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COMISION DE DERECHOS HUMANOS
53° período de sesiones
Tema 5 del programa

CUESTION DEL EJERCICIO, EN TODOS LOS PAISES, DE LOS DERECHOS ECONOMICOS,
SOCIALES Y CULTURALES ENUNCIADOS EN LA DECLARACION UNIVERSAL DE DERECHOS
HUMANOS Y EN EL PACTO INTERNACIONAL DE DERECHOS ECONOMICOS, SOCIALES Y
CULTURALES, Y ESTUDIO DE LOS PROBLEMAS ESPECIALES CON QUE SE ENFRENTAN
LOS PAISES EN DESARROLLO EN SUS ESFUERZOS POR HACER EFECTIVOS
ESTOS DERECHOS HUMANOS

Nota verbal de 12 de marzo de 1997, dirigida a la Secretaría de
la Comisión de Derechos Humanos por la Misión Permanente de
Myanmar ante la Oficina de las Naciones Unidas en Ginebra

La Misión Permanente de la Unión de Myanmar ante la Oficina de las Naciones Unidas y otras organizaciones internacionales en Ginebra presenta sus respetos a la Secretaría del 53° período de sesiones de la Comisión de Derechos Humanos y tiene el honor de adjuntarle copia de la carta N° 68/3-27/02(20), de 19 de febrero de 1997, dirigida a la Sra. Fatma Zohra Ksentini, Relatora Especial de la Comisión de Derechos Humanos sobre los efectos nocivos para el goce de los derechos humanos del traslado y vertimiento ilícitos de productos y desechos tóxicos y peligrosos, por el Sr. U Aye, Embajador y Representante Permanente de la Unión de Myanmar, en respuesta a la carta de la Relatora Especial N° G/SO 234(17-6) de 6 de febrero de 1997, pidiendo que se cooperara en aclarar el fondo de las denuncias anexas a esa carta y se facilitaran cualesquiera informaciones u observaciones que se consideraran pertinentes.

La Misión Permanente agradecería que la carta en cuestión fuera distribuida como documento del 53° período de sesiones de la Comisión de Derechos Humanos en relación con el tema 5 del programa.

* El anexo se reproduce como se presentó en el idioma original solamente.

Dear Mme Special Rapporteur,

I wish to refer to your letter No. G/SO 234(17-6) of 6 February 1997 by which, in your capacity as Special Rapporteur on toxic wastes, you have brought to my Government's attention allegations in which my country is said to be concerned as a State where traffic of toxic or dangerous products and waste originate or as a State recipient of such traffic. You have attached a summary of these allegations with a request for cooperation in clarifying the substance of these allegations and in providing any information or observations deemed pertinent.

It is a well-known fact that Myanmar is neither a State where illicit traffic of toxic or dangerous products and wastes originate nor a State recipient of such traffic. In this context, therefore, a classification of the substance of the allegations is not necessary.

However, the allegations referred to in your letter seem to be related to alleged human rights violations in the context of the construction of a natural gas pipeline in Myanmar. We therefore provide you with relevant information and observations in order to enable you to understand the actual situation regarding this matter:

The natural gas fields in the Gulf of Mottamma are being developed with the participation of TOTAL of France, UNOCAL and TEXACO of the United States of America and some other foreign oil companies.

Natural gas from the Yadana Gas Field is contracted to be sold to Thailand, and at present a pipeline is being laid by TOTAL and UNOCAL to carry the gas to the Myanmar-Thai border. The route selected for this gas pipeline is the one that poses the least threat to the environment and does not pass through any village. The two foreign oil companies involved in this project are actually helping the people living along the route of the pipeline. Workers are hired by these companies and are paid more than local rates. No one has been forced to work in these projects. There are no human rights violations. The oil companies have even built schools and health clinics and initiated agricultural, prawn-breeding projects as well as shrimp, poultry, pig and goat farms in the villages along the route to provide new economic opportunities for the villagers, thus improving significantly the lives of the local populace.

The Government of the Union of Myanmar, with the active participation of the people, has been making efforts towards achieving peace and stability within the country and for the all-round development of the nation. Major restructuring of the economy was carried out within the context of a market-oriented economy. The Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise under the Ministry of Energy is undertaking oil and natural gas explorations and production in collaboration with international oil companies.

Moreover, the Government and the companies concerned have undertaken to provide facilities for independent media persons and concerned officials from Western countries to make extensive tours of the areas in question and these sources have not supported any of the allegations mentioned in your report.

Mme Special Rapporteur, may I observe that the allegations contained in your letter are unfounded and totally untrue. They emanate from the opponents of the Government of the Union of Myanmar, residing within and outside the country. The purpose of their action is to denigrate the Government and the Armed Forces of the Union of Myanmar. They have their own ulterior political motives.

News cuttings regarding this matter are attached herewith for your perusal. I trust that the information provided will help dispel misconceptions and false allegations that there exist human rights violations in the construction of the natural gas pipeline in Myanmar.

Signed: U Aye
Ambassador
Permanent Representative