

Press Release
ASEAN Welcomes Two More Ambassadors
ASEAN Secretariat, 5 June 2009

ASEAN has welcomed two more Ambassadors from the European Union, making it a total of 14 Ambassadors to ASEAN from EU Member States.

Mr Klaus Otto Wölfer from Austria and Mr Roberto Palmieri from Italy presented their letter of appointments to the Secretary-General of ASEAN today.

Receiving the Ambassadors, Dr Surin Pitsuwan said, "ASEAN and EU have enjoyed close relations and we are consistently trying to further enhance these ties. With the appointment of Ambassador Wölfer and Ambassador Palmieri, I am confident that it will contribute to such an endeavour. In addition, I also look forward to cooperation between ASEAN-Austria and ASEAN-Italy with the Ambassadors."

In presenting his credentials, Ambassador Wölfer said that the step signifies a deepening of the relations between Austria and ASEAN, following the entry into force of the ASEAN Charter in December 2008. "Austria welcomes this new era of development within ASEAN, in particular as the European Union has gone through a similar process towards more integration and cooperation. Stepping up our relations with ASEAN should be of mutual benefit to EU-member Austria and to ASEAN alike," he said.

Meanwhile, Ambassador Palmieri said that Italy is interested in establishing strong ties with ASEAN considering the important role that it plays in South East Asia in promoting peace and regional security, social justice, human rights and international trade. "More specifically Italy appreciates very much the pivotal role that ASEAN plays in fostering peace and stability in the region by providing a very useful political forum for dialogue among the Member States," he added.

To date, there are now 24 Ambassadors to ASEAN from non-ASEAN Member States including the European Commission (EC). This is in line with the provision in the ASEAN Charter whereby non-ASEAN Member States and relevant intergovernmental organisations may appoint and accredit Ambassadors to ASEAN.

Ambassador Wölfer and Ambassador Palmieri are concurrently the Ambassador of Austria to Indonesia, Singapore and Timor Leste and the Ambassador of Italy to Indonesia and Timor Leste respectively.



H.E. Mr Klaus Otto Wölfer and Dr. Surin Pitsuwan



H.E. Roberto Palmieri and Dr. Surin Pitsuwan