

*The Government of Myanmar is exerting all her efforts to combat trafficking in persons at the national , bilateral and multilateral levels.*

Nay Pyi Taw- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the Union of Myanmar issued a press release , on 16 June 2007, totally rejecting " The sixth Annual Trafficking in Persons Report" published by the U.S Department of State in June 2007.

The following is the full text of the press release:

"The Sixth annual "Trafficking in Persons Report" issued by the US Department of State this month is a compendium of situations in selected countries. Although the stated aim of the US is to eradicate trafficking in persons internationally, the report lacks objectivity and does not fully reflect Myanmar's concerted efforts against human trafficking.

With regard to prosecution, the report recognizes the progress made by the Government throughout the past year. The report notes that police identified over 400 traffickers in 191 cases in 2006 and that information sharing with the international organizations had improved. It also states that the police units that have received anti-trafficking training have provided separate smuggling and trafficking statistics.

With regard to protection, it states that the Department of Social Welfare provides temporary shelters to repatriated trafficking victims at eight vocational training centres and the victims have a right to file civil suits and seek legal action against the traffickers. The report mentions that the government refers victims to the few NGOs and international organizations providing reintegration assistance.

With regard to prevention, though the Government is relentlessly fighting this complex problem, the report only states that the Government has marginally increased its efforts to prevent trafficking in persons, thereby failing to faithfully

reflect the true situation. The report recognizes that the Women's Affairs Federation and National Committee for Women's Affairs conducted almost 8,000 educational sessions for women around the country that included information about the risks of trafficking. It also recognizes the Government's distribution of pamphlets, publications of press articles and airing of television and radio plays on trafficking.

Indeed, the Government of Myanmar has been tackling the menace of trafficking in persons as a national duty and in cooperation with UN agencies, INGOs, NGOs and all concerned stake holders. Despite these persistent efforts,

which the report itself has duly noted, the State Department has failed to promote Myanmar's status from Tier-3 again this year.

The Government of Myanmar therefore totally rejects the placement of Myanmar in Tier-3 of the State Department's report."

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