



PRESS RELEASE

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The U.S. accedes to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia

The United States has become the 16th country outside of the region to join ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC).

ASEAN Foreign Ministers and the U.S. Secretary of State, Mrs. Hillary Clinton, yesterday (22 July) signed the Instruments of Accession and Extension to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), marking the US formal accession to the TAC.

In his remarks at the signing ceremony, Mr. Kasit Piromya, Foreign Minister of Thailand, expressed his conviction that the U.S. is now able to "play a larger and active role in helping to support ASEAN's efforts to realize an ASEAN Community."

"The accession of the United States to the TAC underscores its commitment to engage constructively in the maintenance of regional peace and stability on the basis of a recognized code of conduct governing relations among States in the region."

"What we have witnessed today is a reflection of the commitment, in words and in deeds, of the United States to reach out and pursue even closer engagement with (your) friends in Southeast Asia and the broader East Asia region", said the Thai Foreign Minister.

The TAC is a legal document, signed by the ASEAN member countries in 1976, that commits its signatories to basic principles for engaging constructively and maintaining peace and stability among States in the region, including the peaceful settlement of disputes, renunciation of the threat or use of force, and noninterference in the internal affairs of one another. This became the code of conduct for relations between members and later on also for countries who became High Contracting Parties to the treaty.

Besides the US, 15 non-ASEAN countries have acceded to the TAC, namely Papua New Guinea, China, India, Japan, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Russia, New Zealand, Mongolia, Australia, France, Timor-Leste, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Secretary Clinton is on a visit to Thailand to attend the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference with ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum scheduled for yesterday and today (22-23 July) in Phuket.

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