

## ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO MYANMAR

### CANADA

- Canada welcomes the public commitment of the Union Solidarity and Development Party made in October 2010 to practice multiparty democracy, guarantee human rights and protect freedom of religion.

In this framework, we would be grateful for an overview of the measures it will take as it holds the majority in new legislative bodies to:

- 1) Repeal or amend domestic legislation, in particular the 2008 Constitution, the 1962 Printers and Publishers Registration Act, Electronic Transactions Law, Section 505(B) of the Penal Code, The Unlawful Associations Act, and The 1950 Emergency Provisions Act to ensure that ambiguous provisions are clearly defined or removed, as to bring it in line with international human rights standards;
- 2) Lift restrictions on the right to freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly and of association;
- 3) Remove restrictions on political opposition parties and put an end to surveillance, harassment, arbitrary arrest, imprisonment and torture of political activists;
- 4) Remove restrictions on independent media and international journalists and put an end to media censorship;
- 5) Guarantee religious freedom and prevent, investigate and prosecute all cases of religious discrimination; and
- 6) Reform the justice system to meet international standards, including guaranteeing the right to fair trials.

The imprisonment with harsh and inhumane conditions of more than 2000 political prisoners solely on the basis of their peaceful political activity, ethnicity or religion is incompatible Burma/Myanmar's ambition to be recognised as a democratic country.

- Could the government provide details on plans to release immediately and unconditionally all political prisoners; to ensure that all trial proceedings conform to international fair trial standards, including the rights to a fair and public trial by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal, access to legal counsel of one's choosing, the presumption of innocence, and the opportunity to appeal through a process of judicial review; and to cease the persecution, harassment and arbitrary arrest and wrongful detention of human rights defenders, pro-democracy activists, and journalist for their perceived opposition?

- Could the government provide more details on steps it will take to improve its cooperation with the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Burma/Myanmar and permit the mandate holder regular and unimpeded access to Burma/Myanmar to investigate and report on the human rights situation throughout the country?
- What steps is the government taking to engage in an inclusive tripartite dialogue with ethnic nationality representatives, including armed groups, and the pro- democracy movement in an effort to resolve the current conflicts and to ensure respect for the human rights of all residents (including self determination and equity)?
- What steps will the government take to ensure Aung San Suu Kyi's freedom of movement, association, assembly and expression, as well as her physical safety?
- What steps is the government taking to investigate and prosecute military personnel and other officials who are accused of serious crime and violations of human rights including extra-judicial killings, recruitment of child soldiers, torture, sexual violence and forced labour?
- Canada welcomes Burma/Myanmar's status as state party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the ILO Conventions.
- What steps will the government take (including consultation with civil society with respect to reporting) will the government take to fulfill existing obligations under international law and to ensure effective implementation of these treaties?
- What steps will the government take to ratify and effectively implement international other human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its two Optional Protocols; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and its Optional Protocol; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and its Optional Protocol; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, making the declarations set out in Articles 31 and 32; and the Convention on the non-applicability of statutory limitations to war crimes and crimes against humanity?

## **CZECH REPUBLIC**

- Could you elaborate on what steps has the newly elected Government taken/is going to take to ensure a free participation of representatives of all political parties, including non-parliamentary political parties, of representatives of ethnic groups and other relevant stakeholders across the Burmese/Myanmar society in an inclusive political process?

