

Statement by Government of Japan

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H.E. U Soe Thane, Union Minister of the President Office,
H.E. Dr. Kan Zaw, Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development,
Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, we would like to express our sincere appreciation for the Government of Myanmar for hosting the 2nd MDCF as well as its warm hospitality and excellent arrangement. In the Session 1, this morning, it was our great honor and privilege to have welcome speech by H.E. U Thein Sein, the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Keynote addresses by H.E. Dr. Jim Yong Kim, the President of the World Bank Group and H.E. U Soe Thane, Union Minister of the President Office. All the speeches inspired us with enriched perspectives of the Myanmar's political and economic visions for the future.

We recognize Myanmar has been addressing many challenges such as democratization, national reconciliation and economic reforms in parallel under the leadership of the President Thein Sein, while Myanmar has already achieved many outcomes, we also highly expect Myanmar to accelerate its effort to tackle remaining challenges. In this regard, it should also be acknowledged that many Development Partners (DPs) have been consistently assisting Myanmar on the basis of their comparative advantages. We believe that the large number of DPs present today reflects the international community's high expectation and its strong support for Myanmar's effort.

"Accelerating Actions for Progress through Enhancing Inclusive Coordination" the theme for this forum, is very timely. About a year has passed since the full-fledged resumption of the assistance by the international community, aid coordination between Myanmar Government and the Partners has seen a procedure cycle. We believe both the Government and the DPs have accumulated knowledge and experiences on individual development agendas as well as the challenges in front of us in delivering assistance in Myanmar.

At this forum, based on such accumulated experience, we all are looking forward to having frank and continuous discussion to facilitate support for various reforms. In addition, we would like to highlight that voice of Myanmar citizens and the Civil Society in the global community should be properly reflected during the Forum.

As explained in the presentation, The Nay Pyi Taw Accord is a useful guideline for coordinating stakeholders. We all are looking forward to significant steps towards finalizing its Action Plan in this Forum. Coordination among the DPs is essential for ensuring aid effectiveness. At the same time, we firmly believe, that respecting difference among DP and utilizing its comparative advantage can also bring greater aid effectiveness as a whole.

From this perspective, I would like to point out that it is critical, given the different coordination applicable by each DPs to eliminate factors which hamper assistance in order to support the better functioning of coordination among donors.

From this viewpoint, we appreciate the aid coordinating efforts and actions taken by the Myanmar Government and DPs such as establishment of 17 Sector Working Groups. Regarding the SWGs, we would like to propose the Myanmar Government to encourage so-called non-traditional donors to participate in this useful aid coordination mechanism because these non-traditional donors are also playing active and important roles in Myanmar. In this regard, I would like to emphasize again that the Nay Pyi Taw Accord Action Plan should be inclusive and flexible to accommodate various aid modalities of each donor and ensure participation of non-traditional donors.

We are grateful to have comprehensive presentations on the progress of the National Comprehensive Development Plan (NCDP) and the Framework for Economic and Social Reform (FESR). These will be excellent basis for the discussions of this Forum as the presentations provided useful information and lessons learnt to DPs, while we leave the detailed discussion on individual issues and coordination in the following session this afternoon and tomorrow. We are very much encouraged by a number of tangible outcomes Myanmar has achieved in a short time. We are looking forward to seeing such positive trend in years to come.

We strongly support the People Centered Approach stated in NCDP. We also recognize the importance of priorities mentioned in the NCDP and the 1st Five Year Plan. Additionally, would like to underline the importance of both capacity-building and institutional-building as cross-cutting issues. Furthermore, the administrative capacity of the government should be regarded as a key element for the effective implementation of all the reforms and the aid.

'Quick Wins' highlighted in the FESR is also still important. The DPs will continue to support Myanmar to implement their respective aid as speedy as possible in order to the people in Myanmar to get benefit from the reforms.

Lastly, allow me to briefly touch upon Japan's latest contribution through ODA. Leading other donors, Japan committed to the resumption of ODA to Myanmar. In fiscal year 2013, Japan pledged assistance about 1.5 billion USD scale, and has steadily implemented its full-fledged assistance under the three pillars, namely, 1) Improvement of people's life, 2) Capacity building and institutional development, and 3) economic infrastructure building. Additionally, early this month, under the banner of "Proactive Contribution to Peace", Japan announced its plans to support up to about 100 million USD in Myanmar for the next five years, in order to achieve national reconciliation as expeditiously as possible and have members of ethnic minorities gain the peace dividend,. particularly in conflict-affected areas. Japan will remain committed to provide its assistance in balanced manners to support Myanmar in line with Myanmar's Development Plan in close collaboration with other DPs.

We, Japanese delegates are looking forward to having active and constructive discussion through the Forum to make a difference in Myanmar's Development Cooperation.

Thank you for your attention.