



# PRESS RELEASE

U.S. EMBASSY RANGOON

110 University Avenue, Kamayut Township, Rangoon, Burma

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## **U.S. Ambassador Visits Flood Affected Communities in Rakhine**

U.S. Ambassador Derek Mitchell, joined by USAID Mission Director Chris Milligan, visited Sittwe and Mrauk-U on August 19-21. The visit was an opportunity to see firsthand the damage caused by Cyclone Komen and resulting floods, and to hear directly from local communities about relief and recovery efforts.

Ambassador Mitchell said: "I want to make sure that our assistance to the relief effort is reaching those who need it most. Mrauk-U and surrounding townships were hit very hard. But this visit reminded me how strong and resilient the Rakhine people are in the face of great difficulty. We are pleased to be able to assist in this time of need. We will continue to work with our partners to determine how we can best support recovery not only in Rakhine State but in other flood-affected areas across the country."

Chris Milligan added, "We are heartened and humbled by the generosity and life-saving work being done by volunteers in Rakhine and across this country to help flood victims. It is a spontaneous and tremendous example of national unity."

During their visit, the Ambassador and Mission Director met with Rakhine Chief Minister Maung Maung Ohn as well as representatives from humanitarian and civil society organizations and local officials engaged in flood response. They also visited a community in Myaung Bwe, Mrauk-U Township, where farmers lost an entire crop due to the disaster. USAID is providing over nine metric tons of specially-adapted short-cycle rice seeds to help farmers there and in surrounding townships to replant before the end of the season. Here and in other flood-affected areas across the country, farmers are in urgent need of rice seed to replant to continue to support their families and communities. Less than two weeks remain in the current planting season.

The delegation closed their trip with a visit to Ohn Taw Gyi (South) Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) Camp in Sittwe Township to speak with residents about conditions in the camp, and to identify gaps where further humanitarian and other assistance is needed.

The U.S. government is providing over \$4.5 million in flood relief and recovery assistance to people affected by the disaster in Rakhine, Sagaing, Magway, Chin, and other areas. This includes the distribution of over 50 million liters of clean drinking water; over 3,300 metric tons of locally procured rice, pulses and salt, and vegetable oil; and 20,000 long lasting insecticide-treated nets in flood affected areas that have a high prevalence of malaria.

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