

EXCERPTED STATEMENTS FROM SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON THE SITUATION IN BURMA

12 January 2007
Security Council Chamber

Russian Federation **Ambassador Churkin**

Russia has been consistent in opposing consideration of the issue of Myanmar in the Security Council. While we do not deny that Myanmar has been facing certain problems, particularly in the socioeconomic and humanitarian areas, we believe that the situation in that country does not pose any threat to international or regional peace. That view is shared by a large number of States, including, most importantly, those neighboring Myanmar.

The problems in Myanmar that are mentioned in the draft resolution before the Security Council are being considered within the framework of other bodies of the United Nations system, particularly by the General Assembly and its Third Committee, the Human Rights Council, the International Organization for Migration, the World Health Organization and other relevant organs. Duplication of their efforts by the Security Council would be counterproductive and would not facilitate the division of labour between the main bodies of the world Organization which is provided for in the Charter of the United Nations or the development of their constructive cooperation. We deem unacceptable any attempt to use the Security Council to discuss issues outside its purview.

China **Ambassador Wang**

(...)Thirdly, the Myanmar issue is mainly the internal affair of a sovereign State. The current domestic situation in Myanmar does not constitute a threat to international or regional peace and security. No one would dispute the fact that Myanmar is, indeed faced with a series

of grave challenges relating to refugees, child labor, HIV/AIDS, human rights and drugs. But similar problems exist in many other countries. If, because Myanmar is encountering this or that problem in the areas to which I referred, it is to be arbitrarily labeled as a prominent or potential threat to regional security, included on the agenda of the Council and be the subject of a draft resolution, then the situations in all other 191 United Nations Member States may also need to be considered by the Security Council. Such an approach is obviously neither logical nor reasonable.

As a matter of fact, all of Myanmar's immediate neighbors, all ASEAN members and most Asia-Pacific countries believe that the current situation in Myanmar does not pose a threat to regional peace and security. Since various relevant United Nations agencies have already held discussions on the Myanmar issue, and given that the primary responsibility entrusted by the United Nations Charter to the Security Council is to maintain world peace and security, China holds that there is no need for the Security Council to get involved. Nor should it take action on the issue of Myanmar. If it does so, it will not only exceed the mandates of the Council, but also hinder discussion by other relevant United Nations agencies, and bring no benefit to the Secretary-General's good offices.

South Africa **Ambassador Kumalo**

I regret to inform the Council that South Africa will vote against the draft resolution on Myanmar. My Government decided on this action on the basis of the following three reasons. First, we believe that this draft resolution would compromise the good offices of the Secretary-General in dealing with sensitive matters of peace, security and human rights. Secondly, it deals with

issues that would be best left to the Human Rights Council. The third and most fundamental reason for us is that this draft resolution does not fit with the Charter mandate conferred upon the Security Council, which is to deal with matters that are a threat to international peace and security.(...)

Congo

Ambassador Ikouebe

(...) However, in the spirit of reconciliation, my delegation preferred to abstain, in the hope that the sponsors of the draft resolution would be able to find other ways to address this problem, which pertains above all to the competency and sovereignty of Member States. In any case, we believe this matter falls under the purview of other United Nations bodies other than the Security Council.

The United Kingdom

Sir Emyr Jones Perry

(...) Our disagreement is one of competence. Is this a valid issue for decision by the Security Council? The British Government believes that the situation in Burma/Myanmar represents a threat to regional peace and security and to the security of the Burmese people. We therefore voted for a draft resolution that we believed to be within the responsibilities of the Council. But we do not claim an exclusive Security Council interest. Other organs — the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations — all have a key role to play in tackling the problems affecting Burma/Myanmar, be they HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases, displaced persons and refugees, abject poverty, drugs, vulnerable children and so on. (...)

Ghana

Ambassador Nana Effah-Apenteng

(...)Indeed, we are of the view that the maintenance of international peace and security in today's radically changed world necessarily involves addressing complex challenges that are cross-cutting and interrelated. We believe that there is no other route to a peaceful and secure

world built on freedom, justice and prosperity for all.

In that regard, we are also convinced that the interests of humankind can best be served by the United Nations when the various organs and subsidiary bodies are more devoted to complementing each others' efforts. We should not overlook the fact that, in recent times, this Council has dealt with many intra-State conflicts. Above all, in their endeavours, the various United Nations organs must never lose sight of the underlying principles and objectives enshrined in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.(...)

France

Ambassador Lacroix

France voted in favour of the draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom and the United States. We regret that the Security Council was not able to adopt it, because we feel that the situation in Burma calls for the international community's serious concern with respect to important aspects of the Security Council's responsibilities.

Conflict persists between the Burmese army and various armed factions, with repercussions beyond the country's borders. Refugees have fled the country, in particular to Thailand, leading to border incidents and facilitating drug production and trafficking from Burma. The Council cannot remain indifferent to the situation of civilians in conflict zones where such serious disturbances are taking place.(...)

Panama

Ambassador Arias

(...) Given that understanding of its responsibility to the international community, Panama expresses its concern today about the pressure that has been exerted in the Council's decision-making on the matter at hand. We regret to say that we do not have a clear grasp of the factors that led to this situation. We are concerned that the topic on which we have decided today far transcends the situation in Myanmar. The topic we are addressing is the functions and mandate of this Council, and

specifically its capacity to act preventively and in conformity with the scope and range of Articles 32, 33 and 34 of the United Nations Charter.

We are all aware of the important changes that have occurred in the international situation since the Charter was adopted. We are discussing — and will discuss in future — threats to international security. We recently had a debate in this Chamber on this very issue. We also have to discuss the functions of the various bodies of the United Nations in the face of these new realities. In particular, we have to discuss the functions of the Security Council, which is its responsibility. I hope that when we have that discussion we will understand that all of these bodies should act as part of a whole and not in a segregated and individual fashion.(...)