

**Statement by Lt. Gen. Kyaw Swe  
Union Minister for Home Affairs, Republic of the  
Union of Myanmar  
at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Commission on Narcotic Drugs**

**15 March 2019  
Vienna, Austria**

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates,

First and foremost, on behalf of the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control of the Union of Myanmar, it gives me much pleasure to wish you all good of health and peace of mind.

Also, I am honored to have this opportunity to report to this meeting the efforts of the Myanmar government in the fight against drugs.

Distinguished Delegates,

Myanmar is included among the countries suffering from the menace of drugs, not only in the Southeast Asia Region, but also in the Asia Pacific Region. Since our independence in 1948, successive governments have been vigorously combating drug problems comprehensively and designating the problem as a national duty.

Myanmar is a party to all the UN Drugs Control Conventions and has been assiduously fulfilling its obligations in accordance with the stipulations of the Conventions. Furthermore, in line with the Conventions, Myanmar has promulgated the 1993 Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law and the 1995 Rules

pertaining to the said Law. In addition, a Precursor Chemical Control Rules was promulgated in 2004.

The Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control was established in 1976 with 16 members from the relevant line ministries. Ten Working Subcommittees were also established. In addition, Drug Control Committees were established by law at different levels, State, Region, District, Township, down to Wards and Village Tracts, this commencing in fight against drugs at the grassroots level.

In 2018 June 22, a hotline was opened at the Office of the President to facilitate the reporting of drugs information by the public. The public have been cooperating wholeheartedly, making it possible for many drug operations to be exposed.

Thus 2,829 kg of opium, 1,899 kg of heroin, 106 million tablets of methamphetamine, 2,827 kg of Ice, 20,759 kg of caffeine, 1,833 kg of *Mitragyna Speciosa* (Kratom), totaling 13,837 drug cases, 7 clandestine heroin refineries, 2 tablet punching machines were seized and 18,681 drug criminals were arrested. Compared to 2017, it is an increase of 3,493 cases and 4,681 arrests. During 2018, the Armed Forces and Myanmar Police Force conducted 4 special operations resulting in the exposure of 1,027 drug operations, 1,485 arrests and the seizing of a significant amount of drugs.

Distinguished Delegates,

Combined efforts by the government and the public have led to a 25% decrease of poppy cultivation from 41,000 hectares to 37,300 hectares in 2018. Likewise, opium productions also decreased by 14% in 2017. Last

year alone we saw a decrease from 550 tons in 2017 to 521 tons in 2018, a 5.3% drop.

In accordance with the drug law, annual poppy eradication programs were conducted: a total of 6371.54 acres and 4146 acres in 2018-2019 (up to mid-January). Eighty Six acres were eradicated manually. Contrary to the Drug Law, opium farmers were not prosecuted and imprisoned, instead, alternative development programs are being implemented for the farmers in collaboration with UNDOC, ONCB of Thailand and NNCC of China.

To creating markets for the products of AD Projects, particularly coffee, we have now signed an MOU with Malongo, a company from France, and will be exporting 600 tons of coffee to the European market for the first time.

Distinguished Delegates,

There is no doubt that illicit drugs production and trafficking are one of the factors related to the peace process in our country. We are now in cooperating in effort to curb illicit drugs with the Ethnic Armed Groups who have signed the National Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).

Unfortunately, as opium poppy cultivation and production trend declined over the years, Amphetamine Type Stimulants (ATS) have now taken the front stage as the main problem. As the market base for ATS increased, the involvement of transnational organized syndicates also increased making the problems and situation more complex and serious. As you are aware, ATS are synthetic drugs produced from chemicals, precursors and thus controlling precursor chemicals is crucial. Myanmar does

not produce the controlled chemicals or precursor chemical. It is quite obvious that controlling the illicit movement of precursor chemicals is key in the fight against illicit production of ATS in the region.

In this connection, Myanmar in collaboration with UNODC hosted a Senior Officials Conference on 7-9 November 2018, to draft a Regional Precursor Control Strategy in the region.

Further, to be in line with current international trends and norms, taking into consideration harm reduction and access to the health care system, the 1993 Drug Law was amended on 14 February 2018. Relevant rules that will enable effective implementation of the law are now being drafted.

In addition, a new comprehensive Drug Control Policy, in line with the resolutions of the UNGASS was adopted on 20 February 2018. The newly adopted National Drug Control Policy identified 5 main issues namely;- Reduction of drug production and Alternative Development, Demand Reduction and Harm Reduction, International Cooperation, Research and Analysis, and conformity with Human Rights. Dissemination of the New National Drug Control Policy to be implemented by the States and Regional governmental departments and the civil society is proceeding drafting a National Strategic Plan for implementation in 2019-2023 is also in process. The States and Regional governments will draft their own 2 - year Action Plans.

Myanmar has been cooperating actively with neighboring countries through the Greater Mekhong Cooperation and BIMSTEC to address drugs issues. In

addition, we have bilateral agreements with the US and Russia, and in particular with Thailand for Joint Action Plan Operations during 2018 October to December.

Furthermore, the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control Committee (CCDAC), in close collaboration with DEA, AFP, ONCB, NNCC launched “Operation Dragon” and seized 1,100 kg of ICE, 622.3 kg of Ketamine, 2.466 millions of methamphetamine tablets in the Andaman Sea, breaking an international drug gang on 17 November 2016. The mastermind of the gang, Ah Sue (alias) Sue Songkitikul is still on the run but with ONCB cooperation, Thailand has been able to confiscate assets worth 113 million baht on 20 December 2018.

Distinguish Delegates,

Problems related to drugs have been undermining health and social economy throughout the world and disrupting peace along the borders of the countries in region. Drug trafficking has become a transnational crime that cannot be solved by one country alone; its challenges can be overcome only through international cooperation. Myanmar has been an earnest player in the fight against drugs in cooperation with international stakeholders. However, we still need a lot more international assistance. And we sincerely look forward to obtaining technical and other assistance from our international partners.

In conclusion, international cooperation and collaboration is the key to overcome the menace of drugs successfully. I wish to reiterate that Myanmar will stay committed to the fight against illicit drugs. However great threats and challenges of drugs we have to face, Myanmar

will be fully committed to fight earnestly alongside member states of the United Nations, and regional and neighboring countries.

Thank you very much.

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