

**Opening Speech by Dr. Aung Thu, Union Minister,
Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation on
"Awareness Raising Seminar on the Recent Development in the UPOV Member Countries"
September 12, 2017, DAR, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar**

Good Morning,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to give the welcoming remark on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation on the **"Awareness Raising Seminar on the Recent Development in the UPOV Member Countries"**.

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere thanks and warmly welcome to –

- High Officials and delegates from UPOV, MAFF, GNIS, KPHIS, CPVO,
- And all delegates from each UPOV member ASEAN countries and other invited countries,
- Representatives from national and international NGO, INGO and Plant Breeding and Seed Production Companies of Myanmar,
- Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Very good morning,

As you all know that Agriculture is the main source of food and livelihood of the Myanmar people. Since most of the developing countries including Myanmar are primarily agriculture-based countries, development in agricultural sector are of paramount important in the request for economic development and food security. In order to increase food production and self-sufficiency, Myanmar needs to establish a viable self-sustainable seed industry in which the private sector involvement plays a major role.

Government is supporting in private public partnership approach for the development of seed industry. It is also important to encourage creativity and investment in private and public plant breeding through an effective Plant Variety Protection (PVP) system. The private sector will be interested if there is reliable legal framework for their business development. In case of plant breeding, the breeders give great effort such as knowledge and talent, time and money to produce new plant variety. PVP system will be able to reimburse the rights of award back to the plant breeders.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The ASEAN member countries were agreed to established **"East Asia Plant Variety Protection" (EAPVP)** to promote mutual cooperation for Members to develop and implement PVP systems based on the UPOV system, for the overall goal of achieving food security and other benefits to the society, through sustainable plant breeding activities.

EAPVP was endorsed at ASEAN+3 Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF+3) Meeting in 2007. Regional cooperation activities are to develop and harmonize PVP system in each country. The EAPVP forum has been conducted annually since after its establishment.

1st Meeting was held in Tokyo, Japan, July 2008

2nd Meeting was held in Beijing, China, April 2009

3rd Meeting was held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, April 2010

In the 3rd meeting “The Guideline for Operation of East Asia Plant Variety Protection” was approved.

4th Meeting was held in Makassar, Indonesia, May 2011

5th Meeting was held in Bangkok, Thailand, May 2012

6th Meeting was held in Kuching, Malaysia, July 2013

7th Meeting was held in Vientiane, Lao PDR, August 2014

8th Meeting was held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, July 2015

9th Meeting was held in Hanoi, Vietnam September 2016

10th Meeting is Now Here in Myanmar.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Myanmar became a member country of CBD in 1994 and WTO in 1995. Under the provision of the WTO-TRIPS agreement, WTO member countries must provide protection to plant varieties either by patents or by an efficient *sui generis* system or by combination thereof. In accordance with obligations under TRIP, Myanmar needs to establish a system for PVP not only above reason but also for increasing the utilization of the improved new plant varieties by our farmers. Until today, Myanmar is not yet a member of UPOV where Myanmar is a member of EAPVP since 2007.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Now, we are starting to establish a system and unit of New Plant Variety Protection under the Department of Agricultural Research of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation. We strongly believed that not only the plant breeders but also all of the stakeholders who are involving under national seed industry will get economic benefits, health benefits, environmental benefits through the adoption of PVP and utilization of the new plant varieties.

By the end of this seminar, based on the valuable presentation of experienced experts and discussions, we are expecting to well identify highlights of the seminar achievements and assess seminar outputs as well as clear understanding of the implementation of new plant variety protection system in Myanmar harmonization with other EAPVP countries.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before I am going to close my opening remarks, I would like to urge all of you to participate actively in discussion and deliberation on every topic of presentation which are related to the implementation of new plant variety protection system in Myanmar. I deeply wish, to be able to bring forth this seminar outcome smoothly and successfully. Finally, I strongly believed that fruitful results will come true to our hands in the near future.

Thank you.