

MEDIA ADVISORY: 07.03.2016

## Kayah State: Myanmar's hidden gem

### Discover the unknown Myanmar at ITB 2016

(Yangon/Berlin) – Myanmar Tourism Marketing (MTM) in partnership with the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) will on 9 March 2015 present Kayah State as Myanmar's latest tourist destination. The presentation will take place on during the Internationale Tourismus Börse (ITB) 2016 2016, taking place in Berlin.

New cultural tourism tours and experiences will be presented, and the media and other participants are invited to join any of these events and meet with representatives from ITC and Kayah State.

More than 5 million people visited Myanmar in 2015, but tourism has so far been concentrated on a few destinations, including the bustling capital of Yangon, the colonial Mandalay, the temples of Bagan and Inle Lake. However, recent political changes in the country have led to a surge interest from visitors who want to discover Myanmar's many hidden gems.

One such gem is Kayah State, situated in the country's east. Closed for over half a century and recently opened to visitors, Kayah is one of South-East Asia's last frontiers for inspiring, authentic travel. With pristine nature, ethnic diversity and a location close to Inle Lake and the Thai border, Kayah holds great potential for cultural tourism in the small local villages and offers a privileged insight into traditional ways of life.

As part of the 'Myanmar Inclusive Tourism Focusing on Kayah State' project, launched in 2014 and funded by the Netherlands Trust Fund, ITC has worked with the Government of Myanmar to develop suitable cultural and ecotourism products, preparing local communities for the arrival of international visitors.

Since 2014 the International Trade Centre, in partnership with the Myanmar Ministry of Hotels and Tourism (MoHT) and Ministry of Commerce (MOC), has supported the development of new cultural and nature tourism products in Kayah State. These include the 'trail of the ancestors' with local villages as guides or the opportunity to sample local cuisine at a 'jungle picnic'. The objective is to establish a new tourism destination in Kayah with minimal disruption to the local environment and existing way of life, opening the potential for sustainable, community driven economic development with benefits that are widely and equitably shared.

**Notes to the Editor:** ITC is the joint agency of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations. ITC assists small and medium-sized enterprises in developing and transition economies to become more competitive in global markets, thereby contributing to sustainable economic development within the frameworks of the Aid-for-Trade agenda and the UN Global Goals.

#### ITC events at ITB 2016

	Time	Event	Location
<b>Wednesday Sunday</b>	10.00 – 17.00	Myanmar national stand	Hall 26B, stand 201 and 228
<b>Wednesday 9 March</b>	13.15 - 14.15	Authenticity and sustainability in Asia's emerging tourism regions: best practice example Myanmar, Kayah.	Hall 7.1a, Saal New York 1 ITB Convention
	17.00 - 19.00	Social gathering at Myanmar stand	Hall 26B, Myanmar stand.
<b>Thursday 10 March</b>	10.00 - 10.30	Myanmar, Kayah state: an emerging community tourism destination.	Hall 4.1.b. Adventure Stage & Event Area
	10.45 - 11.35	Myanmar press conference	Room 1 in hall 5.3.
	15.30	Film Festival awards ceremony	Cinema Hall 3.1.
<b>Friday 11 March</b>	12.30 - 13.30	Myanmar, Kayah state: new community tourism products presentation & B2B meeting	Room Dessau 4, meeting bridge C, between hall 6.2 and 7.2
	16:30-18:00	ITB Blogger Speed Dating	City Cube Level B

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