EU to open Delegations to Myanmar and to the United Arab Emirates

Following a decision of Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission, the EU is to open a Delegation to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (Burma) and a Delegation to the United Arab Emirates. The EU Delegation to the Republic of Suriname is to be closed. Taking these measures into account, the EU has a total of 141 Delegations and offices around the world.

Catherine Ashton said: "The European Union has followed and welcomed the historic changes in Burma/Myanmar and we encourage the country to continue in its wide-ranging reforms. The opening of a Delegation in Yangon will allow the EU to step-up its dialogue and cooperation with national authorities and other stakeholders with a view to contributing to the country's economic, political and social development. I am also very pleased to announce the opening of an EU Delegation in the United Arab Emirates, as this decision highlights the importance both of our geo-strategic interests in and our political and economic ties with this country, as well as with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) as a whole."

The decisions by the High Representative/Vice President follow those of the Council of the European Union and the Commission on 28 September and 19 December 2012 respectively and should be implemented in the course of 2013.

Until now the Delegation in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, was the EU's only permanent diplomatic representation in the six GCC member countries, covering relations with the GCC as well as with Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE.

The decision to open a Delegation in Myanmar reflects the significant departure from authoritarian rule taken since early 2011, along with the country's commitment to reforms and the significant steps taken to establish a more open society.
The closure of the EU’s Delegation in Suriname is the result of a redeployment of resources, with the EU's commitment to its relationship with the country remaining assured through the diplomatic accreditation of its Head of Delegation in neighbouring Guyana to Suriname. The EU Delegation in Guyana will also take over the EU's programme and dialogue in and with Suriname.

**More information**

