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STATEMENT BY U KYIN, O.B.E., CHIEF
SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BURMA,
LEADER OF THE BURMA DELEGATION.

Mr. President,

The Government of Burma had followed with keen interest the progress of the Draft Charter from the original form in which it was proposed by the United States of America to what it is at present. The Charter is of special significance to us.

It has been said that the interest of countries in the stability of international trade is in measure with their share of it - those with a greater share having a greater interest. I wish to point out the other view that small countries with smaller share in international trade have an equal, if not greater, interest in the stability of international trade. For these countries, especially those which are in a rapid process of political development like Burma which I represent, the achievement of the goal set for ourselves and the shredding of the dregs of colonial status depend almost exclusively on the ability to raise the material standards of life. And for this we need a stable market for our products and a stable source of supply for our needs.

We therefore look up to the Charter as an instrument that will best guarantee our aspirations and we are prepared to contribute our share however meagre it may be. However, it is also necessary that the Charter should be so flexible and capacious that it should provide the maximum opportunity for the development of underdeveloped nations. If it happens to freeze the relative levels of economic development it would become the greatest burden

Looking from the employment angle also it would be a source of instability should the Charter merely aim at achieving full employment irrespective of the differing levels of labour standards of various countries. It should aim at raising the lower levels to the higher and not merely content itself with elimination of sub-standard conditions of labour. It is therefore necessary that the Charter should permit the maximum possible scope for legitimate measures aimed at raising the underdeveloped countries. It should not impose rigid restrictions on what they should not do and what they should do. The guiding principle should be the simple and flexible rule that such measures should be reasonable and least restrictive of international trade. Imposition of rigid procedures and restrictions will only lead to evasion and conflict.

It is also necessary that the Charter should not brand any form of measure as undesirable and bad. The organization should be capable of accommodating all types of economy and social philosophy. This is especially important for underdeveloped countries because the objective conditions of these countries may be such that a large measure of participation by the state in the economic life of the country will be necessary. Speaking for my own country Burma, she has been very badly battered during the Second World War. She suffered more devastation perhaps than any country in Asia from that War. She needs rehabilitation in all respects, particularly in her economic field. The economic stability in her case can only be realized by increasing production all round, by preventing the inflationary spiral from taking one

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more turn for the worse, by controlling imports and in short, by working out a completely planned economy. A planned economy will, however, dispense with the techniques of the free market as it generally defies the normal patterns of economic behaviour. It is accepted that no country's economy is static and that each in its own way must undergo a constant process of re-adaptation. It may, in the case of agricultural countries like Burma, be that development should necessarily involve a wide range of new manufacturing industries beyond making improvements in the field of primary production by the use of modern methods in the technique of primary production. Any agreement between my country and other nations of the world must permit such a scope to rehabilitate her devastated economy and our amendments to the Draft Charter now before us for consideration will be directed towards this end.

Finally the I.T.O. if it were to be true to the objectives set forth in the Draft Charter should accommodate those countries which are not completely independent. They should be accommodated not on an inferior basis, but on terms of full equality. Then only will the Charter be an effective instrument to end colonial economies and be the hope of semi-independent and independent countries. I speak this because my country knows what sufferings and what difficulties are involved in a colonial economy. The Charter as an instrument to end such disadvantages will not only bring about the happiness of a great mass of humanity but will also be an instrument of peace .