



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council conclusions on Myanmar/Burma

*FOREIGN AFFAIRS Council meeting
Brussels, 16 December 2013*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The European Union reiterates its strong commitment and continuous support to Myanmar/Burma's democratic and economic transition and welcomes the launch of the EU-Myanmar Task Force held on 13-15 November. The European Union expresses its appreciation to the Myanmar/Burma authorities, Parliament, civil society, business, development partners and other stakeholders for the excellent cooperation extended to the organisation of the event.
2. The Council welcomes the outcome of the first meeting of the EU-Myanmar Task Force, in particular the commitment to pursue a human rights dialogue, to continue the preparatory work towards the launch of an investment agreement in 2014, as well as the agreement in principle to extend EIB lending to Myanmar/Burma from 2014. Furthermore, the Council welcomes the setting-up of the Myanmar Crisis Response Centre, the signature of an inter-parliamentary cooperation agreement, the establishment of a Business Council and the proposed creation of a European Chamber of Commerce.
3. The Council confirms its commitment to the Comprehensive Framework for the European Union's policy and support to Myanmar/Burma as outlined in Council Conclusions of 22 July 2013.
4. The European Union underlines its intention to significantly increase its development cooperation programmes with Myanmar/Burma for the period 2014-2020. It welcomes progress made on joint programming of EU and Member States' development assistance, as presented to the Government during the Task Force meeting. Furthermore, the European Union reiterates its support to on-going work to assist transition, including through support to civil society, the Myanmar Peace Centre and to the reform of the police service.
5. The Council appreciates the Government of Myanmar/Burma's close cooperation with the EU in the United Nations General Assembly on the resolution on the "Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar" and urges the Government to implement its recommendations, including the establishment of a country office of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

P R E S S

6. The Council welcomes the formation of the Constitution Review Joint Committee and urges the Government to continue constitutional and electoral reforms. The Council encourages an inclusive review process to bring the Constitution in line with the requirements of a modern democracy and to help achieve lasting peace and national reconciliation. The Constitution should enable the conduct of credible, transparent and inclusive general and presidential elections in 2015, allowing all candidates to fairly contest the elections.
 7. The European Union welcomes progress in the national reconciliation process and looks forward to the conclusion of a nationwide ceasefire agreement. The EU stands ready to support an inclusive political dialogue which should lead to a lasting peace agreement. This process should involve all stakeholders, including the participation of women.
 8. The European Union welcomes the latest release of political prisoners and looks forward to the Government fulfilling its commitment to unconditionally free all remaining prisoners of conscience by the end of 2013. It emphasizes the need to put an end to all arbitrary arrests.
 9. The European Union calls on the Government of Myanmar/Burma to address the underlying causes of inter-communal violence and to guarantee the respect of human rights and the rule of law. It invites the Government to pursue durable solutions, including by addressing the status and welfare needs of the Rohingya. In order to contribute to peace-building and respect between the communities, the EU strongly encourages development initiatives and the promotion of religious and ethnic tolerance. It urges all leaders to take a zero tolerance approach to violent extremism.
 10. The European Union further calls on the Government of Myanmar/Burma to facilitate the work of humanitarian organizations in Rakhine State and in Kachin State and to ensure unhindered access for humanitarian assistance to the internally displaced population and all those affected by conflict and violence.
 11. The Council attaches great importance to the involvement of civil society in building the institutions that are necessary for a modern, inclusive democracy in Myanmar/Burma and encourages interaction between the state and civil society in this respect.
 12. The Council encourages the Government of Myanmar/Burma to adhere and implement all relevant international agreements in the field of non-proliferation and disarmament."
-