



December 10, 2013

### **EU, UNODC, US Joint Delegation to Shan State**

Yangon – On December 2-6, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Country Manager Jason Eligh, U.S. Ambassador Derek Mitchell and EU Ambassador Roland Kobia conducted a joint mission to southern and eastern Shan State to gain first-hand knowledge of the security, peacebuilding and developmental challenges facing this highly diverse but previously restricted region.

In this first-ever visit by international diplomats, the delegation drove over the five days through the southern Shan Hills from the capital Taungyi to the border town of Tachilek. In meetings with local government and members of an array of ethnic communities in townships along the way, the delegation learned about the daily life and challenges of the people living in south and eastern Shan State, and explored ways the international community may help support long-term peace, security and alternative livelihoods development in those areas. Altogether, the delegation met with Shan, Pa O, Lahu, Lisu, Wa and Akha communities.

Delegation members were pleased to participate in a public Shan New Year festival in Mongnay Township, an event that highlighted the unique components of Shan State culture, and to visit Panglong, including the site where the historic 1947 Panglong Agreement was signed.

At every point, the delegation was reminded about the central importance of peace in the country, to enable communities to celebrate their heritage freely and openly, and ensure the overall health, education, and sustainable development of their people and societies. The mission itself is a strong signal of the concrete impact the current cease-fire has produced. We would like to thank all those in Shan State and Nay Pyi Taw for their critical support for this trip, whose purpose was to demonstrate the commitment of the international community to support lasting peace, justice, and development in this country.

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