



## **Press Release**

### **State Counsellor participated in the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation held in Beijing**

State Counsellor of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Daw Aung San Suu Kyi paid a visit to China to attend the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation at the invitation of President Xi Jinping, from 13th to 17th May 2017 and arrived back Nay Pyi Taw by a special flight at 15:00 hrs on 17th May 2017.

The Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation was held on 14-15 May 2017 in Beijing, China. It was attended by more than 1500 representatives from over 130 nations including 30 heads of state and government.

The State Counsellor attended the opening ceremony of the Forum held in the morning of 14 May 2017 at China National Convention Centre in Beijing and the welcome dinner hosted by President Xi Jinping in the evening. On 15th May 2017, she attended the Leaders Roundtable held at Yanqi Lake International Conference Centre in Beijing. The Leaders Roundtable was attended by 30 heads of State and Government, including the host, the United Nations Secretary-General, the President of the World Bank Group and the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund. The morning session of the Leaders Roundtable was held to discuss the theme of “Policy Synergy for Closer Partnership. Its afternoon session was focused on “Connectivity Cooperation for Interconnected Development” and the theme of the working lunch was “Closer People-to-People Bond”.The State Counsellor participated in and made interventions at both sessions and at the working lunch.

In her interventions, the State Counsellor expressed her thanks to President Xi Jinping and the Government of China for initiating the Belt and Road Forum as well as for their warm hospitality. She stressed that good people-to-people relations based on mutual understanding and respect and a stable and peaceful environment are essential foundation stones for the success of the Belt and Road Initiative. Connectivity covers not

only physical or infrastructure connectivity but also institutional connectivity and people-to-people connectivity. Because of its multi-faceted nature, connectivity cooperation would need to complement existing national and regional platforms. She also stressed that projects under the Initiative would be most effective if they are designed to re-enforce or complement ongoing and future projects of respective nations and regional organizations. Due attention needs to be paid to the expectations and concerns of governments and peoples. She added that each partner country has its own characteristics and the best multi-national initiatives are aligned those well with national plans. Myanmar has laid out its own Road Network Master Plan and it is also participating in a number of ongoing sub-regional and regional projects. She emphasized the need to ensure that business activities are carried out in a socially and environmentally responsible manner. Conservation of the natural environment and welfare of local communities are essential for the success of development projects. The creation of employment opportunities for local peoples is also an important factor. She shares the view that the Belt and Road Forum should not be a onetime event and it should be a process so that progress can be reviewed and policy guidelines charted out for the success of this Initiative. Myanmar supported the proposal for continuation of the Forum in future.

At the end of the Leaders Roundtable, the leaders adopted a Joint Communiqué on the Belt and Road Initiative. It was stated that the Belt and Road Initiative aims for strengthening physical and infrastructure connectivity among countries along the Silk Road, for fostering policy coordination and connectivity cooperation, for unimpeded trade and investment, and for promoting people-to-people bond through exchange of culture, religion, tourism, education, and digital connectivity.

The State Counsellor was accompanied at the Forum by Union Minister for Construction, Union Minister for Transport and Communications, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Deputy Minister for Commerce and senior officials from the relevant ministries to the Forum. The accompanying Ministers also attended the High-level Dialogue sessions held in the afternoon of 14th May 2017 in Beijing.

During the visit, on 16th May 2017, the State Counsellor held separate bilateral talks with President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang of the People's Republic of China. At the meetings, the leaders stressed the importance of advancing

“Comprehensive Cooperative Strategic Partnership Relations” based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence and existing “Pauk-Phaw” friendship, maintaining peace and stability and development of the border areas, continued support of China for the success of Myanmar’s reconciliation and peace process, promoting diverse cooperation between the two countries particularly for the benefit of the two peoples through the high-level communications and exchange of visits. Furthermore, the leaders also cordially discussed about the further promotion of trade and investments including establishment of Border Economic Cooperation Zone and ongoing infrastructure projects stressing the importance of peace and stable environment for the success of Belt and Road Initiatives.

After the bilateral meetings, the State Counsellor and Premier Li Keqiang attended the signing ceremony of cooperation agreement and MoUs between Myanmar and China. A total of 5 MoUs and Agreement were successfully inked, namely Agreement on China’s grant for Economic and technical Cooperation of RMB Yuan 500 million to Myanmar to Support Development of Agriculture Sector, MoU on Establishment of China-Myanmar Border Economic Cooperation Zone, MoU on Cooperation within the Framework of the Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Initiative, MoU on Cooperation in Health, and MoU on Cooperation in Post-quake Restoration and Protection of Historic Monuments of Bagan.

While in Beijing, the State Counsellor held bilateral meetings separately with H.E. Mrs. Doris Leuthard, President of Switzerland, H.E. Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, H.E. Ms. Beata Szydlo, Prime Minister of Poland, and H.E. Mr. Erdenebat Jargaltulga, Prime Minister of Mongolia on 14th May 2017 and discussed on further promoting friendship and cooperation as well as on lending supports to Myanmar’s democratic transition process. She also held a separate meeting with H.E. Mr. Antoni Guterres, United Nations Secretary General on 15th May 2017 and exchanged views on the United Nations’ support for the Myanmar’s democratic transition, ongoing peace and reconciliation process as well as on sustainable resolution of the issue of Rakhine State.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

Dated: 17 May 2017.