STATEMENT BY

H.E. U HTIN LYNN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MYANMAR TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE IN GENEVA
AT THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE DAY

(25-1-2018, Geneva)

Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests,

Fellow Citizens,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. On behalf of the Permanent Mission of Myanmar to the United Nations Office and other international organization in Geneva, and the Embassy of Myanmar to Switzerland, I warmly welcome you to the 70th Anniversary of our Independence Day celebration.

2. Being the Myanmar Ambassador also accredited to the Swiss Federal Council, I would like to annouce that we are also celebrating 60 years of diplomatic relations with our host country, Switzerland, this year. I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to the Swiss Government for its assistance to Myanmar in democratization, socio-economic development and in promoting peace and federalism.

3. Seventy years ago, on 4 January 1948, Myanmar regained her independence. Since then, post-independence Myanmar, a country of over 100 ethnic groups, has been stirving for peace, harmony and socio-economic development of the populace in the country.

4. Since the Government took office in April 2016, considerable progress has been made, in two-year time, particularly in national reconciliation and peace process, fight against corruption, education, public health care and transportation services. One of the most important difference we are able to bring about is in creating wider space for the people to express their opinion on the issues affecting their lives and also on the activities of the Government, without fear, intimidation and reprisals.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

5. In his Independence Day message this year to the people, H. E. President U Htin Kyaw highlighted the need to protect and preserve non-disintegration of the Union; non-disintegration of national unity; and perpetuation of

national sovereignty. He urged, on democratization process, the people to strive hard to draw up a constitution embracing democratic principles and norms for a Democratic Federal Union. Towards the goal of lasting peace, he calls for a speedy implementation of the peace process and inspires all nationalities to work together with the State through political dialogues. To boost the economy, he encourages the private sector to join government efforts for a better socio-economic life of the people.

6. Soon after regaining our independence, we join the United Nations as 58th member on 19 April 1948. Cooperation with the United Nations has been and shall continue to be one of the basic tenets of our foreign policy. Myanmar is answering the international community's calls on various aspects of developments in the county by our deeds. Decades-long challenges such as internal armed conflicts, community discord and under-development cannot be solved overnight. However, they are not insurmountable. With trust, support, strength and participation of the people, with the understanding and support by international community and also with necessary time and space, Myanmar will find durable solutions to these challenges. Journeys of nations always exprience various types of turbulences before they land safely at their destinations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

7. In her statement at the 71st UNGA in 2016, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi shared her vision of the world and *I quote*, *" I appeal to you that we all stand up against anger and hatered, against fear and ignorance and find a way to a better world through our capacities for compassion, for loving kindness and for the ability to be happy in the good fortune of others." End of quote*. This appeal is a fitting clarion call to a world increasingly facing conflicts, hatred and deterioration of our shared values.

8. With these words, please join me in raising our glasses:

  - to prosperity of the people of Myanmar; and
  - to the happiness and well-being of all guests who are present on this occasion.

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