

# PRESS RELEASE

## ข่าวสารนิเทศ

27 February 2009

### **The ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting with High Level Panel on an ASEAN Human Rights Body (HLP)**

On 27 February 2009 at 12.00-12.45 hrs. at Dusit Thani Hua Hin Hotel, Cha-am, Phetchaburi, H.E. Kasit Piromya, the Foreign Minister of Thailand, chaired the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting with the High Level Panel on an ASEAN Human Rights Body (HLP), to discuss the 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the HLP which Thailand expects to be set up during the term of Thailand's ASEAN Chairmanship.

The AHRB is a part of ongoing regional efforts to help realize a truly people-centered ASEAN Community by 2015. The objectives of the AHRB is the creation of an organization that will promote and protect human rights and help shape and raise human rights standards in ASEAN according to the regional context and act as a channel for constructive cooperation on the issue of human rights for ASEAN Member States. In addition, the Foreign Ministers emphasized that the AHRB should be credible, realistic, effective and evolutionary.

During the meeting, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers and the HLP discussed and exchanged views on wide-ranging issues, including the objective, Terms of Reference, plan and funding of the AHRB. On funding, the Ministers agreed to task the HLP to look into the possibility of setting up a separate fund to support its activities by mobilizing funds from ASEAN Member States as well as external sources.

The HLP took note and promised to consider seriously the results of the discussion and will incorporate them into a revised draft of the Terms of Reference for AHRB that the HLP will later present and seek approval at the 42<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting to be held later in July in Thailand.

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