

Statement of Myanmar Deputy Foreign Minister U Thant Kyaw
at the 19th Conference of the State Parties to the Chemical Weapons
Convention, the Hague. (2-12-2014) ***

Madam Chairperson, Director General of OPCW, Ministers of the State Parties to CWC, Representatives of various International Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations, Science and Technology community, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen,

On the outset, may I congratulate Madam Chairperson, Excellency Ms. Vesela Mrden Korac, the Ambassador of Croatia, on your election as the Chairperson of this 19th Session of the Conference of the State Parties. Myanmar expresses appreciations to the Director General of OPCW, H.E. Ambassador Ahmet Uzumcy for the invitation extended to Myanmar to this important Conference.

Myanmar also congratulates the State Parties of CWC and OPCW for the dedicated work accomplished so far in promoting our world much safer place from the danger of chemical weapons. It is heartening to learn that 84.95% of the world declared stockpiles of 72,524 metric tons of chemical agent have been destroyed, so far.

I am delighted to be here with the distinguished delegates at this August Gathering of the 19th CSP. I believe that these regular Conferences are very important and useful for the State Parties, to re-synergize the collective commitments.

Myanmar is reiterating today, our commitment to promote peace and security of the world and to protect from the menace of the weapons of mass destruction, including the Chemical Weapons.

Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

Myanmar had signed the Chemical Weapons Convention on early date of 14th January of 1993. Since the signature, we had gone through ups and downs and changes in our history.

After the newly elected Myanmar Democratic Government assumed State responsibilities in 2011, political and economic reforms were carried out diligently. These reforms have brought social and economic developments, promoting for more responsible society and creating various sustainable public goods for the people and for the future generations.

Not just within domestic domain, we are trying to become more active as a member of the international community in various aspects. In this new chapter of Myanmar, we are determined to tackle the global challenges together with the international community.

During the last 3 years plus, Myanmar has been reviewing many aspects of domestic legal frameworks. Government, through the Parliament, has been making good efforts to introduce new laws, make amendments, or abolish the old ones and drafting necessary rules and regulations for a variety of areas.

Myanmar was a founding member of the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee of 1962 and has been an active member of the international disarmament community, also working together with the UN and international Organizations towards global peace and disarmament.

With regard to the status of ratification of the CWC by Myanmar, I would like to inform the Conference that the progress is very encouraging.

Internal procedures are almost completed as the proposal is well on its way to the Myanmar Union Parliament. The upcoming Union Parliament session which will start in January, 2015 will consider the proposal and make a final discussion on ratification of the CWC. I have no doubt that Myanmar Union Parliament is also in support of the Government's decision to ratify the Convention as earliest as possible.

Once our domestic procedures are completed, we will deposit the instrument of ratification to the depository entity, the Secretary General of the United Nations.

Excellencies,

You may wish me to bring you on our current domestic settings. In Myanmar, there are about 60 chemical and petrochemical related factories, plants and branches run by the government, while there are about over 32,000 various chemical related private SME units, registered.

For decades, Myanmar has been using 17 different Laws relating to chemicals management which are now being reviewed. Last year, to ensure the safety standards of mentioned chemical industries, the government enacted **Prevention of Hazard from Chemical and Related Substances Law** on 26 August 2013 drafted by the Ministry of Industry. The rules and regulations are being drafted by the same Ministry. I understand that a copy of this Law is being studied by legal branch of OPCW for further necessary opinions. Extensive legal

framework may require additional attention for improvement to be in line with the CWC. We are in consultation with OPCW in crafting necessary legal tools, or to explore other appropriate options, in this direction.

Furthermore, in June, 2013, Myanmar established a CBRN (*Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear*) Country Team inclusive of the key actors for management and control. The Team has been hosting seminars and workshops in cooperation with UNICRI and EU Centre of Excellence at the Capital.

A draft of Myanmar's Action Plan on CBRN is completed and this will be reviewed for the second time, for further improvement. This platform also contributes to the safety and security aspects of Chemicals in Myanmar.

In preparation to ratify CWC, Myanmar has completed the formation of the National Authority for the CWC. The Entity will collaborate with OPCW for effective implementation of the Convention and to take managerial role at national level to bring together the industries and all stake holders on board.

Meanwhile, in cooperation with OPCW, we are conducting various CWC related workshops in Myanmar. These are helpful for capacity building necessary for the preparation of National Implementation measures. It has already attracted the attention of all the relevant Ministries and stake holders responsible for different aspects of the implementation of the Convention.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Myanmar will continue to work closely with OPCW and member States. This is our high priority, especially at this particular juncture.

Before concluding, let me repeat that Myanmar always stands against the use or acquiring of the Chemical Weapons. The safety of the people and the environment has always been Myanmar's top priority. Myanmar is fully committed to this noble cause.

Becoming a Party to this Convention is not the end, yet it is merely the beginning of the beginning of more extensive cooperation with the State Parties of CWC and OPCW in our collective endeavor to defend the world from the danger of chemical weapons and to create a safer place for our future generations.

I thank you.
