

**UN DEPUTY HUMANITARIAN CHIEF CALLS FOR GREATER
HUMANITARIAN ACCESS TO PEOPLE AFFECTED BY CONFLICT AND
INTER-COMMUNAL VIOLENCE IN MYANMAR**

(Yangon/New York, 13 June 2014): Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Kyung-wha Kang, today concluded her field missions to Rakhine and Kachin States, stressing the need for improved access to people in need of humanitarian assistance in Myanmar.

“During my trip, I witnessed the serious challenges that humanitarian workers face in delivering aid to the estimated 421,000 people in urgent need of life-saving assistance in Myanmar,” said Ms. Kang. “Despite substantial progress in Myanmar’s reform agenda over the past years, humanitarian conditions have deteriorated in some areas where people are in greatest need, but where access continues to pose a challenge.”

In Rakhine State, Ms. Kang travelled with the Deputy Minister of Border Affairs to Sittwe and Pauktaw to visit IDP camps and host communities affected by inter-communal violence. She met with local authorities, community leaders, and humanitarian workers to evaluate progress in resuming and scaling up the humanitarian response following the 26-27 March attacks on UN and NGO premises in Sittwe. Despite the strong support of the Union authorities in this regard, the current capacity of the humanitarian community in Rakhine is still less than 60 per cent of previous levels.

“The safety and security of our staff, both national and international, must be guaranteed in order for the UN and NGOs to continue to support the Myanmar Government in responding to the vast humanitarian and development needs of all the people in Rakhine State,” said ASG Kang.

Despite considerable humanitarian efforts, many people in isolated villages and remote IDP camps continue to live in dire conditions, coupled with severe restrictions on their freedom of movement. “The situation that I witnessed in Nget Chaung IDP camp was appalling, with wholly inadequate access to basic services including health, education, water and sanitation,” said the ASG.

Ms. Kang also visited IDP camps in Kachin State, where communities recently marked the third anniversary of the conflict between the Kachin Independence Army and the Myanmar Army, which has displaced more than 100,000 people. About half of these

For further information, please call:
Pierre Peron (OCHA Myanmar), +95 (0)9250198997 peronp@un.org
Clare Doyle (OCHA New York), +1 646 288 6331 dovlecm@un.org
OCHA press releases are available at www.unocha.org or www.reliefweb.int

internally displaced people, including women and children, are hosted in camps in areas beyond Government control, where access by international organizations is limited to irregular cross-line humanitarian missions.

“Local NGOs have been, and will continue to be, central to the humanitarian response in Kachin, but more regular, predictable, and sustained access by international organizations is needed to reach the required levels of assistance in all IDP areas,” stressed ASG Kang. She noted that renewed fighting over the past months in southern Kachin and northern Shan State led to the displacement of many people for the second, third, or fourth time. “It is essential that all parties ensure the protection of civilians and the full respect of international humanitarian law, while looking ahead in the long-term to develop durable solutions for displaced people and host communities.”

During her visit, Ms. Kang held a series of meetings with Union and State-level officials, including the Vice President, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement, the Deputy Minister of Border Affairs, the Chief Minister of Rakhine, and the Chief Minister of Kachin. Ms. Kang reiterated the UN’s continued commitment to support the Government in responding to humanitarian needs in Myanmar and reminded the authorities of their responsibility to ensure that justice is rendered and that the perpetrators of the 26-27 March attacks are brought to justice.

The 2014 Humanitarian Response Plan for Myanmar has received 39 per cent of the US \$192 million required. \$66 million would provide humanitarian assistance to 111,000 people across Kachin and northern Shan States, while \$126 million would provide humanitarian assistance to 310,000 people across Rakhine State.