of trials and tribulations for arms control and disarmament. We have been witnessing weakening of international commitments. To our dismay, even the commitments, reflected in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, have been called into question. The sole multilateral negotiating forum for arms control or disarmament is at a standstill. No multilateral substantive negotiation on an important disarmament issue is taking place at the moment.**

**Mr. Chairman,**

**This year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the convening of the First Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to Disarmament (SSOD I). The provisions of the Final Document of**

**Mr. Chairman,**

**An urgent and necessary step in a systematic and progressive process of nuclear disarmament is an early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). We are encouraged by the increasing number of ratifications of the CTBT by the signatory states. We welcome the ratifications of the Treaty in the past one year by Afghanistan, Algeria, Albania, Cote d' Ivoire, Cyprus, Kuwait, Mauritania and Oman. We take note with appreciation the convening of the Third Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT, held in Vienna in September 2003. We welcome the adoption by the Conference of the twelve concrete steps to promote an early entry into force of the Treaty.**

**Another urgent step in a systematic and progressive process of nuclear disarmament is the negotiation and conclusion of a draft treaty banning fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (Fissban). We regret that the Conference on Disarmament (CD) is still unable to launch negotiations on Fissban.**

**Mr. Chairman,**

**It is disappointing that the Conference on Disarmament (CD) is still bogged down in an impasse over a programme of work. This year is the seventh year that the sole multilateral negotiating forum in the field of disarmament has been paralysed and unable to undertake any substantive work on disarmament issues. The next year — 2004 — ought not to be another blank year for the CD. The Member States of the CD should do their utmost to overcome the current impasses in the CD.**

**Mr. Chairman,**

**We are heartened by the tangible results, accomplished by the State Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in dealing with the menace of chemical weapons. We welcome the positive outcome of the First Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, held in the Hague, the**

**Netherlands from 28 April to 8 May 2003. We hope that the Eight Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, to be held later this year, will be able to develop a plan of action on national implementation measures and to take further concrete steps in the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.**

**Mr. Chairman,**

**In the area of biological weapons, however, we regret that the States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) are still unable to take concrete measures to strengthen the implementation of the BWC. We hope that the First Annual Meeting of the States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, to be convened in Geneva in November this year, will be able to make significant progress in our endeavours to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention.**

**Mr. Chairman,**

**We recognize the clear and present danger of small arms and light weapons. They are the weapons that are actually causing an estimated half a million casualties every year around the world. We need to address in an effective manner the problem of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspect.**

**The First Biennial Meeting on Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects, held in New York in 7 to 11 July 2003, was an important first step in the follow-up measures on the Programme of Action, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York in July 2001. Under the able leadership of Chairperson Her Excellency Dr. Kuniko Inoguchi of Japan, the Biennial Meeting was able to undertake comprehensive and in-depth discussions on important issues such as weapons collection and destruction, marking and tracing; export and import control, capacity-building for implementation, research, institution building and human security. We take note with appreciation the work carried out by the Group of Governmental Experts on Tracing Illicit Small**

**Arms and Light Weapons. We also join the call made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the Member States to redouble their efforts to work on a ban on supplying small arms to non-states actors.**

**Mr. Chairman,**

**I should like to express our profound appreciation of the Myanmar delegation for the substantial contribution made by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific. The countries in the region have benefited a lot from the regional seminars, workshops and other activities on disarmament issues, organized by the Centre. We support the ongoing activities of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, and we urge that more resources be provided to the Centre in order to enable it to conduct more useful activities in the region.**

**Mr. Chairman,**

**The United Nations symbolizes and stands for multilateralism. We are all for multilateralism. The problems before this esteemed Committee and the United Nations General Assembly are global problems. There is no denying that global problems require global actions in all areas of human endeavours. Disarmament is no exception. All the important international arms control and disarmament agreements to date, including the NPT, the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), are the products of the Conference on Disarmament, and they are indeed eloquent testimony to the crucial role and great value of multilateral diplomacy.**

**Let us, therefore, rededicate ourselves and renew our firm commitment to multilateralism in the field of arms control or disarmament and in other area by human endeavours.**

**I thank you, Mr. Chariman.**