- When is the Government going to respond to constant calls of the international community for an immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners of conscience, currently estimated at more than 2,000, and a full restoration of their political rights?
- Burma/Myanmar is one of a few members of the international community which has neither signed nor ratified any of the two core human rights treaties, namely the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Is it the intention of the new Government to accede to these treaties in the near future and ensure their effective implementation?
- While appreciating the fact that since 1988 the death penalty has not been carried out in Burma/Myanmar, we would like to know whether the current Government of Burma/Myanmar intend to abolish the death penalty as it is considered to be a cruel and inhuman punishment, which fails to provide deterrence to criminal behaviour and represents an unacceptable denial of human dignity and integrity?
- What steps has the Government taken to combat a culture of impunity in the country, as well as a lack of independence of the judiciary and a weak rule of law? How the accountability of all members of State authorities is ensured in the light of the fact that Supreme Court's jurisdiction does not apply to members of military forces?
- What measures has the Government taken to ensure that all allegations of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment are promptly and impartially examined by competent national authorities, that those who encourage, order, tolerate or perpetrate acts of torture are held responsible and brought to justice, including the officials in charge of the place of detention where such crimes are found to have been committed? Does the new Government of Burma/Myanmar intend to accede to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and ensure its effective implementation?
- What steps has the Government taken in order to ensure a full protection of civilians in conflict areas? What measures have been taken to prohibit practice of taking people as forced labour porters by the Burmese/Myanmar army or using persons to guide troops through terrain, acting as human minesweepers?
- It is reported that over 150,000 people continue to live in refugee camps along the country's eastern border and over 500,000 people were internally displaced and at risk of ongoing systemic abuse and lacking adequate standards of living. What measures has the Government taken to recognize the existence of internally displaced persons and to facilitate international aid organizations an access to IDPs in conflict areas since displaced persons face a heightened vulnerability to diseases, violence, trafficking,

forced labour, and reduced access to health services, education, and employment?

- Recent comprehensive need assessments by UNHCR show that approximately 750,000 Muslims without citizenship reside in northern Rakhine State with no access to basic public services. What steps have been taken to put an end to discrimination against ethnic minorities, consisting of restrictions on freedom of movement, a lack of marriage and birth rights, land confiscation and access to basic public services, such as education, health, water and sanitation?
- What measures has the Government of Burma/Myanmar taken to improve a social and economic environment in the country and to implement recommendations of the International Labour Organization?

## **DENMARK**

- When will the Burma/Myanmar government take steps to ratify key international human rights treaties, incl. the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment?
- What steps will be taken to ensure that all parts of the 2008 Constitution as well as national laws reflect international human rights standards and international law?
- According to reports from various international bodies, between 2.000 and 2.300 persons are detained in Burma/Myanmar merely for expressing their political opinions. Will the release of all such prisoners of conscience be an integrated part of a future reconciliation process in Burma/Myanmar?
- With regard to the conflict between the Burma/Myanmar government and several ethnic minorities, there are numerous deeply disturbing reports of violations of minority rights, such as forced labour, arbitrary killings, torture, sexual exploitation of women, confiscation of land, and forced relocations. What measures will the Burma/Myanmar government take to put an end to these violations?

## **FRANCE**

- La Birmanie/Myanmar entend-elle lever les nombreuses restrictions à l'exercice des libertés d'opinion, d'expression et d'information, affectant les droits de l'opposition et la situation des défenseurs des droits de l'Homme?
- Comment la Birmanie/Myanmar justifie-t-elle le maintien en détention de 2100 prisonniers de conscience ? Dans quelle mesure ces personnes

représentent-elles un danger pour l'ordre public? La Birmanie/Myanmar entend-elle les libérer et dans quel délai?

- Quelles sont les mesures prises par la Birmanie/Myanmar pour un règlement pacifique des tensions dans les régions majoritairement peuplées de minorités ethniques, affectant profondément les populations civiles ?
- Comment la Birmanie/Myanmar explique-t-elle le recours encore trop fréquent au travail forcé, affectant également les femmes et les enfants, et ce en dépit des recommandations de l'OIT ? Quelles mesures les autorités prennent-elles pour lutter contre ce phénomène ?
- La Birmanie/Myanmar prévoit-elle de traduire en justice les responsables des graves violations des droits de l'Homme continuant d'être rapportées, et dont certaines, selon le Rapporteur spécial du Conseil des droits de l'Homme, pourraient être qualifiées de crimes de guerre et de crimes contre l'Humanité? Quelles mesures entend-elle prendre pour mettre fin à l'impunité, le cas échéant avec l'assistance des Nations unies ?
- Quels sont les éventuels obstacles à l'adhésion de la Birmanie/Myanmar aux instruments internationaux de promotion et de protection des droits de l'Homme, outre la Convention sur l'élimination de toutes les formes de discrimination à l'égard des femmes et la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant, auxquelles elle est déjà partie?
- La Birmanie/Myanmar entend-elle amender sa législation nationale et la Constitution afin qu'elles soient conformes au droit international des droits de l'Homme ?

