

# PRESS RELEASE

## ข่าวสารนิเทศ

27 February 2009

### **The ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting with High Level Legal experts' Group on follow up to the ASEAN Charter (HLEG)**

On 27 February 2009 at 12.45-13.45 hrs. at Dusit Thani Hua Hin Hotel, Cha-am, Phetchaburi, H.E. Kasit Piromya, the Foreign Minister of Thailand, chaired the Meeting between ASEAN Foreign Ministers and the High Level Legal Experts' Group on Follow-Up to the ASEAN Charter (HLEG). During the Meeting the Chair of HLEG (H.E. Vasin Teeravechyan) presented the Recommendations of HLEG on the legal issues under the ASEAN Charter, comprising legal personality and Dispute Settlement Mechanisms of ASEAN, as well as reported on the work progress of HLEG to the ASEAN Foreign Ministers for comments and guidance. Such comments and guidance would enable the Member States to implement the relevant legal provisions as put in place by the ASEAN Charter during the chairmanship of Thailand.

The ASEAN Foreign Ministers agreed that the drafting of legal instruments on legal personality of ASEAN and the development of Dispute Settlement Mechanisms among the Member States will facilitate the smooth and effective functioning of ASEAN, as well as fostering ASEAN into a rules-based organization. This will help ASEAN Member States integrate with confidence, which will move ASEAN forward as an ASEAN Community. Furthermore, it will help ASEAN achieve a greater dynamism in its relationships with its dialogue partners and other international organizations.

The ASEAN Foreign Ministers agreed for the HLEG to draft an agreement which covers relevant matters related to legal personality of ASEAN such as privileges and immunity. With regard to the Dispute Settlement Mechanisms, the Meeting agreed that the Member States should use existing mechanisms such as a reconciliation or mediation before opting to use arbitration. In this connection, the Meeting tasked the HLEG to draft a legal instrument to establish an appropriate dispute settlement mechanism.

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