



FACT SHEET

U.S. EMBASSY RANGOON

110 University Avenue, Kamayut Township, Rangoon, Burma

May 20, 2013

Visit of President U Thein Sein of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar / U.S. Assistance

The United States recognizes the important ongoing reform efforts underway by President Thein Sein, his government, Parliament, and key stakeholders among civil society to build a modern, peaceful, and democratic country. Building on a long legacy of support for the aspirations of the Burmese people, the United States is providing assistance to strengthen and accelerate the political, economic, and social transition; promote and strengthen respect for human rights; deliver the benefits of reform to the country's people; and support the development of a stable society that reflects the diversity of all its people.

Drawing on the technical expertise and assets of U.S. Government agencies, institutes of higher education, U.S. businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and other partners, the United States is working to bring American ingenuity and ideas to the Burmese people. Through our calibrated policy and targeted foreign assistance programs and partnerships, we are working with the government and civil society to foster a sustainable transition to a democracy that respects and promotes human rights. Program activities include the following:

- Recognizing that the development of a transparent, accountable, representative government responsive to the needs of the people is critical for the democratic transition, the U.S. Government is assisting in improving electoral administration to ensure free, fair, and credible elections in 2015 as well as promote voter education, strengthen parliament, and support political party development. U.S. assistance promotes legal reform by supporting the technical capacity of the Government and empowering a broad-based civil society.
- The reestablishment of the Fulbright program is an important opportunity for the people of our two countries to work and learn side by side, teach students, build human capital and institutional capacity, and engage in scholarly collaboration through educational exchanges. In addition, EducationUSA advising offered at the U.S. Embassy provides accurate, comprehensive, and current information about how to apply to U.S. colleges and universities; the first ever EducationUSA fair in Rangoon in February 2013 drew the participation of 10 U.S. institutions and more than 1000 students and parents.
- The United States is catalyzing university-private sector partnerships involving U.S. businesses and U.S. and Burmese institutions of higher education to address critical development needs. The American Center in Rangoon, which has the highest attendance of any American Center in the world, trains political, civil society and labor activists in democratic systems, and civic engagement.

- The United States welcomes the Government's support for the establishment of a Peace Corps program. A new program would not only build strong people-to-people ties between the people of our two countries, but also help meet development needs.
- Recognizing the role of agriculture in providing livelihoods for the majority of the Burmese people, the U.S. Government has funded a study that provides an expanded knowledge base for developing food security programs. In addition to providing essential health services, the United States is also laying the groundwork for the country's first ever Demographic and Health Survey, which will provide data to relevant authorities, service providers, and the international community to best serve the health needs of the people.
- One of the country's most significant challenges is achieving the national unity that has eluded it since independence. U.S. assistance aims to address the root causes of long-running conflicts and ethnic tensions. In addition, we continue to provide substantial humanitarian assistance to conflict-affected and vulnerable populations in border areas, the interior of the country, and in the region.
- The United States is taking additional steps to promote inclusive, broad-based economic development and strengthen economic relations between our two countries. Following the targeted easing in 2012 of economic sanctions, in consultation with Congress, we are supporting U.S. businesses as they apply their high standards in bringing responsible investment to Burma. We also seek to support reform by leveraging the talents and resources of the U.S. private sector to enhance economic development and extend the benefits of economic reform to all of the country's people.
- As reaffirmed in a joint statement, the United States, through the State Department's Energy Governance and Capacity Initiative, intends to provide technical assistance in support of the implementation of international best practices in oil and gas management and oversight, financial accountability, and safety and environmental stewardship.
- The United States is providing assistance to facilitate the transformational opportunities that result from a competitive and accessible telecommunications market. As the country liberalizes its telecommunications sector, the U.S. Government intends to provide technical assistance and capacity building, provide counsel in the development of a national broadband plan, and assist in the development of a universal service plan, supporting the government in meeting its goals to rapidly expand connectivity across the country in the context of an open regulatory and legal framework.

With these and other activities, the United States underscores our commitment to support and assist all of the people of Burma in their efforts to embrace reform and promote and respect human rights, and highlights our dedication to help them realize the full potential of their extraordinary country.

For further information, please visit:

<http://www.state.gov/p/eap/ci/bm/>

<http://www.usaid.gov/burma>