## **GERMANY**

- In order to improve Myanmar's state of development, CEDAW recommended to strengthen efforts in the area of health, especially to reduce maternal and infant mortality, deaths caused by infectious diseases, malnutrition and maternal complications. CRC recommended to improve the quality of the education system and to make education free in practice and extend compulsory education to at least the sixth grade. Germany is interested to learn whether the Government has plans to improve the social services in accordance with these recommendations, and if so, what these plans comprise of and, in particular, whether Myanmar will increase financial investing in the areas of health and education?

## **IRELAND**

### **1. Crimes Against Humanity**

- Ireland is gravely concerned by the reports of continuing violations of international human rights and humanitarian law in Burma/Myanmar. The

UN Special Rapporteur, in his reports on Burma/Myanmar, has cited the widespread and systematic violations of human rights by the Myanmar/Burmese military, police and other agents of the authorities including the 'Nasaka' border and immigration force. The failure on the part of the Myanmar/Burmese Government to prosecute those responsible for these acts, the lack of an independent judiciary and weak rule of law have resulted in an embedded culture of impunity which has only served to prolong the suffering of Burma/Myanmar's ethnic minorities, civilians and the political opponents of the Myanmar/Burmese Government.

When will the Myanmar/Burmese Government heed the calls of the international community and desist from such abuses and bring those responsible for human rights violations to justice? What steps will the Myanmar/Burmese Government take to ensure the independence of the judiciary and respect for the rule of law?

## **2. Ethnic Minorities**

- Ethnic minorities are denied their fundamental human rights by the Myanmar/Burmese Government, including: the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion and to use their own language freely and without interference.

Ethnic groups also face restriction on their movements, the imposition of arbitrary taxes, forced labour and limitations on permission to marry. These conditions are used as justification for the incarceration of members of these communities, others are forced into a state of extreme poverty and this causes many to flee Burma/Myanmar as refugees.

The Government of Burma/Myanmar has also refused to issue birth certificates to children of the Rohingya ethnic group. This group also suffers particular abuses, such as systematic rapes and other sexual violence, perpetrated by agents of the Myanmar/Burmese Government including members of the 'Nasaka' border and immigration force.

Will the Myanmar/Burmese Government ensure that ethnic minorities are granted their fundamental human rights and amend its domestic laws to ensure the full enjoyment of basic human rights without discrimination for all people in Burma/Myanmar? Will the Myanmar/Burmese Government ensure that allegations of rape and sexual violence are investigated fully and transparently? Will the Myanmar/Burmese Government end the discrimination and violence against Burma/Myanmar's ethnic minorities including the Rohingya? Will the Government of Burma/Myanmar end its practice of denying citizenship to the Rohingya ethnic minority?

## **3. Political Prisoners**

- The Myanmar/Burmese Government is responsible for the protection and treatment of prisoners in its jails, yet serious issues persist regarding the welfare of prisoners in Burma/Myanmar, particularly for prisoners of

conscience arrested on the basis of peaceful political activism, ethnicity or religion. Ireland is gravely concerned by the reports of inadequate water and food rations, a lack of appropriate healthcare and extortion by prison staff. The numbers of deaths in detention and reports of torture are also deeply troubling.

Will the Myanmar/Burmese Government release the estimated 2,000 political prisoners they still hold in detention? Will the Myanmar/Burmese Government address the serious problems in its prisons and ensure the facilities are appropriately funded and meet international standards of care and treatment of prisoners?

#### **4. International Human Rights Treaties**

- Ireland notes that Burma/Myanmar has not signed or ratified a number of international human rights treaties. Will the Government of Burma/Myanmar ratify and implement the international human rights treaties as recognised by the international community?

#### **5. Restrictions on Freedom of Expression and Assembly**

- Restrictions on independent media and freedom of association and assembly, including the surveillance, harassment, arbitrary arrest, torture and imprisonment of political activists, in particular those from ethnic minorities, continue to give cause for concern. What measures will the Government of Burma/Myanmar take to address these ongoing issues?

