



Press Release
US signs Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC)
Phuket, Thailand, 22 July 2009

The United States today signed the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia of 1976, a key regional agreement on peaceful coexistence and mutual cooperation, in Phuket, Thailand.

In a ceremony held after the Post Ministerial Conference with the United States, the Foreign Ministers of the ten Southeast Asian High Contracting Parties and the US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton signed the Instrument of Extension and the Instrument of Accession to the TAC.

"This represents in concrete terms, a shift of strategy on the part of the new US administration towards ASEAN, said Dr Surin Pitsuwan, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, adding that the region appreciates the fact that the decision to accede to the TAC has been in the making for the last few months.

Secretary Clinton, in her visit to the ASEAN Secretariat on 18 February 2009, had first announced that the US had launched its inter-agency process to pursue accession to the TAC.

"It will be a positive, productive and constructive two way relationship into the future," said Dr Surin.

With the accession, the US becomes the 16th non-Southeast Asian country to accede to the TAC.

The ASEAN Foreign Ministers, in the Joint Communiqué of the 42nd ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, said they looked forward to the US accession to the TAC which they said would send a strong signal of its commitment to peace and security in the region.

The TAC commits signatories to basic principles including the peaceful settlement of disputes, non-recourse to the use of force and non-interference in each other's internal affairs.