

**UNESCO Initiates Peace Education Project in Northern Rakhine State
of Myanmar with support from the Belgium Government**

Yangon, 20 Sept— The Ministry of Education in Myanmar has approved UNESCO’s peace education project in Northern Rakhine State. The announcement of the project’s approval aptly coincides with the International Day of Peace on 21 September with the theme of “Education for Peace.” This reaffirms the commitment of the Ministry of Education to promote peace education as a means for fostering mutual respect for cultural diversity at the school level and to jointly implement the project with UNESCO through funding support from the Belgium government.

Following the recent communal violence in Rakhine State, resulting in an ongoing humanitarian situation which has affected hundreds of schools and thousands of students, the government of Myanmar and international community has identified peace education as one of the priority to address underlying causes of the communal tension. The overall aim of the peace education project is to enhance the capacity of school teachers, students and their parents to facilitate inclusive problem solving processes and consensus-building around community priorities and to strengthen the commitment to an inclusive civic national identity. Through a conflict-sensitive approach to education, the project will support local leaders, teachers, students, parents and civil society to facilitate constructive civic dialogue that promotes inter-cultural awareness and peaceful coexistence.

The project will promote the long term goal of education to overcome discrimination and exclusion through human rightsbased, quality education. The project will be implemented in three townships in Northern Rakhine State—Maungtaw, Buthidaung and Rathedaung—and will train 350 teachers from 40 conflict-affected schools in peace education, benefiting approximately 10,000 students. The project also aims to reactivate 40 Parent Teacher Associations and set-up three Community Learning Centres. The Ministry of Education indicated interest in seeing the training modules developed under this project rolled-out for use in other cease-fire areas in Myanmar.—*MNA*
