



EUROPEAN UNION

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## **Statement by the Spokesperson of EU High Representative, Catherine Aston, on the reform process and the elections in Myanmar on 1 April 2012**

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

*«The High Representative welcomes the remarkable programme of political reform undertaken by President U Thein Sein and his Government, including the constructive role played by the Parliament of Myanmar over the last year. The release of political prisoners, the continuing dialogue between the Government and the opposition, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, are all important positive developments, as is the ongoing effort to secure peace with armed ethnic groups and the commitment to economic reform.*

*The forthcoming by-elections are a key moment in national reconciliation and should allow a substantial review of EU policy vis-à-vis Myanmar. The High Representative is following the conduct of the campaign with close attention, and trusts that it will continue to unfold unhindered, allowing the candidates of all political parties to present their programmes to the electorate.*

*The High Representative welcomes the unprecedented access by the international community. The EU will respond to the Government's invitation to be present on election day by sending an official Delegation. The High Representative welcomes the generally peaceful nature of the campaign. The High Representative is, however, concerned by reports of intimidation and other irregularities committed by some parties, and trusts that the Government will investigate and deal with them appropriately.»*

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**P R E S S**

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