

Eleventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

São Paulo, Brazil 13-18 June 2004

GENERAL DEBATE

Myanmar

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**Statement by His Excellency Brigadier-General Pyi Sone,
Minister for Commerce and leader of the Myanmar Delegation,
at the Eleventh Session of the
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development,
(16 June 2004, Sao Paulo, Brazil)**

**Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On behalf of the Delegation of the Union of Myanmar, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to you ... on your election as Chairman of this very important event.

May I express my deep appreciation to His Excellency Ambassador Sha Zukang of the People's Republic of China, to His Excellency Ambassador Ransford A. Smith of Jamaica, to His Excellency Mr. Rubens Ricupero, Secretary General of UNCTAD and also to the Government of Brazil for hosting this important event and making excellent arrangements for the meeting.

Mr. Chairman,

The countries of our globalized world, whether big or small, rich or poor, or far or near, are more interdependent than ever before. The world economy and world trade are two areas in which such interdependence is clearly evident.

The efforts of the developing countries to raise the standard of living of their peoples will be greatly impaired if not supplemented and strengthened by constructive international action based on respect for national sovereignty, and that the resultant increase in productivity and purchasing power of the developing countries will contribute to the economic growth of the industrialized countries as well.

Mr. Chairman,

It is also evident that the lion's share of the benefits of such interdependence goes to the developed countries and only the much smaller share goes to the developing countries. Therefore, the developed countries should not be

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hesitant to extend a helping hand to the developing countries. In this regard, the mandate of UNCTAD, particularly the three pillars of activities; such as policy analysis, research and advice, capacity building activities and technical cooperation, must be reaffirmed today, and implemented effectively and expeditiously.

In order to assist the developing countries better and more effectively, UNCTAD should explore ways and means to overcome the challenges being faced by the developing countries today.

Mr. Chairman,

It is generally agreed that there is no better alternative than the multilateral trading system in promoting the objectives set out in the Millennium Declaration. Despite the breakdown of the Cancun WTO Ministerial Meeting, we are of the opinion that it could be beneficial for the developing countries to restart the trade talks and seek common ground with developed countries in order to implement the Doha Development Agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

The Myanmar Government fully recognizes and is actively pursuing its primary responsibility of raising the standard of living of its people. The Government gives priority to peace, stability and tranquility in the country as there cannot be any progress if there is no peace and stability.

Today, peace and stability reign over the nation as never before in the modern history of Myanmar.

Short term economic plans were formulated and implemented. We have achieved double-digit growth rates consecutively for the last three years. We had a surplus trade balance and a positive current account balance in 2002-2003 for the first time in 22 years.

We estimate that the economy can maintain a high growth rate in the coming year too. These high growth rates are mainly attributable to the development of its agriculture sector.

Under our National Development Plan, three development programmes have been laid down. The first programme is the Border Area Development Plan, with the objectives of ensuring equitable development in the border areas and social live of nationals living in those areas. The second programme is the implementation of 24 development zones with the aim of narrowing the socio-economic gap as well

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as to achieve equitable and balanced development over the whole country. The third programme is the integrated Rural Development Plan for the improvement of transport, water supply, education, health and economic standard, which are fundamental necessities for alleviating poverty in the rural areas.

These are being implemented with our own resources, despite sanctions being imposed by some western countries.

Mr. Chairman,

Every government strives for the development of its own country and those who will enjoy the fruits of such efforts are none other than the people of the country concerned. Unilateral coercive economic and trade measures impair the development and, therefore, such measures must not be invoked and must be resolutely opposed by the international community.

Myanmar continues to support UNCTAD with its objectives of maximising trade, investment and development opportunities of developing countries and assisting them in their efforts to integrate into the world economy on an equitable basis.

Myanmar is striving hard to promote regional and international cooperation with goodwill, sincerity, and friendliness to all countries and organizations of the world for better understanding and strengthening cooperation.

We wish the session all success.

Thank you