

## **Joint Statement between Japan and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar**

～New Foundation for Mutual Friendship～

At the invitation of His Excellency U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, H.E.Mr.Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan paid a state visit to Myanmar from 24 to 26 May 2013.

During the visit, President U Thein Sein and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe held talks in a cordial and friendly atmosphere. The two leaders shared the view that, in laying a new foundation for taking the relationship between Japan and Myanmar to a higher level and establishing a lasting, friendly and cooperative relationship, Japan and Myanmar will work together to bolster their relationship in the following areas:

### 1. Support for Myanmar's reform

President Thein Sein confirmed that Myanmar would continue to make all-out efforts to address various issues that it is currently tackling, including democratization, enhancement of the rule of law, economic reform, and national reconciliation. Prime Minister Abe reiterated Japan's intention to support these efforts by combining the public and private sectors' strengths.

### 2. Towards mutual prosperity

The development of economic and social capital including infrastructure, the development of institutions, capacity building, the development of rural and ethnic minority areas, among others, are key to improving the livelihoods of the people of

Myanmar and to building a prosperous nation. In support of the development of Myanmar and having implemented its arrears clearance operation with Myanmar, the Government of Japan decided to provide new yen loans as well as grant assistance, for which notes were exchanged between the two governments during this visit.

Furthermore, the two leaders shared the view as to the importance of Japan's technical cooperation for institution development and capacity building of the Government of Myanmar and confirmed their intentions to further promote it. They also shared the intention to work together in various areas such as acceleration of their work towards the early signing of a bilateral investment agreement, an enhancement of their efforts towards a bilateral agreement on technical cooperation, and the development of the Thilawa Special Economic Zone (SEZ), in order to strengthen bilateral economic relations including through trade and investment. President Thein Sein confirmed Myanmar's commitment to sustaining efforts for the improvement of investment climate in Myanmar and appropriate measures with due consideration to environment and society, including through discussions under the recently launched "Japan-Myanmar Joint Initiative."

### 3. Enhancing people-to-people and cultural exchanges

Both Japan and Myanmar are countries with long history and traditional cultural heritage, and they have a number of similarities from religion to food culture. The year 2014 will mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. The cordial bilateral relationship between the two countries is grounded in the bonds of trust and friendship based on long-standing interaction between their peoples, and will continue to be enhanced in all areas. Prime Minister

Abe expressed his hope to see JENESYS 2.0 bolster youth exchanges between the two countries. President Thein Sein confirmed Myanmar's intention to consider to facilitate the visit of Japanese businessmen and tourists for the further promotion of economic relation and tourism between Myanmar and Japan.

The two leaders also shared their intention to build on the long history of culture and sports exchanges between the two countries and further enhance these exchanges. In particular, Prime Minister Abe reaffirmed that Japan is committed to supporting the SEA Games 2013 to be held in Myanmar in December 2013.

#### 4. Strengthening political and security cooperation

The two leaders decided to enhance dialogue on regional issues and security in order to advance cooperation across the Asia-Pacific and the Indian Ocean. They also decided to further promote cooperation and exchange between their defense authorities.

Upon strengthening the measures mentioned above, acknowledging that the list of a wide range of projects announced by Japan would substantially contribute to further promoting the reforms in Myanmar, the two leaders welcomed that these comprehensive assistance projects are ongoing or under consideration by relevant organizations including the Government of Japan and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and confirmed to further promote cooperation.

Furthermore, the two leaders shared the intention to further bolster Japan-ASEAN cooperation, taking the opportunity of this year's 40th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship

and Cooperation. In this connection, President U Thein Sein confirmed his participation in the JAPAN- ASEAN Special Summit in December this year and welcomed Japan's continued assistance to the activities of Myanmar as it holds the ASEAN presidency in 2014.

Nay Pyi Taw

Dated 26 May 2013