

Press Statement
ASEAN Broadens Cooperation to Plus Three in Addressing Influenza A(H1N1)
ASEAN Secretariat, 1 May 2009

In a move to have a coordinated and comprehensive response to the threat of Influenza A/H1N1, ASEAN will now invite China, Japan and the Republic of Korea to its Health Ministers Meeting that will be held in Bangkok on 8 May. "Thailand has decided to invite the Plus Three countries to discuss a common regional response," said the Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr Surin Pitsuwan.

In a further move to provide a platform for substantive discussions at the meeting, a video-link will also be established with the US Department of Health and Human Services, the Atlanta-based US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The WHO yesterday began referring to the new influenza virus as influenza A(H1N1) instead of swine influenza. "The Senior Officials, who will meet on 7 May, would be able to discuss with experts from these health establishments via video-link on the technical, medical and scientific issues while the Ministers would be able to interact with the top leadership on policy issues," said Dr Surin.