



Press Release
Another Step Forward for Regional Human Rights Cooperation
Phuket, Thailand, 20 July 2009

ASEAN took another historic step in developing regional cooperation in human rights when the 42nd ASEAN Ministerial Meeting today adopted the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the ASEAN Human Rights Body.

The Foreign Ministers also agreed to name the body as the ASEAN Inter-Governmental Commission on Human Rights.

"This decision by the ASEAN Foreign Ministers will contribute towards strengthening our ASEAN Community building. We are now implementing the Charter both in letter and in spirit. Democracy and human rights are two basic principles enshrined in the Charter and we are now taking steps towards the fulfillment of these principles for our peoples," said Dr Surin Pitsuwan, the Secretary-General of ASEAN in Phuket after the adoption of the TOR.

Each ASEAN Member State will now appoint its national representative to the Commission in time for its formal establishment at the upcoming 15th ASEAN Summit in Phuket on 23 - 25 October 2009.

A political declaration for the launching of the Commission is being drafted by the High - Level Panel that drafted the TOR for the Commission.

In the political declaration, the ASEAN Leaders will lay down the guidelines on how to further strengthen the mandate and functions of the Commission in the promotion and protection of human rights in ASEAN.

Please click **here** to view the Terms of Reference of ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights