NAY PYI TAW, 22 Aug -The following is a translation of the speech delivered by President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein at the first Pyidaungsu Hluttaw second regular session today.

“Mr Speaker and Hluttaw representatives, I wish you Mr Speaker and Hluttaw representatives physical and spiritual wellbeing and extend my warmest greetings to all.

After the 2010 election was held peacefully and successfully in accordance with the 2008 constitution, first sessions of respective Hluttaws could be summoned.

The Hluttaw elected me President of the State, and then the Union government, and Region and State governments were formed. Now, they are in operation.

Likewise, the judicial body under the leadership of the Union chief justice approved by this Hluttaw has assumed its charge of duties in accordance with the principles of the State Constitution such as to administer justice independently according to law; to dispense justice in open court unless otherwise prohibited by law and to guarantee in all cases the right of defence and the right of appeal under law.

I am satisfied to see that Hluttaw representatives and Hluttaw committees are working hard for capacity building to be able to shoulder effectively the main duties of respective Hluttaws such as legislation and check and balance.

Now, the nation is in the smooth transition to new system due to the fact that Hluttaw representatives are discharging duties as public representatives, upholding the interest of the nation and the people to translate the 2008 constitution into reality in accordance with the check and balance of the three powers that are legislative power, executive power and judicial power.

Therefore, on behalf of the nation and the people, I would like to say that we are proud Hluttaws have been able to bring into effect the three sovereignty powers that are stipulated in the constitution.

The governing bodies at all levels including me, and all Hluttaws including respective speakers have made an affirmation to be loyal to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the citizens and hold always in esteem nondisintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty.

As for me, I perform the duties and practise the powers Pyidaungsu Hluttaw has entrusted me in accordance with the constitution, in the national interest.

We are showing our benevolence in the national interest by holding out an olive branch to the national race armed groups that have not accepted the constitution yet.
Our government will take measures in accordance with the provisions of the constitution for development of the languages, literatures, arts and cultures of national races. We will also try to set more commercial centres and industries to create economic and job opportunities in border areas as soon as they see stability and peace.

We are also trying to lessen the conflicts based on disagreements with local political forces that have not accepted the constitution yet. Today, democratization is in the process for flourishing democratic practices, so each of us are to have a strong sense of democratic spirit for the type of freedom that is in conformity with our culture and society. We are exercising the executive power of the Union government the most effectively for sustainable development in the democratic practices.

Mr Speaker and Hluttaw representatives, We are also implementing the proceedings we have pledged to this Hluttaw such as ensuring good governance, clean government and democratic practices, fundamental rights of citizens, the rule of law, transparency, undertaking, reducing the gab between the rich and the poor, creation of a harmonious society, economic reforms and environmental conservation.

Our government is the government of the people. So, we have to give the first priority to the public interest. We are giving educative talks, reminding and taking action in order that all of us become good public servants who win public satisfaction, trust and reliance. In this transitional period, we are working hard for transition to new system. So, we will take punitive action against those sticking to red tape system, and those without a sense of democratic spirit but with partiality. The executive power of the Union government shall reside in the whole Union.

We are trying to bring the Region and State governments’ administrative mechanism and forms into force in accordance with the constitution. We have just started the new administrative mechanism and form, so the institutional building and capacity building of the Region and State governments are picking up momentum. We will soon step up the proceedings for the check and balance of the Region and State Hluttaws. Soon after the emergence of the laws, the administrative mechanisms ranging from the Union level to the ward/village level will be the administrative mechanism and form that are more effective and are designed to mobilize public participation.

Mr Speaker and Hluttaw representatives, We are working with added momentum for making economic reforms by reviewing the monetary policy, fiscal policy, commercial policy and investment policy we have pledged to this Hluttaw for national economic growth.

According to the principle of the constitution that the government shall render assistance as much as possible for improving the socioeconomic life for the people, farmers and workers, we are now pursuing the tasks in practice across the nation for rural development and poverty alleviation.

Moreover, we have undertaken to enact the microfinance industries law.
In accord with the prescribed laws, we have raised the pension salaries of retired service personnel and political pension salaries, which were in conformity with the present era and system, by practising the power of the Union government. In line with the UN Millennium Development Goals, we have set an aim and are implementing it for declining poverty rate to 16 per cent in 2015.

At present, farmers have suffered losses due to instability of foreign currency exchange, uncertainties in world economy and floods caused by heavy rains. In accord with the provision in the constitution that the Union shall assist peasants to obtain right value of their agricultural produce, we are joining hands with the private sector to provide necessary assistance for peasants to be free from difficulty of bringing down the prices of agricultural produce and problem without recovery of expense. Moreover, we will manage arrangements for farmers to carry out cultivation and production on their farmlands without worries till their coming generations under the law.

