



Press Release
Laying the Ground for Enhanced Partnership – ASEAN SG in New Zealand
Wellington, 11 September 2009



With the Prime Minister of New Zealand, John Key

The visit of the Secretary-General of ASEAN to New Zealand from 6 to 11 September 2009 has laid the ground for enhanced dialogue relations with New Zealand.

Looking forward to future cooperation, Dr Surin Pitsuwan, in his talks with Prime Minister John Key and Foreign Minister Murray McCully, has suggested that ASEAN and New Zealand consider working on a Joint Declaration on an Enhanced Comprehensive/Strategic Dialogue Partnership.

New Zealand has been ASEAN's Dialogue Partner since 1975 and next year will mark the 35th anniversary of the dialogue partnership. On the idea of a Commemorative Summit, Dr Surin proposed that both sides look into the possibility of establishing an Eminent Persons Group to review ASEAN-New Zealand dialogue relations and recommend future directions for the Summit.



With the Foreign Minister of New Zealand, Murray McCully

Dr Surin also thanked New Zealand for its support and assistance to ASEAN including through the implementation of the ASEAN-New Zealand Framework for Cooperation 2006-2010.



Addressing the ASEAN New Zealand Combined Business Council in Auckland

Speaking on economic integration, Dr Surin said, "The recent conclusion of the ASEAN-Australia and New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA) signals an exciting development in the region of East Asia. Now that ASEAN has completed FTAs with our major trading partners, it is time to get the private sectors, the academics and the media involved."

During his stay in New Zealand, Dr Surin addressed the ASEAN-New Zealand Combined Business Council and interacted with the businessmen. He was glad to hear that the New Zealand private sector is interested and eager to engage

with the emerging East Asian economic community. "The private sector will be the nuts and bolts of integration, so they must be encouraged to get into the space that is opened up for them and to take full advantage of it," he said.

Dr Surin, in addition, met and engaged in a roundtable discussion with the academics at the New Zealand Asia Institute at Auckland University. He also addressed the media on ASEAN and ASEAN-New Zealand dialogue relations.



*At a roundtable discussion, "New Zealand and the Future of ASEAN",
at the New Zealand Asia Institute, Auckland University*

Dr Surin's visit to New Zealand came at the invitation of Foreign Minister Murray McCully. During his stay, Dr Surin also met Trade Minister Tim Groser, Leader of the Opposition Phil Goff and other Members of Parliament, as well as ASEAN Ambassadors in Wellington.



With ASEAN Ambassadors in Wellington



With the Minister of Trade of New Zealand, Tim Groser



With the Leader of the Opposition, Phil Goff



With MP Shane Jones