

# Statement by the Secretary-General of ASEAN Welcoming the Kingdom of Cambodia as the Tenth Member State of ASEAN

## ASEAN Secretariat, 30 April 1999

Excellencies,

Mr Noun Chivorn, Charge d' Affaires of the Royal Embassy of Cambodia

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A few moments ago, the ceremony for the admission of the Kingdom of Cambodia into ASEAN was held in Hanoi. The admission was marked by the signing of the Declaration on the Admission of the Kingdom of Cambodia by the Cambodian Senior Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the ASEAN Foreign Ministers. The Cambodian Minister then signed the Protocol for the Accession of the Kingdom of Cambodia to ASEAN Agreements. The national flag of the Kingdom of Cambodia was then raised.

I take great pleasure in extending on behalf of the ASEAN Secretariat and myself our heartiest welcome to the Kingdom of Cambodia into the family of ASEAN Member States. At long last, after 32 years, we have fulfilled the vision of our Founding Fathers to unite all nations of Southeast Asia under one ASEAN roof. This is truly a historic moment that we can all cherish.

The realization of "ASEAN-10" has not only a symbolic significance, but also immense implications for the future of our region. With mutual respect and equality, we have turned our diversity to our advantage and pulled together to advance our common interest in strengthening peace and stability in our region. The Kingdom of Cambodia's membership will be a substantial contribution to this endeavour.

One painful but invaluable lesson from the current economic difficulties is that in this age of globalization, nations can thrive and flourish only if they band together for common purposes. Through internal reforms, active co-operation and purposeful integration, ASEAN will certainly overcome the difficulties, as it has already begun to do so. ASEAN will be stronger and ready for sustainable growth and development in the new millennium. With half a billion people in ASEAN and a combined GDP of nearly US\$700 billion, ASEAN remains an important market and platform for production.

It is in this spirit that I once again welcome the Kingdom of Cambodia into our ASEAN family. I would like to take this opportunity to reassure the Kingdom of Cambodia of the co-operation of the ASEAN Secretariat and of our support for the Kingdom of Cambodia's active participation in all ASEAN

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activities. We look forward to welcoming a team of 19 Cambodian officials, which is scheduled to undergo a three-day training programme at our office early next week.

In conclusion, let me thank all of you for taking part in this ceremony, which is our small way of sharing the joy of seeing the dream of unity and solidarity in Southeast Asia come true.

SOURCE: ASEAN Secretariat World Wide Web site <<http://www.aseansec.org>>.