Statement by
Ambassador Hau Do Suan, Permanent Representative of
the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to United Nations
at the Plenary Meeting on the Culture of Peace

United Nations, New York

( 12 December 2018 )
Mr. President,

My delegation thanks the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report and the UNESCO for its valuable inputs.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by Brunei Darussalam on behalf of ASEAN.

We also would like to express our appreciations to all delegations who have taken initiatives to present resolutions under this agenda item.

Mr. President,

Building Peace and national reconciliation are the most important tasks that the Government and people of Myanmar are undertaking today to ensure rule of law and stability, democracy and development in the country.

The series of 21st Century Panglong peace conferences are being held to forge a lasting peace. The Conferences seek to put an end to the armed strife that has ravaged Myanmar since it became an independence nation in 1948, and to build a democratic federal union founded on a lasting unity created out of diversity.

We have known, through our own national experience, the road to peace has never been an easy path to thread. But, this is the only way that will lead us to our long-held aspiration of a peaceful and prosperous nation. We believe in culture of dialogue to reconcile differences, to build trust and confidence and to pursue a lasting peace and sustainable development for all.

Mr. President,

Myanmar is one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the world. It is home to 135 officially recognized ethnic groups, each with its own distinctive culture and adherence to different faiths. As a multi-religious country where all four major religions thrive with all their faithful living in peace and harmony, freedom of religion and the right to preserve cultural identity and heritage have been guaranteed by the Constitution.

Promoting interfaith dialogue plays a vital role in creating a culture of tolerance, mutual respect and understanding among people from religious and cultural diversity. We have established Interfaith Friendship Group at national level and over one hundred sub groups across the country. Interfaith dialogues, awareness talks and combined prayers services have been held all over the country for peace and national reconciliation.
Recently on 21 November 2018, Religion for Peace Advisory Forum on National Reconciliation and Peace in Myanmar was held at the highest national level to promote peace through religions. At the meeting, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi highlighted interfaith dialogue as a vital path to peace. She said that we need to promote interfaith dialogue, and respect and understanding for religious and cultural diversity would contribute to lasting peace and security. She went on to emphasize that, for interfaith dialogue to be truly effective, it should not be limited to religious leaders. It must extend to all so that it results in the meeting of minds and hearts. The State Counsellor also pointed out the need to address education. She said education is essential for overcoming prejudices and stereotyping, mistrust and discrimination. It is through education that we can promote a culture of peace that ensures mutual respect.

Mr. President,

We have seen today in many parts of the world, how religion is being misused by extremists to justify violence and acts of terrorism. Intolerance and religious extremism is most harmful to sustaining peace and harmony in a diverse society. We need to address the root causes of violent extremism.

The Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) terrorist attacks that began on October 2016 and again on 25 August 2017 in northern Rakhine, has triggered immense humanitarian problem that affected innocent people of all religions. Today, there is an urgent need of peace and reconciliation in Rakhine State. In fact, the Government places rule of law and development in Rakhine one of the highest priority to address the long neglected fundamental issues of fear and anger, frustration and poverty in the region. We believe in finding constructive, sustainable ways of building harmony and trust between all communities and bring peace and prosperity for all in Rakhine.

Mr. President,

Sustainable peace is not simply the absence of conflict. They are the presence of values and beliefs in our hearts that will strengthen peace and reconciliation.

In this increasingly inter-connected and interdependent world, we all need to work together in partnership for peace and development through dialogue on the bases of equality and mutual respect. Sustainable peace is essential for sustainable development. Peace and development are two sides of the same coin. Only by promoting a culture of peace, will it be possible to create peace and harmony between diverse communities and societies, thereby creating conducive environment and conditions for sustainable development.

I am confident that through dialogue and fostering of closer cooperation between different faiths, we will be able to build a global culture of peace that will ensure our world a better place and better future for succeeding generations.

I thank you.

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