At present, instability of international monetary systems and world financial crisis affect the local economy. So, some domestic businesses faced difficulties. The government granted issuance of export and import licences within two weeks, establishment licences for companies within two months and passports within 21 days for swift flow of foreign trade.

Moreover, tax rate on exports were reduced to 7 per cent. However, some export items are facing difficulties. So, the government granted exemption of commercial tax from export items to be affected for a period of six months.

Rules and regulations are being amended for convenience of investments for development of small and medium-scale industries as the artery of industrializing the nation. Based on industries, I would like to urge you all to avoid malpractices, abide by policies of the State and disciplines and not to put self-interest at forefront.

The national level workshop was held with the participation of all strata of life for amending the policies including foreign exchange rate in accord with the constitution, and the modern world. By systematically reviewing the suggestions and outcomes from the workshop, we will coordinate with international financial institutions and will carefully undertake the short-term and long-term implementations for daily social economic life of the State and the people.

At present, we are fulfilling the requirements for the national interest in real time with the executive power of the Union government by closely studying changes of economic and monetary affairs of international community and local economic situation. In the economic sector, we will uplift fair competitiveness in businesses in accord with the provisions of the constitution and equal rights for everybody and will deeply practise change of basic rules and regulations for reducing the transactional costs, removal of red-tapism, strengthening of market-oriented economic mechanism and development of industries and businesses.
Moreover, we are striving for raising interest of the State and the people by constantly meeting with leading associations and organizations of private sector as key drivers of the economic sector. The State will cooperate with private sector interchangeably and coordinate with them on economic problems so as to further strengthen the Public-Private Partnership. In increasing the economic profits, the private sector is to join hands with the government for creation of jobs for the entire national people, for promoting national productivity of the State and for raising manufacturing products with higher quality and standards in the region and across the world at competitive environment that will emerge in the future.

Mr Speaker and Hluttaw Representatives, We have specially focused on ensuring fundamental rights of citizens in line with the constitution, amendment to laws on the farmers’ rights to own farmlands suitable to the changing situations, fulfillments of public healthcare and social welfare programmes according to the current needs, passing of laws for promotion of education and health standards, reform of the fourth pillar, the media in accordance with the constitution, and introduction of environmental conservation laws according to the real situation of the nation. And Hluttaw representatives will have to participate in this processes.

In implementing national development projects, our government has focused on eco-friendly development with assessment from all aspects. We will systematically implement environmental conservation works hand in hand with scholars at home and abroad, and non-governmental organizations in line with rules and regulations and principles.

Mr Speaker and Hluttaw Representatives, Our government has inherited traditional foreign policy which has never been harmful to international and regional stability and security and it is maintaining friendly relations with global nations. What’s more, we are trying to stand tall as a dutiful member of the global family in international and regional organizations.

For this reason, we have officially proposed to take the ASEAN chairmanship in 2014. We are extending the hand of friendship to all global nations and all international organizations including the ASEAN.

Our nation has now smoothly transformed into a democratic Myanmar society in which a harmonious society can be built. Learning the current affairs of the world today, you can see clearly that the democratic transformation of our nation is in deed a transformation the entire nation should be proud of.

We don’t have to feel down-hearted and discouraged though there are obstacles against our government.

We still can make miracles with the fifth pillar, the people, the united front of the nation. With the unity of the entire nation, we have overcome independence struggles, nation building programmes throughout successive periods, sanctions and natural disasters.
Today, we have the constitution the entire nation has ratified in unison, the government formed in line with the constitution and respective Hluttaws as interrelated pillars, and also judiciary pillar as an independent mechanism. The fourth pillar, media, is getting more and more developed. We are ready to coordinate with the international community to make those who don’t believe these situations believe, and to enable those who haven’t seen these situations see with own eyes. We are beginning to ensure that every citizen enjoys citizenship rights described in the constitution.

Mr Speaker and Hluttaw Representatives, Our government is an infant government. Despite our very young age, we have started striving for the interest of the people in political, economic, social sectors and so on. The capability of a government can be measured only at the end of its term.

We will do our utmost to take duties and responsibilities vested by the entire nation, the constitution and the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw with trust. We have to bear the burden of these formidable tasks with all the seriousness and faith. To activate the constitution, the whole Union Government at different levels from me and the two Vice- Presidents to ward/village administrators have to practice the administrative power effectively and correctly.

We know what happen to people and what people want. And we are striving our best to fulfill their needs to the full extent. To conclude my speech, I promise that our government as a democratically-elected government will do our best for the interests of the people.”

Source: NLM 2011-08-23