

PRESS RELEASE

ข่าวสารนิเทศ

Thai Deputy Prime Minister briefs the press on the first meeting of the ASEAN Economic Community Council

On 27 February 2009 at 13:00 hrs. Deputy Prime Minister Korbsak Sabhavasud briefed the press on issues discussed during the first meeting of the ASEAN Economic Community Council (AECC) on the eve of the 14th ASEAN Summit.

Deputy Prime Minister Korbsak told the press that the meeting broadly exchanged views on issues including cooperation and the functioning of AECC.

The first issue the AECC discussed was the terms of reference and rules of procedures of the AECC. It was agreed that as the AECC was a relatively new structure, the member countries should actively voice their opinions on the framework and that this should be regularly discussed and reviewed in the future.

The meeting also discussed the proposal for a “Comprehensive ASEAN Economic Community Scorecard” by the ASEAN Secretary-General as a way to monitor the progress of each member country in implementing its commitments and objectives towards the AEC. Nevertheless, the details of the proposed scorecard still needed to be further discussed as some points remained unclear.

The AECC also stressed the importance of the business community, particularly the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) which had expressed concern that ASEAN integration would benefit only multinational corporations. The meeting thus agreed that there should be a clear and implementable work plan with greater involvement of SMEs in the future.

In discussing the public relations plan, the AECC agreed on two proposals put forward by the Thai Commerce Ministry, namely the participation of ASEAN member countries in the ASEAN Trade Fair which Thailand regularly organizes, and the AEC Young Ambassadors Project, which the meeting believed would foster greater involvement and awareness about ASEAN among its youth.

The meeting also touched upon the global economic crisis, exchanging views on the effect the crisis had had on each member country.

Finally, the meeting discussed the schedule for its next meeting, concurring that the AECC should meet at least twice a year, and that Thailand should host the next meeting.

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