

Honorable Ministers, Development Partners, and Distinguished Guests,

With the highest respect we would like to thank the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for the opportunity to participate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum and to contribute this statement.

We represent the INGO Forum, a group of 70 international, non-governmental organizations, which are currently working in all states and regions of Myanmar. We work to support local civil society organizations and communities, implementing activities from emergency relief to development across a range of sectors, including health, education, economic development, social protection and disaster management. INGOs employ more than 10,000 Myanmar people, and we are an important channel for funding and technical assistance to Myanmar. In short, INGOs are an important bridge between the international community and local communities in Myanmar.

In this time of change, we recognize and value the ongoing efforts of the Government toward sustainable development, notably increased transparency, accountability, and structural changes, such as the establishment of aid coordination systems through the new Sector Working Groups .

We are committed to supporting the Government's priorities for accelerating the development of the country and its people, and we are ready to work more closely with the Government as it strives to achieve inclusive and equitable development. We will also continue to work with local partners and communities, to enhance their capacity to participate in an inclusive development process.

To ensure growth that is relevant to all Myanmar people, it is important to emphasize the following areas in the coming year:

- improved funding of and access to essential services, including health, education and social protection
- promotion of human rights, including labour rights, land rights and gender equality
- food security
- rural development
- the rule of law
- definition and implementation of environmental safeguards
- ending ongoing ethnic and religious conflict

We welcome the efforts to introduce a new Association Registration Law, which we hope will soon be enacted. This, together with active participation, increased coordination between sectors and inclusive decision-making, will help create an environment that enables civil society to maximise its contribution to the development of the country.

There is an opportunity for Myanmar to harness its potential to ensure development that improves the well-being of all the people of Myanmar. Many successes have been already realised, and, in closing, we commit our ongoing support to the Government and people of Myanmar.

Thank you