

OPENING REMARKS FOR SG LE LUONG MINH

Official Launch of the ASEAN Regional Integration Support Programme from the EU (ARISE) ASEAN Secretariat, 17 January 2013

Excellency, Ambassador Julian Wilson, Representatives from the European Union from Brussels and from Jakarta.

Excellencies, Ambassadors and Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN, Members of the Diplomatic Corp

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to acknowledge the efforts between ASEAN, represented by the Committee of the Permanent Representatives to ASEAN, and the European Union in furthering the dialogue relations between the two regional institutions, from today's Joint Cooperation Committee deliberations. I am sure that the outcomes of the JCC will bring us closer to our goal of community building by 2015.

In moving forward, we have identified critical measures, programmes and activities that are in line with the ASEAN Community Blueprints. The ASEAN Secretariat will continue to support, facilitate and initiate such measures so that activities will run more smoothly and effectively. In this regard, I welcome the continued support from the EU in strengthening the capacity of the ASEAN Secretariat.

ASEAN – EU dialogue relations have grown rapidly in the last 35 years to cover a wide range of cooperation areas from political-security to economic and trade to socio-cultural. The EU has provided significant technical assistance and funding support to ASEAN through various cooperation programmes and initiatives, such as the recently implemented ASEAN Regional Integration Support Programme from the EU, also known as "ARISE". ARISE is a 15-million Euro programme that will support the deepening of ASEAN-EU cooperation on economic integration, contributing to the realization of an ASEAN single market by 2015.

Included in the ARISE programme is 3-million Euro grant that will support the capacity building of the ASEAN Secretariat. The grant will support the corporate development of the ASEAN Secretariat including complementing the human resources needs of the organization.

We acknowledge and welcome the unwavering commitment from the EU in strengthening the ASEAN-EU Enhanced Partnership and its Plan of Action. EU shall continue to be one of ASEAN's key and unique dialogue partners in our community building efforts.

I wish to thank the Ambassador of EU, Julian Wilson, and the European Union on this occasion of the official launch of the ARISE programme and the signing of the grant contract.

Good afternoon everyone.
