

**Press Release**

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**India Appoints Ambassador to ASEAN**

***ASEAN Secretariat, 7 January 2009***

India has appointed Neelakantan Ravi as its Ambassador to ASEAN.

On receiving the news, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr Surin Pitsuwan, said, "ASEAN has enjoyed a close partnership with India since 1995 when it progressed from a sectoral dialogue partner to become our full dialogue partner. I believe Mr N Ravi's appointment will further enhance ASEAN-India strategic partnership that has since spanned the political and security, economic and social dimensions."

In the economic realm, both parties have recently concluded negotiations on the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement and started negotiations on the Trade in Services and Investment Agreements.

Ambassador Ravi, who previously served as the Ambassador of India to Viet Nam, is concurrently the Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs, India.

India is the seventh ASEAN Dialogue Partner to have appointed its Ambassador to ASEAN. The others are the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and the People's Republic of China.