Statement by
H.E. U Hau Do Suan, Ambassador/ Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to United Nations
at the High-Level Forum on the Culture of Peace

United Nations, New York

(5 September 2018)
Mr. President,

I would like to express my appreciations to you for convening this important high-level forum on the Culture of Peace under the theme “A Credible Pathway to Sustaining Peace”.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the Philippines on behalf of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Mr. President,

Building peace is the most important task that the people of Myanmar are undertaking in the process of transition to democracy today. Since the beginning of the NLD administration, the Government has launched the Twenty-first Century Panglong Conference to take forward the peace process initiated by the previous Government. The 21st Century Panglong peace conference aims to put an end to the armed strife that has ravaged the country for the past seventy years, pave the way to a lasting peace, national reconciliation and to construct a strong democratic federal union founded on unity in diversity.

The government is approaching peace through the principles of non-violence and reconciliation, strengthening mutual trust and understanding that are essential for sustaining peace.

We fully agree with the PGA Mr. Miroslav Lajcak that “peace is more than a ceasefire. It is more than a peace deal”. Sustaining peace is even far more difficult than building peace.

The important nexus between peace and socio-economic development of the people cannot be over-emphasized. And, they are mutually reinforcing. In this regard, the NLD Government has set rule of law, peace, development, and amendments to the Constitution as its goals for lasting peace and well-being of the people in the country’s democratic transition.

Mr. President,

Religious harmony and tolerance of cultural diversity are also crucial for sustaining peace and development in increasingly globalized and heavily
interdependent world. Myanmar is a land of over a hundred different ethnic national races with their own cultural identities and languages.

Myanmar is also a multi-religious country where all four major religions thrive with all their faithful living in peace and harmony. Although an overwhelming majority of about 90 percent of the population is Buddhists, freedom of religion and the right to preserve cultural identity and heritage have been guaranteed by the Constitution.

We have established Interfaith Friendship Group at national level to promote religious harmony and peace. There are over one hundred interfaith friendships subgroups across the country. Interfaith dialogues, awareness talks and combined prayers services have been held all over the country for peace and national reconciliation.

We have also launched campaign to stop spreading of hate speech and inflammatory rhetoric in social media. Legal actions have also been taken against those who are promoting religious intolerance and sowing seeds of misunderstanding and distrust among different communities.

Mr. President,

Intolerance and religious extremism post serious threat to sustaining peace and harmony in a diverse society. Today, we are facing surging intolerance, hatreds, and extremism in many parts of the world.

The terrorist attack carried out by Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) on 25 August last year against Myanmar security forces in northern Rakhine, has triggered tragic humanitarian problem. The terrorist atrocities claimed many innocent civilian lives of different communities, including Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists. It caused serious negative impact on restoration of peace, stability and harmony among different communities in Rakhine State.

Myanmar strongly condemns any act of terrorism in any form or manifestation, violent extremism, incitement of religious hatred and hostility in any society.

Mr. President,

Respect and understanding of the true meaning of different faiths and cultural sensitivities are crucially important in building peace and harmony. Mutual respect, mutual understanding and tolerance are the essence of the culture of peace.
We have known, through our own national experience that the road to peace has never been an easy path to thread. But, this is the only way that will lead us to achieving our common goal of turning our world a peaceful, just and prosperous place for all. We must strive together to build a global culture of peace through compassion, tolerance and an inclusive society, leaving no one behind.

I thank you.

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