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DOMINICANS
FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE

**Oral Statement of the 31st Session of the UN Human Rights Council
Item 6 of the agenda: Consideration of the UPR report for Myanmar
Delivered by Budi Tjahjono – Franciscans International**

17 March 2016

Mr. President,

We, Franciscans International, Pax Romana, Caritas Internationalis, the Congregation of Our Lady of the Good Shepherd and Dominican for Justice and Peace welcome the adoption of the outcomes of the UPR Myanmar. We take note of the acceptance of recommendations to consider ratifying key human rights treaties in which Myanmar is not yet a state party.

We observe closely the development of the human rights situation in the country following the recent election. While welcoming the result of the elections where people of Myanmar could express their political aspiration, we believe that Myanmar still has to address some challenges in order to guarantee the full enjoyment of human rights of all its people.

With regards to the UPR recommendations, we express our concern on rejection of recommendations on the promotion and protection of human rights of minorities. We draw particular attention of the Council to the four laws on the “Protection of Race and Religion”, which were adopted in 2015 regarding interfaith marriage, religious conversion and population control. These laws are discriminatory toward women and religious minorities, and may result in a violation of the right to found a family and have children. They are inconsistent with international human rights obligations and standards and thus seem to constitute a stumbling block toward the achievement of full democracy. Therefore, we strongly call on the Government of Myanmar to repeal the “Protection of Race and Religion” laws without further delay.

Mr. President,

We also express our concern regarding the situation of internally displaced persons and refugees due to conflicts, in particular, in Rakhine and Kachin States. We urge the government of Myanmar to establish policies and to take concrete measures to address the internal conflicts, while promoting and protecting the human rights for all, including the ethnic and religious minorities in Myanmar.

Thank you.