

Invitation to the Panel Discussion

“What to do about Burma/Myanmar?”

Thursday, 6th of September 2007
18.00 – 20.00 hrs

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
Hiroshimastraße 17, 10785 Berlin

In his latest book “*The River of Lost Footsteps*” as well as in his recent article “*What to do about Burma?*”, **Dr. Thant Myint-U** describes the complicated and stagnating political situation in Burma/Myanmar from a historical point of view. The turning of Burma into a province of India and the process of abolishing the monarchy left a void in the society that could not be filled by the colonial administration. Until today, neither stable political conditions nor civil state institutions could be established.

The continued isolation of the country has a negative impact on the people of Burma, concludes Dr. Thant Myint-U. He criticises the western sanctions regime that has in his point of view proven ineffective. Similarly, **Harn Yawng hwe**, Director of the Euro-Burma Office in Brussels, in a recent opinion calls upon the European Union to increase its engagement in the area of humanitarian assistance and be prepared to get involved in a constant dialogue with actors open to reform processes. He sees these points as an indispensable precondition of a consistent strategy towards Burma/Myanmar.

But how can such an engagement look like? How can forces willing to reform be included in current and future processes? How to prevent the marginalisation of oppositional political forces, how to respect and integrate the interests of ethnic ceasefire groups and how to take into account the positions of the different ethnic groups? How could a dialogue between the ruling powers in Burma/Myanmar, the neighbouring countries and the West be established and be designed in the future? And what role does the ongoing National Convention play for the future of the country?

Dr. Thant Myint-U, **Dr. Paul Pasch**, Executive Coordinator of the Burma/Myanmar Project of Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation, Kuala Lumpur, and **Harn Yawng hwe** will debate about these questions and future perspectives in dealing with Burma/Myanmar during this panel discussion.

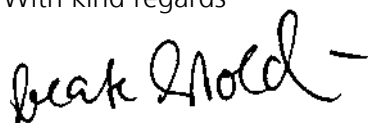
Dr. Christian P. Hauswedell, former Director for Asian Affairs in the German Foreign Office, will moderate the session.

We have the pleasure to invite you to this event. Please find attached the programme and a registration form. We will provide you with the opportunity to continue your discussion subsequent to the session while snacks and drinks are being served. The discussion will be held in English.

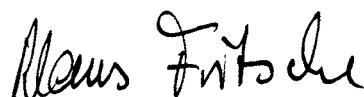
Please return the filled out **registration form** not later than **Monday, September 3rd, 2007**.

We are looking forward to your active participation.

With kind regards



Dr. Beate Bartoldus
Head of Department
Asia and the Pacific



Dr. Klaus Fritsche
Director
German Asia Foundation/Asia House