



# Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the Karen civilians fleeing Burma/Myanmar

**The EU has noted with serious concern the mounting offensive of the Burmese Army and its allies against the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), which has resulted in large numbers of civilians fleeing from the conflict area in Kayin/Karen State to Thailand.**

The EU calls for an immediate ceasefire and requests the authorities and military operators to ensure the protection of civilians at all times and to comply with international humanitarian and human rights law. Generally, the authorities should refrain from seeking military solutions against the ethnic minorities; this only fosters instability, long-term divisions and hatred. The EU reiterates its commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Burma/Myanmar.

The EU calls instead for the conditions to be created that allow the return of all refugees, and for the start of an inclusive and time-bound process of political dialogue leading to national reconciliation.

The EU is strongly concerned about the humanitarian situation of the thousands of newly displaced persons in Thailand. It acknowledges the efforts that the Royal Government of Thailand, which already hosts large numbers of Burmese refugees, undertakes to provide the new arrivals with all necessary care. The EU stands ready to provide more assistance where possible.

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## Contact:

- **Milan Řepka**, Spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- tel.: +420 224 182 426, GSM: +420 724 034 154; e-mail: [milan\\_repka@mzv.cz](mailto:milan_repka@mzv.cz)

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