STATEMENT

BY

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ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DELEGATION OF

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR

AT THE THIRD COMMITTEE

AT THE 68TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

UNDER AGENDA ITEMS 108 and 109:

CRIME AND DRUGS

(NEW YORK, 9/10 OCTOBER 2013)
Mr. Chairman,

Since I am taking the floor for the first time, may I congratulate you on your well-deserved election. I am confident that your vast experience and diplomatic skills will lead to fruitful deliberations of this Committee.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Malaysia on behalf of ASEAN.

I wish to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UNODC for their comprehensive reports on the drug situation of the world and the implementation of the mandates relating to international drug control during the past year.

Despite the commendable progress that has been achieved so far collectively in fight against the world drug problem, the international community still needs to pay serious attention to eradicate the scourge of narcotic drugs. My delegation, therefore, would like to underscore the importance of the high-level review of the Political Declaration and the Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem in 2014 to address the challenges of this global menace. We hope that this review process will provide us with an opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences in the fight against drugs and crime.

Mr. Chairman,

Abuse and illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs entail money laundering and other serious crimes. The drug issue poses a major socio-economic challenge to the mankind. It is a threat to the right of the people to enjoy a decent quality of life. As such, Myanmar has been taking anti-narcotics measures as a national endeavour. The World Drug Report 2013 highlighted that in 2012 alone, Myanmar has eradicated over twenty-three thousand hectares of opium poppy cultivation, 3 times higher than that of the previous year. This demonstrates Myanmar's seriousness in the fight against illicit narcotic drugs. With the determination and the political will, we have been taking concrete steps in the areas of prevention, strengthening of legislation and enforcement.
Mr. Chairman,

Myanmar has been waging the war against illicit narcotic drugs for decades. The present government has vowed to root out the drug abuse and the illicit trafficking that deters the overall development of the country. A series of measures have been taken aimed at achieving the goal of the 15-year national drug control plan calling for the elimination of the drug trafficking and the illicit drug production by 2014. The objective of the Plan is to totally eradicate the opium cultivation in 51 townships of Shan State, Kachin State and Chin State. In the drive to eradicate opium poppy cultivation, we have achieved significant results through the designation of drug-free zones in the Mongla, Kokang and Wa regions.

In order to promote the living standard of the national races residing at border areas, numerous development projects have been carried out since 1992. The “New Destiny” project, one of the components of the 15-year narcotics eradication plan, was launched in 2002 paving the way for the opium poppy growers to switch to the cultivation of alternative cash crops. However, adequate funding is urgently required to ensure successful implementation of such projects. In case of failure, the local famers would return to the opium poppy which can be easily grown in any fertile soil. To this end, we would like to call on the international community and donor organizations to provide continuous assistance for the crop substitution programmes. Since the 15-year narcotics eradication plan is due to expire on 31 March 2014, the Government has been making necessary preparations to extend the plan for another 5 years, taking into account the experiences encountered during the past 15 years.

Mr. Chairman,

As part of activities for anti-narcotics measures, law enforcement authorities in Myanmar had seized over 1,470 kilos of opium poppy in 2012 which was relatively higher than that of previous year. Out of 1,470 kilos, a total of 1,256 kilos were seized in Shan State alone. In a ceremony marking the 2013 International Day Against Drug Abuse
and Illicit Trafficking, 37 kinds of seized drugs valued at 73,114 million Kyats were destroyed in Mandalay, Yangon and Shan State on 26 June 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

At the bilateral level, we have been cooperating with our immediate neighbours as well as the countries in the region.

At the regional level, Myanmar has been working closely with other ASEAN countries to implement the ASEAN Work Plan on Combating Illicit Drug Production, Trafficking and Use 2009-2015 and the Roadmap for a Drug-free ASEAN by 2015. We have a shared responsibility to bring about a more secure world for the global community and its future generations in addition to our separate national responsibilities and priorities.

My delegation believes that the best way to ensure a drug-free ASEAN community by 2015, is to put a speedy end to drug production. The Myanmar Government has been relentlessly working to achieve this goal.

We are pleased to inform the Committee that in May 2013 Myanmar hosted a ministerial-level meeting of six signatory nations to the 1993 Memorandum of Understanding on Drug Control Cooperation. The Nay Pyi Taw Declaration on Drug Control Cooperation was adopted at the meeting. The Declaration is designed to enhance cross-border cooperation, share best practices, strengthen alternative development programmes and promote cooperation in drug law enforcement interventions to suppress illicit drug production and trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region.

Mr. Chairman,

The problem of drugs is not confined to an individual, a race or a country alone. It is a problem endangering the whole human society. Therefore, Myanmar will continue to combat this horrible scourge until it achieves its goal -- a drug-free nation.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.