

**Country Statement by Dr. Tin Htut,
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Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, Myanmar
at the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2)
Rome, Italy
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Mr. Chairman,

Honorable Dr. Jose Graziano da Silva, FAO Director-General,

Honorable Dr. Margaret Chan, WHO Director-General,

Honorable Ministers,

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning,

It is a great pleasure and honor for me to address the country statement in this important session. On behalf of the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and on my own behalf, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to FAO and WHO for organizing this very significant event. I hope that this conference will provide a unique opportunity for all of us here to exchange views and experiences to address food, health, agricultural, educational and social protection challenges and pave the way forward.

Mr. Chairman, Honorable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for over 70 % of the Myanmar population and considered as a driver for economic development. Enhancing agricultural production, productivity and rural livelihoods have been the main

objective of the Government of Myanmar. It is a fundamental instrument to achieve food and nutrition security, reduce poverty, create rural and urban employment, generate sustainable broad-based economic growth ensuring environmental sustainability. Noting the importance agriculture sector, strong policies and programs are being laid out to enhance more investment particularly for smallholder farmers.

For sustainable agricultural development, the Government of Myanmar recognizes family farming system and smallholders play an important role to ensure food security and reduce malnutrition. It also encourages and supports integrated and multi-sectoral public policies, as appropriate, to raise the productive capacity and incomes, thereby, strengthening the resilience of rural community. I believe, therefore, "Family Farming: Feeding the World, Caring for the Earth" has been chosen by FAO as the theme for this year's World Food Day and 2014 has also been designated as "International Year of Family Farming."

According to the FAO, there are more than 500 million small holder farm families working on family farming on 98 per cent of the total farmland worldwide. Therefore, we need to fulfill the requirements of small scale holder farmers and to stress and support in family farming for sustainable development as this issue has encouraged by FAO

The World Food Summit, 1996 called for eliminating hunger and malnutrition. In order to meet the MDG, measures have been taken to arrest this chronic problem by all member states including Myanmar. Combining food security and nutrition, International Conference on Nutrition has been devised. Today, all of us here gather at the Second International Conference known as ICN2 event is serving as a platform to encourage and support the realization of the initiative of UN Secretary-General to take up "Zero Hunger Challenge".

National Zero Hunger Challenge of Myanmar has been launched on World Food Day-2014, jointly celebrated with FAO and Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MOAI) on last October 16. I would like to take the opportunity to mention here that with the support and assistance of FAO, MOAI is currently preparing to formulate and implement National Action Plan for Myanmar Zero Hunger Challenge. Moreover, the Ministry of Health has also prepared National Plan of Action for assuring the nutrition security in Myanmar. The Government of Myanmar has implemented several nutrition programs and exclusive breast feeding together with UN agencies like WHO and UNICEF and INGOs. It is actively supported SUN Movement as well. It is well noted the importance of inter-ministerial roles to combine the food security and assuring nutrition.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Ministers, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since "Nutrition" itself covers in the sense of "Food Security", food and nutritional education is one of the most important concerns that disseminate to all consumers and stakeholders in order to raise the public awareness of food losses and food wastes. If the food wastes from family dining tables, the wastes from kitchens of hotels and restaurants could be reduced, it would help to attain food security in the world.

Moreover, I would also like to emphasize the need for technology support for pre- and post-harvest technology in agricultural sector where losses, about 40% of production, are wasted in the handling process of agricultural supply chain in developing countries. Myanmar is no exception. Those post-harvest losses are also the major challenge to overcome the global food security issues.

While we are putting efforts on agriculture development, improving food security in the country itself and contributing to global needs of food security, most of the nations have been facing primary challenges like natural disasters which are

the consequences and impacts of Global Climate Change. It affects not only agricultural production systems, thereby food availability, but also people's ability to access food which, in turn, has implication on nutritional concerns.

Myanmar has learned valuable lessons from notorious Cyclone Nargis 2008 in 2008 and Cyclone Giri in 2010 impairing livelihood and food security local community in Ayeyarwaddy Delta and Rakhine State of Myanmar respectively. Restoring livelihoods and food security were made by cooperation and support of UN Agencies and other international Organizations. It was a good example of international cooperation for relief measures. It requires us to address the food security and nutrition at the time of crisis and establish early warning system in the wake of climate change and natural calamities. Planning regarding climate smart food production system also needs to be devised.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Ministers, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In 1997, Myanmar became a member of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). Being a member country of ASEAN, it actively participated in ASEAN food security program. According to ASEAN food security frame work, Myanmar has been actively participating in the establishment of ASEAN Food Security Reserve Board- AFSRB, ASEAN Food Security Information System- AFSIS, and ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve-APTERR has been signed. Since then, ten ASEAN member countries, including Myanmar, stockpiled emergency reserved rice in total amount 87,000 MT as an APTERR. Out of this, Myanmar has agreed to contribute 16 % (equivalent to 14000 MT) to regional food security.

Before ending my statement, I would like to thank the Director-General of FAO and WHO for convening this session to address the issue of food security and nutrition. I am looking forward to have continuous and strong international support

to devise strong policy and planning to address food security and nutrition through nutrition sensitive agricultural programs and empowering smallholder family farming system. I also believe that this conference will be able to bring good understanding and solution to the direction for the people of the world through policy options, institutional arrangement and capacity building, and investment strategy aiming at sustainably improving food security and nutrition, taking into consideration the global warming, climate change and natural disasters. All in all, I assure our fullest cooperation for this global undertaking.

Thank you for your kind attention.