#### **6. UN Good Offices Mission**

- Ireland supports the work of the good offices mission of UN Secretary General, Ban ki-Moon and the Special Rapporteur for Human Rights, Mr. Ojea Quintana in Burma/Myanmar. However, Ireland notes with concern the refusal by the Myanmar/Burmese authorities to issue a visa to Mr. Quintana in August 2010. Will the Myanmar/Burmese authorities co-operate fully with the UN good offices mission in Burma/Myanmar and allow Mr. Quintana to visit the country without restriction on his movements to carry out his UN-mandated role?

### **JAPAN**

- Although the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar provides for the right of peaceful assembly and freedom of association, concerns over restrictions on such freedoms continue to be expressed in UN reports and resolutions. Likewise, the continued practice of arbitrary detention and torture, while prohibited by the Penal Code, has been raised as a matter of concern. We would like to request that the Myanmar Government explain how its understanding of the provisions laid out in its Constitution and Penal Code relates to the concerns and issues pointed out by the UN. We would also like to request

explanation from Myanmar regarding the concerns on restrictions on the freedom of expression mentioned in paragraph 43 of the UN compilation report.

- The UN has raised concerns over the recruitment and use of children as soldiers in addition to pointing out the need for the Myanmar Government to put into place a tighter mechanism to reintegrate former child soldiers into society. We are aware that the Government has been developing measures, including a Plan of Action, to prevent the recruitment of under-age children into military service as well as to rehabilitate former child soldiers. We would like to inquire as to what are the main challenges for the Government in tackling this issue.
- What are the prospects for Myanmar becoming a signatory to the international conventions on human rights that it is currently examining, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Political Rights (ICESCR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the rights of the Child on the sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography? In this connection, we would also like to inquire as to why the Convention Against Torture and the Optional Protocol on the Convention on the rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict are not also under examination for signature by Myanmar.

## **LATVIA**

- According to the information by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 73 countries from different regions of the world have issued standing invitations to all special procedures of the Human Rights Council. Considering previous cooperation with special procedures mandate holders and despite several still pending requests by special rapporteurs to visit Myanmar - would your country consider extending a standing invitation to all special procedures of the Human Rights Council in the future?

## **NETHERLANDS**

- **Child soldiers**

With reference to paragraphs 48, 49 and 50 of the national report on the efforts by the Government to halt recruitment of children into the armed forces, and in light of the urgent appeal by the UN Secretary-General, mentioned in paragraph 34 of the OHCHR compilation, to put into place a tighter mechanism to prevent the recruitment of children, and with further reference to the allegations expressed in paragraph 74 of the stakeholder report that recruitment of child soldiers continues to be routine by both the Army and ethnic forces, will the Government enlist all relevant UN mechanisms to stop the use of child soldiers, ensure their disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, prevent further recruitment? Does the Government intend to sign and ratify Optional Protocols 1 and 2 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child?



- **Prisoners of conscience**

In light of the calls, reiterated in paragraph 29 of the OHCHR compilation, by the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar to release all political prisoners, and with reference to allegations of arbitrary arrests and ill-treatment of prisoners of conscience detailed *inter alia* in paragraphs 18, 23, 43, 45, 47, 48 and 51 of the stakeholder report, what actions does the Government plan to take to effectuate the immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners of conscience and to allow their full participation in the political process?

- **Forced evictions and land disputes**

Concerning remarks in paragraph 64 of the OHCHR compilation and paragraphs 4, 65 and 70 of the stakeholder report which detail the occurrence of forced evictions due to natural resource exploitation or infrastructural projects as well as appropriations by the Government of resource-rich lands, what efforts does the Government currently make in order to establish fair, equitable and accessible judicial remedies to effectively prevent forced evictions and land confiscation, resolve land disputes, clarify land rights, enforce landlord tenant laws and provide restitution and return rights?

