



## THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

MESSAGE FOR THE OPENING  
OF THE 12TH ASEAN SUMMIT  
Cebu, Philippines, 13-14 January 2007

Excellencies  
Dear friends,

I send my warmest wishes to all taking part in this 12<sup>th</sup> ASEAN summit. It is with deep pride -- but also with humility -- that I have just taken office as the first Asian Secretary-General since U Thant took office 45 years ago. I thank ASEAN leaders for their support of my appointment.

Your organization is a pioneer of regional cooperation, in one of the most dynamic parts of the world. As ASEAN prepares to mark its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, you have many achievements to celebrate -- from initiatives for growth and prosperity to landmark treaties for regional stability.

Individually, your countries are already playing a crucial role in strengthening and renewing the United Nations -- from membership of the new Peacebuilding Commission and Human Rights Council, to participating in our peacekeeping operations around the world.

The partnership between ASEAN and the United Nations, too, is evolving. The fact that you have now been granted observer status by the UN General Assembly will help to strengthen cooperation between us. And by creating an ASEAN Charter, you will surely be able to tackle, yet more vigorously, the range of issues that both our institutions will need to address in the future.

As Secretary-General, I will work to ensure that the United Nations is able to carry out effectively the ever more global role which Member States have entrusted to it. In that effort, I will seek to act as a harmonizer and bridge-builder. I will do all I can to restore trust in the Organization.

I ask for ASEAN's support as I take on those challenges. And I pledge, as a Secretary-General from Asia, that I will bear in mind Asia's perspectives at the United Nations.

I wish you a most productive summit, and continued success in your mission to build "one caring and sharing community".

Ban Ki-moon