



Human Rights Council
23rd session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group

Myanmar

Delivered by DPR Carl Reaich

6 November 2015

Mr President,

New Zealand welcomes the delegation from Myanmar to the Human Rights Council. While New Zealand commends Myanmar on the progress it has made on human rights in recent years, we consider that there are still areas for significant improvement.

In particular, we are concerned with the effective disenfranchisement of certain minority groups, restricting their ability to participate in the November 8 election. New Zealand **recommends** that Myanmar ensure universal suffrage for all adults of voting age, regardless of ethnicity.

New Zealand **recommends** that Myanmar increase its efforts to counter hate-speech and incitement to violence. We also note the recent enactment of the Race and Religion Protection Laws, and urge Myanmar to ensure that these laws not be used to discriminate on religious grounds.

New Zealand commends Myanmar for the progress it has made regarding child soldiers, but considers that more should be done. New Zealand therefore **recommends** that Myanmar continue to prioritize its work with the ILO on a Joint Action Plan on Child Soldiers to progress the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1612.

While New Zealand welcomes the positive steps that have been made by Myanmar towards freedom of opinion and expression, New Zealand **recommends** that Myanmar work to ensure that freedom of opinion and expression are protected.

We wish the Myanmar delegation a successful review.

Thank you Mr President.