- **Access to humanitarian assistance**

In reference to paragraphs 121 to 126 of the national report which state the efforts by the Government to respond to the consequences of Cyclone Nargis, and considering the remarks in paragraphs 48, 69, 70, 72 and 80 of the OHCHR compilation and paragraphs 40, 71 and 72 of the stakeholder report on the difficulties of international humanitarian agencies and NGO's to reach all who are in need and which are said to be due in part due to Government restrictions, how does the Government deal with the consequences of natural disasters such as Cyclone Nargis and Cyclone Giri and in what way has the Government been facilitating UN organisations and NGO's in order for them to provide the necessary humanitarian assistance?

- **Political dialogue**

With respect to the call, reiterated in paragraph 44 of the OHCHR compilation, by the General Assembly to undertake a genuine dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi and all political and ethnic groups, and a similar call by the Secretary-General on the Government to engage in substantive talks with armed ethnic groups to reach a cessation of hostilities, as repeated in paragraph 67 of the OHCHR compilation, what steps has the Government taken to engage in an inclusive tripartite dialogue with ethnic nationality representatives, including armed groups, and the political opposition in an effort to resolve the current conflicts and broker a nationwide ceasefire agreement?

- **International investigation into gross human rights violations**

In light of the serious allegations made in paragraphs 6, 12, 22, 23, 31, 32 and 33 of the stakeholder report about gross human rights violations and the alleged impunity for such violations which is formalised by the amnesty clause in the new constitution, as well as the grave concerns expressed in paragraphs 26, 27, 28, 30, 32 and 56 of the OHCHR compilation by *inter alia* the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council

and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar about gross violations of human rights and humanitarian law and the impunity for the perpetrators thereof, is the Government willing to cooperate with an international independent investigation into violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, by giving investigators full access to the country?

## **NEW ZEALAND**

- In the preparation of Myanmar's national report for the Universal Periodic Review, what opportunity was made available for members of the public and regional and international human rights NGOs to comment on the report?
- In section F of its national report, Myanmar describes the activities being carried out by the Myanmar Human Rights Committee, but what advice is being provided by the Committee on implementing human rights standards in legislation and enforcing them?
- What action does Myanmar need to undertake in order to be in a position to accede to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention against Torture?
- What plans are being put into place for the release of Myanmar's political prisoners? When will Myanmar release its political prisoners?
- What measures will Myanmar put in place to ensure that its judiciary is independent and respects the rule of law?
- In paragraph 41 of its national report, Myanmar states that the 'rights of freedom of thought, conscience and religion are provided'. What is being done to allow for and encourage a free and frank dialogue in the media? When will the internet be made available to all people in Myanmar?
- Does Myanmar have laws in place to prevent discrimination against persons with disabilities and to ensure they enjoy their rights on the same basis as others?
- What is Myanmar doing to ensure the full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child? Also, what measures are being carried out by Myanmar to lift the health status of all children? And what is Myanmar doing to ensure that all children can attend school?
- When will Myanmar implement the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement?
- When will Myanmar allow the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar access to all areas where people are being held in detention?

- Given the experience with Cyclone Nargis and the devastation it caused, what plans are in place for co-operation by Myanmar with United Nations humanitarian agencies to ensure the protection of and assistance to the entire population during times of emergencies?
- While Myanmar has stated that it 'has spared no effort to eradicating forced labour in Myanmar with a strong political will', what then is being done to bring the country's legislation into compliance with ILO Convention 87 on Freedom of Association? Also what support is being provided to trade unions and their leaders?
- How does Myanmar consider Article 445 of its new Constitution, which allows all State officials to act with impunity, to be compatible with its international human rights obligations?

## **SLOVENIA**

- Myanmar has only ratified two core human rights treaties (CEDAW, CRC). Does Myanmar have a plan for the ratification, step by step, of other core human rights treaties?
- According to the OHCHR compilation, more than 25 per cent of the population in Myanmar lacks access to safe drinking water. What plans does the Government have for the improvement of this situation?

## **SWEDEN**

- The human rights situation in Burma/Myanmar is alarming. Widespread and systematic violations of international human rights and humanitarian law occur, including extrajudicial executions, torture, forced labor, forced displacement and enforced disappearances. Sweden is also deeply concerned about the reports of widespread impunity for crimes committed by the police, the security forces and the military, and about the new constitution that enables impunity for perpetrators of human rights violations, including past violations.

