

## **Building a Lasting EU-Myanmar Partnership**



### **JOINT STATEMENT**

On 5 March 2013, the President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, and the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, U Thein Sein, agreed that, in light of the historic changes in Myanmar, they will work in partnership:

- To make Myanmar into a modern democracy. To ensure that the best international standards are met, the EU will work closely with Myanmar's three branches of the state, as well as with the Election Commission. The three Presidents welcomed the wish of the EU Parliament and the Myanmar Hluttaws to strengthen their cooperation.
- To achieve a lasting peace. Without peace there can be neither democracy nor prosperity in Myanmar. The Government is committed to inclusive negotiations for a lasting political settlement. These should address long standing differences to achieve sustainable peace. The EU will continue to support the Government's efforts for peace and the Myanmar Peace Centre.
- To promote human rights and the rule of law for all people living in Myanmar. The Government has taken steps to secure freedom of expression, assembly and association. The release of prisoners has opened a new chapter in Myanmar political life. The review mechanism established by the government - which includes members of the opposition and former prisoners - will ensure that remaining cases are dealt with in a spirit of openness and reconciliation. The EU and Myanmar will establish dialogue and cooperation in this field to help Myanmar fulfill its commitments. The EU will support the efforts of the Myanmar

Government to build an independent, impartial and efficient judiciary.

- To work with Myanmar as an active and respected member of the international community. In this respect Myanmar's readiness to accede to international Human rights agreements and to the Additional Protocol to IAEA's Comprehensive safeguards agreements is particularly important.
- To create an EU-Myanmar partnership in trade and investment. The foundations of growth and prosperity for all Myanmar citizens will be laid through economic reforms implementing the Government's vision of people-centered economic and social development, a market economy and a level playing field for business. These reforms have already been initiated. In support of this comprehensive reform process, the EU has launched the process to reinstate as early as possible unhindered access to the EU market including preferential treatment under GSP/EBA. As a next step the EU and Myanmar will explore the feasibility of a bilateral Investment Agreement to increase investment flows. Both sides will promote best practices in Corporate Social Responsibility and responsible investment. Both sides have also agreed to take concrete steps to promote and deepen business partnerships and economic cooperation.
- To work together on preparedness, response and resilience to emergencies, by building up a professional and effective response system.
- To build a development partnership. In line with the Nay Pyi Taw Accord and the Government's Action Plan and commitment to poverty reduction, the EU is for its part committed to maintaining its increased assistance for national development priorities. The EU will assist the Myanmar Government in its efforts to build a more prosperous future. The EU will continue supporting Myanmar's development through its cooperation programs. In parallel, both sides commit to establishing a comprehensive policy dialogue on sustainable development.

- To bring our societies closer, through academic exchanges, media contacts, tourism and cultural cooperation. The Government of Myanmar is committed to protecting Myanmar's cultural heritage and to that end will consider offering a suitable building in Yangon's heritage conservation zone for establishment of a Europe House. Myanmar is committed to sustainable tourism for the benefit of the people of Myanmar, their traditions and culture. Myanmar also welcomes cooperation with the EU in the domain of national heritage preservation and reconstruction.
  
- To maintain the momentum of the partnership and to turn these commitments into reality, both sides will establish a joint Task Force. It will meet in Myanmar in November to assess progress and develop further cooperation in the future.