

**Welcome Remarks to be delivered by Dr. Shwe Hein, Secretary of
Thilawa SEZ Management Committee at
the Seminar on Good Practice Approaches to Land Acquisition and
Resettlement Peri-Urban and Urban Environments**

**Organized by TSMC in-collaboration with JICA and Myanmar
Centre for Responsible Business(MCRB)**

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Rose Garden Hotel, Yangon

**Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Good Morning,**

- I would like to express my sincere thanks and deep appreciation to Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business (MCRB) for inviting me to this important seminar on **Good Practice Approaches to Land Acquisition and Resettlement Peri-Urban and Urban Environments**, which will give us an opportunity to learn international experience and lessons learned from other countries, including from ASEAN friends as well as field study findings.
- My gratitude also goes to the resource persons from JICA, MCRB and IFC for sharing their knowledge and experience; and participants who are present at today's seminar, despite their busy schedules.
- Since Myanmar transformed its economic and political system from closed door and single party system to market economy with democratic system, Myanmar is promoting itself in the global market, attracting responsible investment, conducting various infrastructure development projects for its socio-economic development, implementing economic policy with high emphasis on poverty alleviation, job creation, uplifting

the standard of living of our people. Thus, one of the measures Myanmar has to exercise is effective and appropriate infrastructure development approach accompanied by the improvement of land acquisition and resettlement (LAR) practices for its development projects.

- Therefore, I see, today's seminar is a timely initiative introduced by our development cooperation partners for sharing knowledge and international best practices to our officials, especially those who are engaged in LAR.
- We understand that all investors as well as concerned officials would like to undertake resettlement activities responsibly and make their goal to ensure that communities are better off than they were before. When investment companies or project executing agencies manage resettlement activities well, they will make a significant contribution to development in the areas surrounding their projects. However, if resettlement activities are not managed properly communities may face poverty and social exclusion, and companies as well as authorities involved can face disruption of the project, and run legal or reputational risks.
- Whenever we talk about LAR, our minds go to LAR related existing international best practices, legal framework, implementation mechanisms, international guide notes as well as local policy, legal system, national laws on land including existing land tenure systems and inheritance patterns and local customary practices. If there is no national policy for resettlement, resettlement plan should develop such policy in the beginning of the project.
- For the relocation issue, we think firstly about the displace, there are various approaches used in our neighbouring countries such as land-for-land strategy, and monetary compensation strategy. Again, the need to consider about timing for replacement and compensation actions (e.g. some west Asian countries have a decade delayed compensation payment experiences in some projects which obviously devalues the

compensation award.), having accurate statistics through socioeconomic surveys if there is a lack of national statistics, work plan & procedures, alternative flexible approaches, appropriate compensation arrangements for community apart from monetary payments to individual.

- This seminar will give you a chance to exchange views with speakers and also among participants. I do hope that you will exchange your experience from the official point view with the consideration of challenges faced by displaced persons and communities without gender differentiation and vulnerability.
- The issues may be considered relating to compensation and benefits for displaced persons; grievance mechanism; social impact assessment, resettlement planning and implementation; physical displacement; economic displacement; government-managed resettlement in order to support national regulators for future possible national framework.
- We all understand that challenges of resettlement are being treated with urgency at various levels. A part of knowledge sharing today is on reflection of TSEZ's perspective that if done well, you may find resettlement can support sustainable economic and social development of our effected society.
- There are no one-size-fits-all solutions for successful resettlement activities, but there are many useful lessons to learn from past experiences around the globe, especially our Asian region.
- Thus, today's seminar is very important for Myanmar in general and particularly for Yangon region which is considered as the largest FDI recipient region compared to other states and regions for manufacturing, hotel, telecommunication, transport, residence and real estate sectors nowadays.
- I do believe that the presentations of the workshop given by the distinguished resource persons will - (i) increase understanding of government officials; (ii) improve company/organization/country

ownership of appropriate LAR practices; (iii) closer alignment between international and local practice as per existing national legal frameworks/environment on land acquisition and resettlement; and (iv) improve procedures and tools for future possible resettlement plan.

- In conclusion, I convey my thanks to the resource persons for their enthusiastic efforts and contributions to our officials and hope this seminar will be highly enriching and useful to all.
- Thank you very much indeed and have a productive and fruitful discussion.

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