The serious human rights situation in Burma/Myanmar is a cause of great concern to us. Sweden would therefore like to be informed of what measures the Government has taken to stop the widespread and systematic human rights violations committed by the police, the security forces and the military.

Furthermore what other measures has been undertaken to protect its populations from these acts of human rights violations.

Finally, the widespread practice of impunity has to come to an end. What measures have been taken in that regard by the Government?

- Sweden is closely following the situation in Burma/Myanmar and notes that Aung San Suu Kyi has been released from the house arrest where she has been detained for more than 15 of the past 21 years. According to credible reports there are still at least 2000 political prisoners in Burma/Myanmar, arrested solely on the basis of their peaceful political activity, ethnicity or religion. Fundamental rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly are severely curtailed in Burma. Those who criticize the Government are at risk of harassment, arbitrary arrest, torture and other ill-treatment, imprisonment and even extrajudicial execution.

Could the Government of Burma/Myanmar elaborate on what measures it is taking to protect the human rights of its people, including the right to freedom of expression, freedom of association and assembly, freedom of the press and freedom of religion?

## **SWITZERLAND**

- Does the government of Myanmar intend to investigate all allegations of torture and arbitrary detention and bring the perpetrators to justice? Does the Government intend to ratify the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment as well as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights?
- What measures are taken to ensure freedom of expression and freedom of association? Is the government of Myanmar willing to decriminalise peaceful political dissent, and release all prisoners condemned for this offence?
- Does the government of Myanmar intend to allow non-violent opposition actors and political parties including the NLD to operate freely without undue restrictions and participate in the ongoing democratization process of the country?
- What steps will the government take to guarantee the rights of ethnic minorities? In particular, has the government considered reviewing the Citizenship Law and abolishing restrictions imposed on the Muslim minority in Rakhine State as recommended in the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child of 30 June 2004 and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women of 7 November 2008?
- By which measures does the government of Myanmar intend to stop land, housing and property rights violations such as forced evictions and mass land confiscations in relation to state sanctioned development and infrastructure projects and to provide land dispute settlement possibilities according to international best practices?

## **UNITED KINGDOM**

- Could the Government tell us whether it plans to carry out the recommendations made by Special Rapporteur, Tomas Ojea Quintana in his

reports of March 2010 and September 2010, including to carry out an investigation into war crimes and crimes against humanity? The UK notes that the United Nations Human Rights bodies including the General Assembly Third Committee and the Human Rights Council have also called on the Government to undertake a full and independent investigation into human rights violations and to bring to justice those responsible.

- The UK welcomes the unconditional release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Could the Government outline its plans to release the 2,200 other prisoners currently detained for exercising their freedoms of expression, assembly and association?
- Could the Government provide information about how it will ensure that human rights are respected in ethnic conflict situations, in particular in regard to violence by the military towards civilians, including women and children?
- Could the Government explain how it intends to ensure the protection of democratic space, given concerns over official restrictions on the media and political parties? How will the Government ensure that those disenfranchised by the cancellation of elections in certain regions and those excluded from participating as candidates by its election laws can play a part in the country's political life?
- Could the Government please explain how it plans to respond to reports by opposition parties who participated in the election that the advance voting process was manipulated?
- How does the Government plan to help its people exercise their economic and social rights through poverty reduction and the attainment of the other Millennium Development Goals? Can the Government explain how it intends to eliminate discrimination towards particular ethnic groups, including the Rohingya, and to provide universal access to basic services?
- Could the Government explain the steps it has taken to establish and enforce a transparent system of land rights, and to put an end to forced confiscation of land and relocation by the authorities and the private sector?
- The UK welcomes accession to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1997 and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1991. What is the Government's proposed timeframe for ratification of the Optional Protocol to CEDAW and the two Optional Protocols to the CRC?
- The UK welcomes the Government's stated intention to establish a Human Rights Commission. Could you explain how such a body will be able to operate with genuine independence, in line with Paris principles, and, given the particular concerns of the UN over the human rights situation in your country, whether international monitors will be permitted to assess and assist in its operation?

- Could you explain the extent to which civil society groups and sources of independent information including UN reports were consulted in the preparation of your national report?