

**Republic of the Union of Myanmar**  
**Information Team**  
**Press Release (4/2014)**  
9 April 2014

**Press Release on Further Measures to be Taken Based on the Report of the Investigation Team on the Incidents Happened in Sittwe, Rakhine State**

1. Office buildings, storage houses and dwellings of some UN agencies and INGOs were damaged by unruly mobs in Sittwe, Rakhine State on 26 and 27 March 2014. In this connection, an investigation team, led by the Deputy Minister Major-General Maung Maung Ohn, Ministry of Border Affairs, was formed under Order No. 24/2014 of the President Office to find out the real case, to avoid recurrence of similar incidents and to further promote the cooperation with the United Nations and international organizations. The investigation team conducted field investigations.
2. It was found out that the incident happened due to the following causes:
  - a. A religious flag was raised by the owner of a building which was rented to the Malteser International to join a protest before the census taking. Ms. Yvonne Dunton removed the flag in good faith as she believed such activity may lead to a misinterpretation of the principle the organization. Instigators exploited her action to incite the local population which led to raising tensions against the international organizations.
  - b. It was learned that Ms. Yvonne Dunton has been resident in Myanmar since 1993 and volunteered to work for the people of Myanmar. It is found out that she did not have any intention to mistreat the religious flag.
  - c. Some local population has lost trust and confidence in some UN agencies and INGOs due to the misconduct by some of their staffs. At a time of high tension, the incitements and spreading rumours on the removal of the religious flag led to further misunderstanding and attacks against some facilities of the UN agencies and INGOs.
  - d. 14 offices, 16 dwelling houses, 15 storage facilities, 14 cars, 2 boats, 29 motor-bikes and office equipment of 18 organizations were affected amounting to an estimated value of 430 million kyats.
  - e. Such damages occurred due to the limited capacity of local authorities to make a rapid response to the situation. However, it is found out that necessary security protection was provided to the UN and INGOs personnel in a timely manner. No UN and INGOs staff were injured.
3. The government is taking the following measures:
  - a. Necessary safety and security measures have been provided and will continue to provide effectively to the personnel of the UN and INGOs who remain in Sittway, for their work places and property. Those who left for Yangon can now return to their work places and the government will provide necessary assistance.
  - b. The Union Government will coordinate with the Rakhine State Government to provide further security and strengthen cooperation with the UN and INGOs so that they can carry out the humanitarian works safely as before.
  - c. It was found out that the local government had a limited capacity in making rapid response and therefore, strengthening the capacity of authorities and security forces is a priority. Furthermore, the Union Government will assist by establishing rapid response supporting teams.
  - d. Legal actions against the perpetrators and those who made incitements will continue to be taken.

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