

Joint Communiqué of the 42nd AMM

On 20 July 2009, Mr. Kasit Piromya, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand held a press conference on behalf of the ASEAN Chair, on the outcome of the 42nd ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting, which is reflected in the Joint Communiqué of the 42nd AMM. Gist of the Joint Communiqué is as follows:

1. The establishment of the ASEAN Human Rights Body and Dispute Settlement Mechanisms

The ASEAN Foreign Ministers formally adopted the Terms of Reference of the ASEAN Human Rights Body, which will be called "the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights". They also recommended to the ASEAN Leaders that the Commission be launched during the 15th ASEAN Summit to be held in October this year.

The adoption of the TOR is the beginning of an evolving process. The TOR provides ASEAN with a platform for furthering ASEAN's efforts in the promotion and protection of human rights. Hence, as part of the review process of the TOR in 5-years' time after it enters into force.

After this, each ASEAN country will proceed to appoint its representative to the Commission so that we can convene the inaugural Commission meeting during the 15th ASEAN Summit.

The Foreign Ministers also endorsed ad referendum the draft agreement on privileges and immunity of ASEAN and agreed to extend the mandate of the High-Level Legal Experts' Group (HLEG) so that they can finalize their work on dispute settlement mechanisms and other legal issues under the ASEAN Charter for the Foreign Ministers' consideration.

2. On regional and international issues.

The ASEAN Foreign Ministers discussed, among others, the post Cyclone Nargis situation in Myanmar and the role of the Tripartite Core Group. They also discussed the issue of illegal migrants in the Indian Ocean and the situation in Myanmar, following the recent UN Secretary-General's visit. From all these discussions, there emerged a general feeling that now that ASEAN has the Charter in place and is moving towards becoming a Community, ASEAN Member States should do more to help one another and to resolve ASEAN's internal problems within the ASEAN family without recourse to the international community.

Another issue discussed was the situation related to the Korean Peninsula. The ASEAN Foreign Ministers recalled the ASEAN leader's statement in June 2009 in which they reiterated the condemnation of the recent underground nuclear test and missile launches undertaken by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. They



PRESS RELEASE

ข่าวสารนิเทศ

urged the DPRK to fully comply with its obligations and relevant UNSC resolutions. At the same time, ASEAN will do what it can to keep the DPRK engaged, particularly through the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and explore how ASEAN could serve as a bridge between the DPRK and the world.

3. On ASEAN Community Building,

The ASEAN Foreign Ministers also discussed issues related to the implementation of the ASEAN Charter. These include the division of labour between the existing mechanisms such as the senior officials and the director-generals of ASEAN, and the new mechanisms. The idea is to make ASEAN work more efficiently without duplication of work.

They agreed to work closely together to enable ASEAN to play an increasingly proactive and leading role in the regional architecture.

They will also make greater use of the ASEAN Committees in Third Countries in representing ASEAN and interacting with host countries. The ASEAN Foreign Ministers further agreed to form such a committee in countries where there are five or more ASEAN embassies.

4. On external relations

The ASEAN Foreign Ministers approved the accreditation of 28 Ambassadors from countries outside ASEAN, which include all 10 dialogue partners and other regions. They also endorsed guidelines for the procedures for the accreditation of non-ASEAN Ambassadors to ASEAN prepared by the Committee on Permanent Representatives to ASEAN.

5. On the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asian (TAC),

The ASEAN Foreign Ministers looked forward to the United States' forthcoming accession to the TAC, which will send a strong signal of its commitment to peace and security in the region.

6. Other matters

The ASEAN Foreign Ministers exchanged views on how to further develop infrastructure linkages among ASEAN countries as well as linkages between ASEAN and India and China to promote connectivity in the region.

Finally, the Ministers noted the tentative dates proposed by Viet Nam for the 43rd AMM next year, which is in July 2010.

20 July 2009