



MYANMAR

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Statement by

**Mr. Ye Minn Thein, Director, International Organizations and
Economic Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
at the First Committee Thematic Discussion
on “Conventional Weapons”**

74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

New York, 25 October 2019

Mr. Chairman,

Myanmar aligns itself with the statements delivered on behalf of NAM and ASEAN.

Mr. Chairman,

While weapons of mass destruction haunt humanity, the use of conventional weapons across the world in conflicts including urban areas continue to cause many deaths. Worryingly, these weapons easily find their ways to terrorists, and individuals ill-use them.

According to the small arms survey, there were 589000 violent deaths in 2017 from the use of small arms and light weapons with less than 20 per cent of these deaths remain as the direct result of armed conflicts. We fully share the view of the Secretary-General: disarmament saves lives.

We would like to call on states to exchange good practices on preventing, combating and eradicating illicit trade in SALW and ammunition in order to develop guidelines in compliance with the UN Programme of Action.

Mr. Chairman,

Myanmar believes that conventional weapons including cluster munitions have an indiscriminate and negative effect on human beings as well as environment.

Myanmar supports, in principle, the provisions of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Mine Ban Treaty. We recognize the initiatives taken under the said instruments to avert indiscriminate use of cluster munitions and landmines which can lead to vulnerable humanitarian impacts.

We share the view that it is essential to contribute resolving challenges of removing cluster munitions and anti-personnel mines and to ensure their destruction in an effective, efficient and coordinated manner.

Myanmar has established Mine Risk Education Inter-Agency Working Group with representatives from relevant ministries. The Working Group conducts awareness raising on the risk of land mines and provides victim assistance in collaboration with UN Agencies, INGOs, NGOs and the CSOs.

The Military together with Ethnic Armed Organizations that are signatories to the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA), has engaged in humanitarian demining in Kayin State. Since 2011, more than 36,000 landmines and explosive remnants of war have been cleared.

Myanmar is in a process of finalizing a mine clearance operation standard namely “Myanmar National Mine Action Standard”, aiming for conducting systematic demining.

Myanmar is working with countries in the region through ADMM-Plus Expert’s Working Group on Humanitarian Mine Action under ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre.

Mr. Chairman,

In today’s world of technology advancement, there are growing concerns on new types of weapons such as lethal autonomous weapon systems and their destructive power. Myanmar participated as an observer in the meetings of GGE in 2019. We thank the members of GGE for their hard work.

Mr. Chairman,

We are witnessing with deep concern the conflicts persisting, terrorism spreading and the risk of a new arms race growing. Worldwide military expenditures are increasing at alarming

level with total military expenditures reached to USD 1.782 Trillion in 2018 according to the World Bank's data.

It is evident that 2030 Sustainable Development Goals are mostly confronted with the destructive elements such as proliferation of conventional weapons. Myanmar believes that the SDG goals can be better achieved through reduction of expenditures for armament and by channelling necessary supports and funds to the efforts for disarmament and development.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm that Myanmar will continue to work with the United Nations and relevant stakeholders under the existing frame works and programmes to pursue every avenue to eradicate the danger of the conventional weapon proliferation for saving lives.

Mr. Chairman,

It is disappointed that Bangladesh is exploiting the first committee to pursue its own narrow political agenda against Myanmar, using unfounded allegations and wasting precious time of the forum. Therefore, we do not intend to take our right of reply to the unsubstantiated accusations.

I thank you.
