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European Union

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To:	Delegations

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Subject:	The Court of Auditors' Special report No. 4/2018 on EU Assistance to Myanmar/Burma - Council conclusions (22 May 2018)
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Delegations will find in the annex the Council conclusions on the Court of Auditors' Special report No. 4/2018 on EU Assistance to Myanmar/Burma, as adopted by the Council at its 3618th meeting held on 22 May 2018.

Council conclusions
on the Court of Auditors' Special report No. 4/2018 on EU Assistance to Myanmar/Burma¹

1. The Council welcomes the Court of Auditors' Special Report on EU Assistance provided to Myanmar/Burma in the 2012–2016 period. The Council underlines the relevance of the Court's recommendations and conclusions, in particular that the EU development support to the country had been partially effective. The Council also takes note of the replies of the EEAS and the Commission Services.
2. The Council's position regarding the situation in Myanmar/Burma is laid down in Council conclusions of 26 February 2018.²
3. The Council notes that, with regards to the achievement of objectives, there were good results achieved despite the difficult context; yet only half the projects audited delivered the planned outputs at the time of the audit, mainly because of implementation delays.
4. The Council notes that, in the Court's judgment, the EU responded rapidly to the political changes in the country and played an important and leading role in supporting the development priorities in a difficult context allocating significant funding in order to address the country's needs. Nevertheless, the Council notes the view of the Court that there is a need to better focus the areas of support in order to increase the impact of EU external assistance to Myanmar/Burma. In this regard, the Council stresses that the Commission should give more attention to domestic revenue mobilisation.

¹ 6465/18

² 6418/18

5. The Council stresses the importance of operationalising humanitarian-development nexus, for which Myanmar/Burma has been selected as one of six pilot countries. The Council further calls upon the Commission to ensure enhanced coordination between its services with the aim to strengthen synergies between humanitarian assistance and development cooperation, as well as to engage with Member States and to provide them with information about the programmes to be implemented in a regular and timely manner. The Council stresses the importance of the EU taking a context specific approach when implementing the humanitarian-development nexus.
6. The Council takes note of the Court's finding that the cost-control provisions of the EU-UN contracts had little impact while also noting the Commission's view that the spending is in line with the applicable financial rules of the EU. The Council encourages the Commission to ensure that EU contributions to UN-managed trust funds are cost-effective. Furthermore, the Council notes the Court's finding that the Commission has used the provisions of crisis contract procedures too extensively while also acknowledging the Commission's justification that it applied the provisions in a limited number of occasions and in full respect of applicable rules.
7. The Council welcomes the positive achievements of the joint programming process in Myanmar/Burma. It urges the Commission and the EEAS to better justify and document the allocation of funding to focal sectors as well as to individual actions. The Council further underlines the importance of sound monitoring and the use of appropriate indicators.
8. The Council calls on the Commission Services and the EEAS to ensure better visibility of EU external assistance in Myanmar/Burma, including by working together with EU Member States.