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**Statement by the spokesperson of EU High Representative Catherine Ashton following her meeting with U Shwe Man, Speaker of the Lower House of Burma/Myanmar**

The spokesperson of Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the Commission, issued the following statement today:

*"High Representative Catherine Ashton met U Shwe Man, Speaker of the Lower House of Burma/Myanmar, in Brussels last night. The meeting was an opportunity to continue the discussion on the impressive process of political and economic reforms underway in Burma/Myanmar. HR Ashton recalled her recent visit to the country and the commitment by the European Union to give strong support for the transition to democracy and to help with the economic development of the country. Speaker U Shwe Man stressed the deep commitment to the on-going democratic reforms and the need for inclusive process, while recalling also the entrance of Dawn Aung San Suu Kyi and NLD into Parliament. He expressed appreciation for EU and wider international support.*

*HR Ashton and Speaker U Shwe Man also discussed the situation in the ethnic regions; including the latest efforts to address the conflict in the Kachin area. They spoke about possible EU support to help underpin ceasefires and turn them into durable peace. HR Ashton also briefed the Speaker and his delegation on the upcoming discussion at the Foreign Affairs Council - Development on Burma/Myanmar, with a view to promote an ambitious and coordinated EU approach in the area of development assistance. "*

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**P R E S S**

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