

Opening Address of the Union Minister of the Ministry of Culture, Republic of the Union of Myanmar at the Opening Ceremony of the Museum Seminar “New Horizons in Asian Museums and Museology ”

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“New Horizons in Asian Museums and Museology”**

Mingalarbar,

It gives me great pleasure to be here with you this morning for the opening of the Museum Seminar, entitled “New Horizons in Asian Museums and Museology”. To our overseas friends from Japan, Thailand and Mongolia, I extend a very warm welcome to Myanmar.

This International Seminar on Asian Museum and Museology, held in Bagan and Yangon, two places in Myanmar in 2013, follows that held in Mongolia in 2012. So, there are many professors and museum experts in attendance here from Japan, Thailand and Mongolia together with Myanmar museum professionals. I would like to extend my sincerest wishes to all of the participants and invited guests for a healthy and happy stay in our country. As you are museum professionals, I hope that you can enjoy your museum excursion tours and sightseeing trips both in Bagan and Yangon.

Before you speak on museum and museology matters, let me explain Myanmar’s Cultural Policy and Vision and Mission of the Ministry of Culture of Myanmar for your information. Firstly, I would like to introduce you to the Cultural Policy of our country. It is especially intended to uplift the national prestige and integrity, to preserve and safeguard cultural heritage and national characters, and to uplift the dynamism of patriotic spirit. And the Vision of the Ministry of Culture is to cherish the nation and its people by having a good tradition of preserving the traditional customs and ancient cultural heritage.

The Mission of our Ministry is to preserve and safeguard the Myanmar cultural heritage and national character, to inspire a genuine Union Spirit in all nationalities, to prevent cultural resistance among the youth and to promote cultural norms in accordance with the increasing wealth of the State and its people. The Mission Statement of our Ministry is laid down as “Honour the State with Culture”.

According to our cultural policy, the Ministry of Culture is the most responsible focal ministry to establish the National Museums, regional cultural museums, ethnic museums, historic museums and archaeological museums in archaeological sites. One country can showcase its cultural richness through the windows-like museums. So, our museums are an important basis of cultural heritage for safe-keeping and distribution to audiences. Most young Myanmar museum staff still need more experiences and skill for museum functional works.

I learnt that this program on museology and museum activities will promote joint research between Japan and three Asian countries (Myanmar, Thailand, and Mongolia). This International Seminar on Asian Museum and Museology, held in two places in Myanmar for this year, follows that held in Mongolia in 2012. So, there are many professors and museum experts in attendance here from Japan, Thailand and Mongolia together with Myanmar museum professionals. From this seminar, our new generation, Myanmar Museum staff, who are attending here as observers, can learn a lot about the museum functions such as collection management, museum objects conservation, museum marketing, public education and community engagement from the museum experts who have many experiences in this field.

In this seminar, museum experts from Japan, Thailand, Mongolia and Myanmar will exchange their experiences and knowledge on their museums of each country by talking about two basic themes of Museum Exhibition and of Conservation and Documentation for museums in Yangon and Bagan. I received the information that not only with these themes, but also a public seminar will be held at the multi-purpose hall of the National Museum (Yangon) with the theme of social roles of the museum and human resource development. It may also be a great attraction for the general public who can enjoy this seminar if they have an interest in museums and museology.

From this seminar, I hope that museum staff from among the four Asian countries can develop a deeper relationship and can assist each other in museology matters within these countries.

Thank you very much for your co-operation Mr. Ken'ichi Sudo, Director-General of the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, Japan and the main coordinators who are professors from the same museum, Prof. Katsumi Tamura and Prof. Naoko Sonoda.

In conclusion, I wish this seminar every success of invigorating a lively discussion that will enable sharing, learning and future partnerships among Asian countries.

I now declare the Museum Seminar, entitled "New Horizons in Asian Museums and Museology", 2013 open.