

Press Release

Secretary-General of ASEAN welcomes Canadian Ambassador to ASEAN

ASEAN Secretariat, 16 February 2009

Canada has appointed H.E. John T. Holmes as her first Ambassador to ASEAN.

Welcoming this gesture from Canada who has established dialogue relations with ASEAN since 1977, the Secretary-General of ASEAN Dr Surin Pitsuwan said, "Canada has been a long-standing partner of ASEAN. This year marks the 32nd year of ASEAN-Canada dialogue relations. With Ambassador Holmes' appointment, I believe ASEAN-Canada relations will be further enhanced and cooperation intensified in the political and security, economic and socio-cultural fields."

In August 2007, ASEAN and Canada adopted the ASEAN-Canada Joint Cooperation Work Plan 2007-2010, which provides a framework for comprehensive cooperation in the various areas, including counter-terrorism and transnational crime.

Ambassador Holmes is currently Ambassador of Canada to the Republic of Indonesia, with concurrent accreditation to the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste.

Under the ASEAN Charter, non-ASEAN Member States and relevant inter-governmental organisations may appoint Ambassadors to ASEAN. So far, 13 countries* and the European Commission have appointed their Ambassadors to ASEAN. The number is expected to grow since all 27 member states of the European Union are expected to appoint their Ambassadors to ASEAN.

Dr Surin said, "This is a demonstration of the confidence that the international community has in ASEAN and recognition of the growing importance of ASEAN as we intensify our community building efforts."

() These countries are, in order, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the People's Republic of China, India, UK, France, Finland, the Czech Republic, Germany, and Canada.*