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

Myanmar Government must cooperate fully with the UN on human rights

Mr. President,

Amnesty International welcomes this additional opportunity to hear from the Special Rapporteur. The ongoing human rights violations and abuses she has highlighted underscore the need for increased international monitoring of the human rights situation in Myanmar.

Recent research by Amnesty International has documented violations of international human rights and humanitarian law by the Myanmar Army and armed groups in Northern Shan and Kachin States. These include the indiscriminate shelling of civilian populated areas, summary executions, arbitrary arrests and torture, forced labour and recruitment, restrictions on humanitarian access, and the planting of landmines.

Restrictions on humanitarian and media access to Rakhine State and other places in the country have still not been fully lifted.

A range of repressive laws remains on the books leaving human rights defenders and peaceful activists at risk of arrest and imprisonment. Human rights defenders also report threats and intimidation from state and non-state actors.

We are concerned about the lack of government cooperation with the UN on human rights. The government dissociated itself from Council resolution 34/22 that established a Fact-Finding Mission into serious human rights violations and abuses. Meanwhile, it has yet to engage with the Special Rapporteur on her proposed joint benchmarks. We note with concern that no progress appears to have been made in establishing the long-awaited OHCHR country office, nor has OHCHR been granted adequate access to the country.

If the government of Myanmar is serious about improving the human rights situation, it must cooperate fully with the Fact-Finding Mission, allowing unrestricted and unmonitored access to all parts of the country, and engage meaningfully with the Special Rapporteur to agree proposed benchmarks and a timetable for their implementation. We urge the government to facilitate the establishment of an OHCHR country office with a full promotion and protection mandate.

Ms. Lee, have you received any indication from the government of Myanmar that it is considering the joint-benchmarks that you have suggested?

Thank you, Mr. President.