

# Remarks of High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the joint press point following the meeting with the State

*Check against delivery!*

It was really an honour, a pleasure for me to welcome the State Counsellor here to Brussels, to the EU institutions, for her first official visit after the formation of the government one year ago. I take it as a particular honour also the fact that, in her first visit to Europe, she is visiting the European institutions.

It is really a sign of recognition of our strong friendship, partnership that has deep roots and also very concrete elements in the work we do together. I started by thanking her for a very [warm message she delivered](#) on the relevance of the European Union on the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaties of Rome. This might not be the central point of the relations between the EU and Myanmar, but seeing how our friends and partners in the world value the partnership with the European Union is something that us Europeans should keep in mind a bit more often and hearing her words on that occasion was particularly important – for me personally and I believe for all of us.

We discussed during a very warm, useful, frank, open, interesting and lively discussion today first of all the ways in which the European Union can continue to support, in the best possible way, the democratic transition of the country, the peace and reconciliation process. The European Union is one of the few international signatories of the Peace Agreement [Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement] as a witness and so we exchanged views on how we can – even better and more – support this process, which is fully in the hands of the people of your country, but that needs to be accompanied by all those who believe in democracy, peace and reconciliation. Any reconciliation and peace process needs time, energy, determination, political leadership that Aung San Suu Kyi has shown in a remarkable manner over decades and in these last months, in very difficult conditions. This is what the European Union continues to support and will continue to support with all our means and all our strength – both politically and financially.

We have also discussed our humanitarian support. Commissioner Stylianides has joined us during our meeting; he will visit Myanmar next week and we took also the opportunity also to prepare his visit. We also discussed the political process; perspectives for the change in the Constitution. We also discussed the situation in Rakhine State that is for us an area of concern but also an area where we are providing key humanitarian support for all

communities. This will also be part of the work that Commissioner Stylianides will do next week.

We also exchanged views on the broader regional situation – the work that the European Union is doing with ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations], strengthening our partnership in many different fields and the fact that we will be in Myanmar in November with all the EU Foreign Ministers for the EU-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting that her excellency will host and chair. That will be another occasion for us to meet and continue our cooperation that, as I said, is for the European Union a key partnership, and if I can, also a key way to show and live in concrete ways our friendship with the people of the country – all of them – in this new era that the country has started to live.

Any new era is a challenge, is difficult, is interesting, but mainly is difficult. Friends are there to accompany difficult processes; that's what the European Union is determined to do. Sometimes we have some bumpy moments ahead of us but the determination, the sense of direction is the same: that of strengthening and supporting the democratic transition and the reconciliation process in the country, knowing all the challenges that are ahead but in a sense of respect, friendship and mutual understanding and support.

I thank you very much for the honour you gave us of being here today.

**Q. I just wanted to ask both of you, actually, what exactly the High Representative has encouraged you to do with regards to the Rakhine and whether you believe that any of her suggestions might be things that you'll be putting into practice? If there's anything specific you can tell us about your discussions on that issue?**

I can confirm completely what Aung San Suu Kyi just said. For us what is essential is that the living conditions of all communities are improved as a matter of urgency. Let me start by saying that we always condemn any forms of violence, including the ones that took place [on 9th October](#) [2016]. And we did it, I think, as the first international actor, condemning and publicly denouncing attacks on the security forces. We believe that all communities need to see an improvement in their lives and we discussed mainly how we can better support the authorities in the country to implement the recommendations of the Annan report. This is, for us, the roadmap. We have appreciated the determination and the endorsement that the State Counsellor made clearly about the recommendations and indications of the Annan report and we believe that is the way forward. So the fact of the matter is that we are ready to support and we discussed practical ways in which, including through humanitarian aid, the European Union can help and support the full implementation of the measures indicated in the report.

**Q: This is a question for both of you. What is your position on the calls for an international investigation into the situation of the Rohingya?**

The decision by the [United Nations] Human Rights Council to dispatch an independent international fact finding mission is probably one of the very few issues of disagreement between us, if I can say so. Actually, I have not detected any other. We believe that this can contribute towards establishing the facts for the past provided that, as we said before, we fully agree on the need to work together on the way forward. The fact finding mission, to our understanding, is focussed on establishing the truth on the past and we agree on the need to focus on the future and the implementation of the recommendations that are included in the Annan report as I said.

