



EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR

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Press Statement

The Embassy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in Washington D.C. has noted with great disappointment on the issuance of the statement on Myanmar by the Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom held in Washington D.C. on July 26, 2018. Furthermore, it is regrettable that Myanmar was not invited to the event and has thus missed the opportunity to inform the meeting on Myanmar's stand on the issues contained in the statement.

Under Chapter I, paragraph 34 of the Constitution of Myanmar, *“Every citizen is equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right to freely profess and practice religion subject to public order, morality or health and to the other provisions of this Constitution”*. Hence, the people in Myanmar enjoy freedom of religion under the State Constitution. Moreover, Myanmar is one of the few countries in the world where a Buddhist pagoda, a Christian Church, an Islamic mosque, a Jewish Synagogue and a Hindu temple is found within a radius of one kilometer. There are 4407 Mosques and 459 Islamic schools across the country, where there is a mosque for every 260 Muslims. In addition, there are 6998 Churches of different denominations all over the country and there is a Church of worship for every 470 Christians. These statistics demonstrate the degree of freedom of religion the people in the country are enjoying.

Myanmar is a young democracy in which the government is building a democratic nation after decades of isolation. The country is facing numerous challenges that are related to peace and security, rule of law and socio-economic development. The problems related to the challenges are deep rooted, complex and longstanding. The young civilian government that assumed the responsibility of the state two years ago has made a strong determination and firm resolution to resolve the critical issues of the nation including the situation in Rakhine State by working together with all stake holders. Progress has been made in the work between the Government of Myanmar and the UN agencies on the development in the Rakhine State. All the parties concerned who are working on the development in Rakhine State are aware of the complexities of the problems that cannot be resolved in a short period of time. Time and space are required for the Government to bring lasting solutions to these problems.

At this important juncture, the Government of Myanmar is striving its utmost to resolve the situation in Rakhine State, the Embassy of Myanmar is desirous to see the understanding and support of the Government of the United States of America and the international community on Myanmar's efforts in finding lasting solutions to its challenges.

Embassy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Washington DC

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