

**Foreign Minister Kasit Addresses Issues Related to Myanmar**  
**Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand**  
**16 May 2009**

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On 15 May 2009 at 13:45 hours, Mr. Kasit Piromya, Minister of Foreign Affairs, held a press conference to address recent issues on Myanmar. Gist as follows:

First, on the concerns over Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's recent health problems, the Foreign Minister stated that he had conveyed his concerns regarding Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's recent health problems and her difficulty in accessing necessary medical services to the Government of Myanmar. He welcomed the news that the Myanmar Government had taken the necessary steps to ensure Ms. Suu Kyi had adequate access to medical services.

Second, as the period of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's detention would come to an end on 15 May, Foreign Minister Kasit expressed his wish to see her release, which is in line with the view of ASEAN, as reflected in the Chairman's Statement of the 14th ASEAN Summit in Thailand earlier this year, that "ASEAN encourages the Myanmar Government to facilitate the national reconciliation process to be more inclusive so as to strengthen national unity, thereby contributing to peace and prosperity in Myanmar". He added that the release of political detainees and the inclusion of all political parties in the political process leading to the 2010 elections would contribute significantly to the national reconciliation process and the Myanmar Government's 7-Step Roadmap, and would be welcomed by the people of Myanmar as well as those of its ASEAN neighbours and the international community.

Third, regarding the recent incident involving a US national who swam across the lake to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's house, Foreign Minister Kasit noted that the facts surrounding the incident remained unclear, particularly the circumstances in which the man swam across the lake, such as how he was able to evade security in the area, and his intentions. The Foreign Minister expressed his wish to see more details from the Myanmar Government, especially during the legal proceedings which would begin on 18 May 2009. He also hoped that the matter would be handled with transparency, so that this would not adversely affect the Government of Myanmar.

The Foreign Minister noted that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had informed the Myanmar Government in advance about this press conference, and emphasized his wish to see progress, stability, peace, and reconciliation in Myanmar as both countries enjoy close relations and share over 2,000 kilometers of land border, adding that what happens in Myanmar affects Thailand one way or another.

Asked about Myanmar's reactions after being notified of the press conference, Foreign Minister Kasit said he believed Myanmar understood that Thailand had to express its views given its role as ASEAN Chair and the fact that as a democratic country, the Thai Government needed to inform the public about its stand. He also added that he would not prejudge whether and how the Myanmar Government would provide information about the case involving the American national.

In response to a question from the media on ASEAN's role, Foreign Minister Kasit said that the Thai ambassador in Yangon was in consultations with other ASEAN ambassadors and a meeting of ASEAN senior officials might be held to discuss the present issue on the sidelines of the EAS Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) on 19 May 2009 in Phuket. He also reaffirmed that Thailand would not take any action or measure to pressure Myanmar, adding that Thailand and Myanmar were friends who should be able to reason with each other, and that Myanmar should be aware of its responsibilities and the expectations of the international community.