Thank you.

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## **5 ways SNP councils will deliver for young people**

On Thursday people across Scotland will go to the polls to elect their local council.

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## **News story: UK troops deploy to South Sudan to support peacekeeping mission**

Touching down in country today, an additional 35 UK military personnel will join the current UK presence providing support to the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).

This latest addition to the British contingent will provide engineering support to the UN mission, undertaking projects such as the construction of a jetty on the River Nile, helicopter landing sites and other infrastructure improvements, and will be based mainly in Malakal.

In particular, the Royal Engineers will support the construction of a temporary field hospital in Bentiu. On completion of this, a permanent hospital facility, which will support over 1,800 UN peacekeepers and UN staff, will be constructed. These hospitals will be staffed by medical

personnel drawn from all three services.

This latest arrival means around 240 British personnel are now based in South Sudan, primarily split between Malakal and Bentiu in support of UNMISS.



The latest deployment of British troops has arrived in South Sudan. Picture: UNMISS.

Along with a small number of staff officers in the UNMISS headquarters in Juba, the total number of UK military deployed will rise to nearly 400 over the coming months, making it one of the UK's largest operational deployments across the world.

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## [Meeting between the High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini and the Foreign Minister of Mongolia Tsend Munkh-Orgil](#)

Today, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, Federica Mogherini

received Mongolia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tsend Munkh-Orgil.

HR/VP Mogherini and Minister Munkh-Orgil reviewed the current excellent cooperation between the European Union and Mongolia, which has recently delivered a number of practical results. In particular, the European Union has tailored its development assistance in support of Mongolia's ongoing structural reforms and has strengthened cooperation on trade-related issues to support Mongolia in improving its business environment and diversifying its economy. HR/VP Mogherini and Minister Munkh-Orgil looked forward to the further intensification of the EU-Mongolia relationship via the EU's ongoing work to strengthen its presence in Ulaanbaatar and the upcoming conclusion and entry into force of the [EU-Mongolia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement](#).

The High Representative and the Minister discussed foreign policy issues notably developments on the Korean Peninsula and political, security and economic dynamics across Eurasia. They both agreed that the EU and Mongolia share common values and a common interest in a stable and prosperous north-east Asia, underpinned by open markets and the rule of law.

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## [Dichiarazione dell'alto rappresentante Federica Mogherini, a nome dell'Unione europea, in occasione della Giornata mondiale](#)

Free press is vital for having a democracy that works. Today we celebrate the **World Press Freedom Day** in a difficult context for journalism. Freedom of expression and Freedom of the press are under increasing attacks around the world.

Free, diverse and independent media are indispensable to promoting and protecting democracy worldwide. A free press and freedom of expression are among the very same foundations of democracy, contribute to stable, inclusive, and resilient societies and can help defuse tensions and contain conflicts. The EU supports the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes ensuring universal access to information and protection of freedom of expression.

Supporting independent, quality and ethical journalism is essential. By facilitating the free flow of quality and well-researched information on matters of public interest, and by acting as the "public's watchdog", independent media are the basis of a participatory democracy and a tool to make governments accountable for their actions. The EU ensures that respect for freedom of expression is integrated in all EU policies and development

programmes. The EU is notably funding specific projects in third countries enhancing quality of journalism, access to public information and freedom of expression. Since June 2015, the EU has supported at least 45 endangered Human Rights Defenders that promote the right of freedom of expression under its small grant scheme.

The EU condemns the increase of threats and violations against journalists and media professional offline and in cyberspace. All states are expected to fulfil their global obligations to protect freedom of expression and the safety of journalists by providing a supportive legal environment and prosecuting all attacks against journalists. The EU consistently opposes – in bilateral contacts with third countries as well as in multilateral and regional fora – any legislation, regulation or political pressure that limits freedom of expression and takes concrete steps to prevent and respond to attacks against journalists and bloggers.

The EU Guidelines on Freedom of expression online and offline, adopted in 2014, and their continued implementation, reaffirm the EU's determination to promote freedom of opinion and of expression as rights to be exercised by everyone everywhere, based on the principles of equality, non-discrimination and universality, through any media and regardless of frontiers.