



MYANMAR

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**Statement by Ambassador Kyaw Moe Tun,
Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations
at the General Debate of the United Nations Conference at the Midterm
Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International
Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development,” 2018-2028
(New York, 24 March 2023)**

Mr. President,

It is an honour to deliver this statement today at this historic United Nations Water Conference. I wish to thank the Netherlands and Tajikistan for co-hosting this conference.

Mr. President,

Water is life. It is essential for all living things. Ensuring clean water access is a basic human need for good health and well-being. It is important to stress the successful and timely achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal (6) of universal access to safe and affordable drinking water, equitable sanitation and hygiene, and improved water quality.

However, the world is not on track to achieve this goal by 2030. Today, two billion people globally lack access to safe and fresh drinking water, and thousands of people die every year across the globe from water-related diseases. The global water security challenge is escalating, and there is an urgency to ensure the vital human needs of water, including drinking water, food production, livelihoods, sanitation, and other domestic uses. The demand for safe water is increasing with the growing population and urbanization, including agriculture, industry, and energy sectors. Moreover, Water scarcity significantly impacts food production and immensely threatens food insecurity. In that sense, this Conference is

an opportunity to achieve strong commitments to advancing SDG 6 and all the water-related goals and targets.

Mr. President,

In my own country Myanmar, the elected civilian government had strived to implement Sustainable Development Goals through community-driven development projects in road transport, telecommunications, water and sanitation, and electricity. Significant progresses were achieved. One of the most notable achievements was hosting the “3rd Asia-Pacific Water Summit” in 2017 in Yangon, Myanmar. The "Yangon Declaration: The Pathway Forward," was issued at the Summit expressing concern over the gap in ambition between the water-related goals in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the threats to water security, from climate change, especially in the lowest-income countries.

Unfortunately, those promising developments were thwarted by the illegal military coup in February 2021. The impact of the military coup on the people is devastating and huge. The military has been waging a campaign of violence and brutality against the people of Myanmar by all means, including arbitrary detention, torture to death in custody, summary execution and repeated massacres. As we speak, more than 3158 people including women and children have been brutally killed. The military conducted indiscriminate aerial bombings, heavy artillery shelling on villages and whole-sale burnings of over 62,000 residential homes. All atrocities committed are in a widespread, systematic and coordinated manner.

Due to such atrocities, over 1.6 million people are internally displaced and over 17.6 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. Most internally displaced people are in difficulty to access to food, drinking water, sanitation and hygiene. Some children are suffering of various health issues related to lack of clean water.

Mr. President,

Now we are behind in every sector, especially in socio-economic status. Political stability and Economic development are two sides of the same coin. We cannot achieve any sustainable development without peace and political stability. Undoubtedly, achieving SDGs, particularly Goal 6 in Myanmar, will not be possible until the end of this military dictatorship. The people of Myanmar are confident that through building a free, peaceful, inclusive, just, and democratic society, Myanmar can achieve successfully the SDGs, including Goal 6.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, the Conference is a unique opportunity for the world community to set a roadmap and a timeline toward securing water for all and combating the global water challenges. I am confident that the Water Action Agenda will accelerate progress in the second half of the Decade 2018-2028 and the second half of the 2030 Agenda. Most importantly, we all need to ensure that no community, no ecosystem is left behind when we thirst for clean water. Together we can achieve the goal timely and effectively.

Water must bring peace, unity, solidarity and prosperity.

I thank you.
