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## Press Release

for immediate release

### **A well-run, competitive election with legal reforms and procedural improvements remaining**

**YANGON 10 November 2015** – “The 2015 general elections are a historic juncture in the democratic transition of Myanmar. The poll was well organised and voters had a real choice between different candidates. In the future, constitutional, legal and procedural improvements will be required for truly genuine elections”, summarised Alexander Graf Lambsdorff, Chief Observer of the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) the Preliminary Statement of the mission today in a press conference in Yangon.

The Chief Observer highlighted: “Our 150 EU observers reported from over 500 polling stations in rural and urban areas that the people of Myanmar turned out in large numbers to calmly cast their votes in a generally well-run polling process, and that the secrecy of the vote was respected. Before that, the election campaign was nearly entirely peaceful. The process for advance voting, however, was less well managed and lacked transparency. For example, EU observers were not given access to out of constituency advance voting in military barracks, despite prior assurances”.

“It is important for everyone to note that the election is not over. The results process is still underway. This is a critical part of the process and it will be important to maintain a high level of transparency and integrity throughout”, said Lambsdorff, adding: “EU observers will remain in the field to observe the tabulation and results processes as well as any complaints and appeals.”

Lambsdorff also emphasised that “the legal framework does not fully provide for the conduct of genuine elections, most notably because of limitations concerning the number of seats directly elected to the parliament, as well as some limitations on the right to vote and the right to stand”.

Ana Gomes, Head of the Delegation of the European Parliament, which observed as part of the EU EOM the polls, endorsed the preliminary statement of the EU EOM and stated: “The people of Myanmar showed they want democracy. This is just the beginning of the process. The European Parliament will assist in capacity building and promoting democratic governance and oversight. We believe that democracy and human rights are also about inclusion and embracing diversity.”

The EU Election Observation Mission will present a Final Report with recommendations to the public at a later stage.

#### **Note to Editors:**

*The European Union (EU) was invited to deploy an observation mission by the Union Election Commission of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Union Election Commission. The EU EOM is independent from any EU institutions or Member States or government institutions and is committed to remain neutral and abide by the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and the Code of Conduct, as well as the laws of Republic of the Union of Myanmar.*

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