



European Union

Statement

**ILO Governing Body, 320th session
(13 – 27 March 2014)**

**"Report on ILO activities in Myanmar"
(GB.320/INS/6)**

Geneva, 27 March 2014

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

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EU Statement

Thank you chair,

I speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The following countries align themselves with this declaration: Turkey*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia†, Montenegro†, Iceland‡, Serbia†, Albania†, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia.

We thank the office for the comprehensive report prepared. We would also like to thank the staff in the liaison unit for their work.

The European Union is strongly committed and supports the democratic and economic transition in Myanmar/Burma. The country has embarked on a remarkable process of reform under the new Government, significant both for its own people and for the region. Our goals are to support political, social and economic development, fostering respect for human rights and assisting the Government in rebuilding its place in the international community.

We welcome the activities of the Office in the country, in particular the fact that it places emphasis on developing sound foundations based on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. We also welcome the focus on a rights-based approach and on community empowerment.

* Candidate country

† The Candidate countries former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia as well as potential candidate countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

‡ Candidate Country Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

We welcome the extension of the Supplementary Understanding and we have taken note of the data concerning the complaints on forced labour. We share the objective put forward in the report that is to change behavioural patterns developed over many years. The final result must be the elimination of all forms of forced labour by 2015 if not before. The European Union will help to achieve this objective.

We attach great importance to the involvement of social partners in building the institutions that are necessary for a modern and inclusive society. We welcome the Office programme of technical cooperation on freedom of association and social dialogue. We encourage the ILO to continue its activities to build the capacity of the constituents to engage in dialogue. We have taken note of the concerns of the labour organisations on the difficulties in establishing higher level structures at the region or state and at national level. We encourage the Government to continue discussions with labour organisations, facilitated by the ILO, to meet these concerns.

We promote the practice of the highest standards of integrity and corporate social responsibility as laid out, inter alia, in the UN Guiding Principles on business and human rights. We welcome the number of initiatives such as the establishment of a Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the opening of the Centre for Responsible Business and the launch of the Global Compact. The European Union will work with the authorities, the private sector and the people of the country to create the best possible regulatory environment and to promote responsible investment. In the context of the European Union-Myanmar Task Force, we are working towards the launch of an investment agreement in 2014.

We call on all States to ratify and implement the eight core labour standards. For this reason we welcome the ratification by the country of another fundamental ILO convention, namely Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Finally, we encourage the country to promote peace, democracy and inclusive sustainable development to the benefit of its people and we look forward to work in partnership with the Government and other stakeholders.

Thank you, chair.