**Intervention on Fundamental Rights of Citizens for Health, Education and Religious Freedom at 37th session of the UPR Working Group of Myanmar**

**(25 January 2021)**

**Madame President,**

1. I am Ko Lay Win, Director-General from the Ministry of Education.
2. The Constitution of Myanmar offers every citizen the fundamental rights including right to health care, right to education and right to religious freedom irrespective of their race, ethnicity, religion or sex.
3. The Government is striving towards ensuring and fulfilling the basic rights without discrimination despite facing challenges. Allow me to respond to the points raised by some participants regarding fundamental rights of citizens for health, education and religious freedom.

**Right to Health Care**

1. Regarding the health sector, Myanmar has been trying to improve nation-wide health care services as well as making continuous efforts to reach ultimate goal of Universal Health Coverage. Accordingly, the Government has increased health expenditure 15 times in 10 years.
2. The Government is paying special attention to addressing the existing health issues such as stigma and discrimination in HIV/AIDS services, leprosy control, and sexual and reproductive health with specific strategies and plans.
3. In addition, the Government also focuses on areas which need special attention. Taking into account of the impacts of long internal conflicts, health clusters have been activated to provide primary health care services for the conflict-affected people in IDP camps without any discrimination.
4. At a time of current threat of global pandemic, Myanmar holds the principle of “leaving no one behind” and its preventive measures cover IDP camps and the areas controlled by the ethnic armed organizations as well.

**Right to Education**

1. In the education sector, the Government has increased its expenditure on education to 2.28% of GDP in 2020-2021 Fiscal Year. More budgets are allocated in marginalized and remote areas as a priority.
2. The Government introduced a new basic education system by implementing universalization of 12-year free basic education to ensure that all school-aged children are in schools and have access to quality education.
3. Apart from regular education platform, some special programmes such as special education programmes for children in IDP camps and Inclusive Access to Quality Education (IAQE) programme for children from migrant families are also being implemented on a nation-wide basis.
4. Furthermore, ensuring all ethnic nationalities have the rights to education, the Government prints textbooks in ethnic languages and provides the students for free.

**Right to Religious Freedom**

1. As a multi-religious country, we are promoting religious harmony for equal enjoyment of the rights to freedom of religion. According to the recent statistics, the ratios of population and religious buildings for different faiths across the country are in comparable status.
2. In respect of bringing interfaith harmony, the Religions for Peace (RfP) Myanmar and the Interfaith Friendship Group (Myanmar) have signed an MoU in February 2019 with the goal of building religious harmony and countering religious hatred through interfaith friendship activities.
3. In addition, the directive of the President’s Office on the prevention of proliferation of hate speech in April 2020 also contributes to reducing hatred and enhances mutual respect among communities of different faiths.
4. To conclude, we would like to reaffirm that the Government is putting its utmost efforts to ensure fundamental rights for all citizens without discrimination.
5. I thank you.

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