Statement by Ms. Aye Mya Mya Khaing, Advisor of the Myanmar Delegation under Agenda Item 23: Groups of Countries in Special Situations, sub item (a): Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries at the Second Committee of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly

(New York, 22 October 2018)

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation associates itself with the statements delivered by Lao PDR on behalf of ASEAN, Egypt on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and by Malawi on behalf of LDCs.

My delegation thanks the Secretary-General for his comprehensive reports under this agenda item. We also thank the Director of the office of UN-OHRLLS for presenting the reports.

Mr. Chairman,

The Least Developed Countries are the most vulnerable segment of the international community and deserve immediate and special attention. The Istanbul Programme of Action for the LDCs (2011-2020) set an ambitious target of enabling half of the LDCs to meet the graduation criteria by 2020. We are still far short of this target even additional 12 LDCs met the graduation criteria in the recent CDP review.

With two more years down the road before the IPoA’s deadline, LDCs continue to face persistent poverty and multiple structural impediments. The LDC share of exports in global trade continues to decline and foreign direct investment remains limited. The growth has begun to pick up with 4.9% in 2017 from 4.3% in 2016, however, it is far from the 7% target of 2030 Agenda and the IPoA. Despite some increase in ODA in 2017, the share is yet to meet the IPoA and the Addis Agenda targets.

LDCs are disproportionately affected by devastating impacts of climate change and natural disasters, and Myanmar is no exception. According to the recent IPCC report, the effects will be more disastrous if we cannot keep the world’s temperature to a maximum of 1.5°C. To reach the target, full and timely implementation of the Paris Agreement is critical, and with that we hope the upcoming COP24 will mark another important milestone. While the Green Climate Fund needs to be fully funded and operational, enhanced access to the fund by the most vulnerable countries should be facilitated.

ICT is a powerful tool to help us achieve sustainable development if deployed properly and equitably. Access to ICTs is increasing worldwide but remains uneven. Substantial digital divides still exist between developed and developing countries, particularly LDCs. In light of
this, Myanmar welcomes the establishment of the Technology Bank for the LDCs, and looks forward to its effective and meaningful operation to enhance ICT development in all LDCs.

Three years into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, LDCs are still lagging behind other developing countries in almost all targets. Given that the current momentum is clearly not enough, enhanced and more concerted effort is required from all sides. Likewise, the implementation of IPoA and 2030 Agenda must be synergized with those of Addis Agenda, Sendai Framework and Paris Agreement in pursuit of sustainable development.

Mr. Chairman,

Myanmar has been undergoing multiple, simultaneous and complex transitions throughout recent years. Despite multidimensional risks, external and internal pressures and the massive complexity of issues we are dealing with, our commitment to be a responsible member of the international community has not wavered. The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs have been integrated into the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP) which provides a coherent and unifying roadmap for our development process.

Myanmar fulfilled all eligibility thresholds to graduate from the LDC category for the first time in CDP’s 2018 Triennial Review. My delegation wishes to underscore the importance of smooth transition and continued and enhanced international support to graduating and graduated countries to ensure no backsliding to the category.

The Government of Myanmar has been trying to strike the right balance between development and stability because one cannot prevail without the other. Efforts have been made to strengthen our economy, increase resilience to shocks and stabilize macroeconomic foundations which have led to the decent growth rate of 6 to 7 per cent. Poverty rates have fallen from above 40 percent to 30 percent today. We are wholly committed to improving Myanmar’s investment environment and launched the Myanmar Investment Promotion Plan earlier this month to attract more investment in the coming years.

After many difficulties and setbacks, Myanmar reached another milestone in the decades-long peace process. The three Sessions of the Union Peace Conference – the 21st Century Panglong-held so far have adopted fifty-one fundamental principles which will become part of the Union Peace Accord. Seldom do peace processes run smooth and unimpeded, we have yet to overcome serious challenges ahead. Nevertheless, we are determined to continue our journey to achieve long-lasting peace and stability, harmony and national reconciliation, and inclusive and sustained development.

We are taking a holistic and all-inclusive approach in tackling these problems and other challenges to achieve our transition and to attain sustainable development without leaving anyone behind. We are confident that with understanding and support of the international community, we shall not fail to move forward.

I thank you.