

First Meeting of the ASEAN Political-Security Community Council 10 April 2009

On 10 April 2009, H.E. Mr. Kasit Piromya, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, chaired the First Meeting of the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Council which was attended by ASEAN Foreign Ministers, delegates and the Secretary-General of ASEAN at the Royal Cliff Beach Resort Hotel in Pattaya, Chonburi Province, Thailand. Gist of the Meeting is as follows:

H.E. Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, ASEAN Secretary-General, briefed the Meeting on developments in sectoral bodies that are under the APSC Council including the recent meetings of ASEAN Ministers of Defence, ASEAN Law Ministers, ASEAN Ministers on Transnational Crimes as well as the Informal ASEAN Foreign Minister Meeting. The Meeting also discussed on the issue of illegal migrants in the Indian Ocean, during which Myanmar expressed readiness to accept back all migrants from Myanmar with valid identification or verifiable addresses following consular access, and reassured their safe return. The Meeting noted that this issue would also be taken up at the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, in Bali on 14-15 April 2009.

The Meeting agreed on Thailand's proposal to request the ASEAN Secretariat to compile and disseminate to the public information on humanitarian assistance provided by ASEAN Member States as well as ASEAN Member States' contribution to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations as part of ASEAN's support to the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Meeting welcomed the process initiated by US President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev to reduce warheads and stockpiles, and stressed the need to further encourage nuclear weapons States (NWS) to become parties to the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty.

The Meeting had extensive discussion on implementation of the APSC Blueprint, including assignment of activities to various sectoral bodies, and development of APSC Communication Plan to enhance public awareness, which should form part of a coordinated communication strategy for all pillars of the ASEAN Community.

Thailand as Chair outlined some key deliverables during its chairmanship in 2009 including, inter alia, establishment of AHRB, strengthening of dispute settlement mechanisms and strengthening cooperation to fight human trafficking and people-smuggling.

The Second Meeting of the ASEAN Political-Security Community Council will be held during the 42nd AMM/PMC on 16-23 July 2009 in Thailand.