



35th Regular Session of the UN Human Rights Council

Item 4: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar

**Oral Statement Delivered by Yin Yadanar Thein on behalf of
Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)**

Thursday, 15 June 2017

Mr. President, FORUM-ASIA welcomes the update by the Special Rapporteur. We echo her concerns over recent reports of serious human rights violation in Shan and Kachin states. Conflict related human rights situations in these states are very worrying. The situation in Rakhine state continues to be a matter of serious concern. It is imperative that the humanitarian situation in all regions are immediately resolved while grave violations are credibly investigated and truth, justice and accountability are established.

Freedom of expression, assembly and association remain stifled in Burma/Myanmar. Restrictive legislation such as the Telecommunications Act continue while as pointed out by the Special Rapporteur, recent protests by local communities at the Letpadaung copper mines and farmers in Shan state faced suppression. The update also mentions a recent case of Muslims facing charges in Yangon for peacefully protesting on infringements into their freedom of religion. We call on the government to cease all restrictions on the freedoms of expression, assembly and association in accordance with its international obligations.

We further welcome the Special Rapporteur's decision to look into business and human rights issues. We ask the Special Rapporteur to elaborate her views on the possibility of a nexus between business interests and serious human rights violations in Burma/Myanmar.

We welcome the establishment of the fact finding mission on Myanmar and agree that this is in the best interests of all in the country. Therefore we call on the government to fully cooperate with the mechanism and to grant unhindered access. The ability of civil society to freely engage with this mechanism is critical and we call on this Council to take immediate action in the event of any reprisals.

Lastly we welcome the Special Rapporteur's resolve on continuing her work on benchmarks that the Council mandated her to develop. We call on the government to fully cooperate with the Special Rapporteur in taking this ahead and implementing the benchmarks.

Thank you