End Dengue: Starts with Me
Message for the ASEAN Dengue Day on 15 June 2019
from Myanmar, Chair for ASEAN Health Cluster 2 on Responding to All Hazards and Emerging Threats.

On 15 June of every year, the ASEAN region observes the ASEAN Dengue Day (ADD) to remind the peoples in the region about the dangers and negative implications of dengue to the community, family and individual. It is also about advocating the involvement of each individual in the community that the prevention and control of dengue is a shared responsibility in which everyone plays a role in the fight against this disease. On this day, the ASEAN also celebrates the successes as well as recognizes the promising innovative approaches and interventions against dengue.

ASEAN Member States have consolidated their efforts in fighting the disease. Dengue is one of the priority communicable diseases which the ASEAN Health Sector has committed to address under the ASEAN Post-2015 Health Development Agenda, through the ASEAN Health Cluster 2 on Responding to All Hazards and Emerging Threats.

The ASEAN region continues to record the highest number of dengue infections in the Asia and Pacific and is seriously affected by the significant socio-economic impacts of the disease. The region also recognizes that addressing the disease requires strong and long term commitment of governments, sectors, communities, and individuals, and that proven strategies, approaches and tools – as outlined in the Global Strategy for Dengue Prevention and Control 2012-2020 (WHO) – are available and can help us in reversing the spread of dengue, and in reducing infections and deaths.

ASEAN Member States through their local communities are strongly committed in protecting their people from the threats of dengue. They have implemented integrated prevention and control programmes, including preparedness and response to outbreaks, that bring together relevant government ministries, private sector, civil society and local communities. The AMS are also involved in continued initiatives for long-term solutions in the fight against dengue including the use of new and appropriate technologies in dengue detection and monitoring; and, mosquito-control methods.

As you may know, dengue is viral disease with four sub-types that is rapidly-spreading globally and transmitted through the bites of *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes. This problem is particularly acute in areas were growing community populations live in crowded environments. These
mosquitoes have already adapted itself to breeding in human dwellings wherein their eggs are deposited in any uncovered container with water. Having dengue can really be detrimental to the family including the negative effects on family responsibilities and financial resources especially if the affected member is the breadwinner.

In observing ADD 2019, the ASEAN Health Cooperation acknowledges the critical role of each person in the ASEAN region on dengue control and prevention. For this reason, we have adopted ‘End Dengue: Starts With Me’ as the theme for this year’s observation. The fight against dengue must start from ‘me’, as an ‘individual’. We call on each person or individual in ASEAN to take their part in the collective fight against dengue and in the continued implementation of actions against dengue in their communities.

During ASEAN Dengue Day on 15 June 2019, I highly encourage the peoples of ASEAN to be responsible in disseminating public health messages in the prevention and control of dengue, and to practice them at the same time in our family, neighborhood, and community. Each person has a key role in keeping their homes and their communities free from mosquito breeding sites; and, in seeking early detection and treatment should signs and symptoms of dengue progress. The people in communities also need to work together with their leaders and neighbors, as well as government agencies in public education coupled with community action since collective multi-sectoral efforts and resources do not impact when respective individuals in communities do not partake in the fight against dengue.

As the current Chair of ASEAN Health Cluster 2, allow me to congratulate the successful ongoing community efforts against dengue. I highly affirm the critical role of each individual in every affected community in ending dengue.