
Meeting of the Twelfth U.S.-ASEAN Dialogue Washington, D.C., May 9–10, 1994

JOINT PRESS STATEMENT

1. The Twelfth U.S.-ASEAN Dialogue was held at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C. on May 9–10, 1994.
2. Delegations from the governments of the United States and members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) participated in the meeting, which was co-chaired by Ambassador Winston Lord, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, leader of the United States Delegation, and His Excellency Dato Lim Jock Seng, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, leader of the Brunei Darussalam delegation. His Excellency Dato Ajit Singh, Secretary-General of ASEAN, was also present.
3. The private sectors of the United States and ASEAN also participated and were represented by the United States and ASEAN Sections of the U.S.-ASEAN Business Council. To underscore the central importance both sides accord to the private sector and the United States and ASEAN desire to integrate the private sector more extensively in the Dialogue, the private sector participated fully in the entire economic agenda of the Dialogue.
4. Acting Secretary of State Strobe Talbott welcomed the ASEAN participants and observed that the dialogue provides an opportunity to discuss a broad range of economic and political issues, including issues outside the Asia-Pacific region. The U.S. attaches special importance to the new ASEAN Regional forum. Communications and transportation technologies are bringing the world closer together in time and space, enabling us to forge new links among peoples and joint approaches to shared problems. The communications revolution also encourages a global consciousness, and a global conscience. ASEAN, and the U.S.-ASEAN dialogue, can play a leading role in magnifying the positive features of our growing interdependence and in controlling the negative ones. Far more important than any differences among us are the interests and values that bind us together. The Acting Secretary noted the value in having the Trade and Investment Coordination Committee (TICC) deliberations within the framework of the Dialogue process, thereby engaging the private sector in all aspects of the economic agenda. He extended a special welcome to the business leaders participating in the dialogue.
5. ASEAN Secretary-General Dato Ajit Singh emphasized in his opening remarks the importance of the now 17 year old ASEAN-U.S. Dialogue process, noting our substantial trade and investment ties and our shared political and security interests. He described the Dialogue process as a dynamic one, pointing to the role of the private sector, the Dialogue's elevation to the senior officials level, and the inclusion of political and security issues. The Secretary-General stressed ASEAN's commitment to free trade and the opportunities for U.S. joint ventures with ASEAN counterparts. He said ASEAN looks to enhanced regional security consultations to foster trust and confidence so matters can be peacefully resolved. The

Secretary-General concluded that ASEAN considers the United States an important partner in the region.

6. His Excellency Dato Lim Jock Seng, in his opening remarks, stated that the Dialogue is a relationship between friends who feel confident enough to talk frankly, and that we had made progress in the Dialogue relationship. He emphasized the need for mutual understanding and sensitivity in conducting relations. He pointed to the importance of a balance within the Dialogue relationship to ensure that all aspects of our joint efforts — political, economic, cultural, and development cooperation — are given equal consideration.

7. The Meeting reviewed the U.S.-ASEAN Dialogue relations since the last U.S.-ASEAN Dialogue in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam on May 15–16, 1993. Both sides emphasized the importance of the Dialogue process as a key element in our relations, recognizing the breadth of United States and ASEAN links and the areas where the United States and ASEAN can work in partnership, and emphasizing the role of the Dialogue in reviewing shared economic and political issues.

8. The representatives of the U.S. and ASEAN private sectors called on governments to nurture a healthy and strong economic and commercial relationship. The U.S.-ASEAN Dialogue and the Trade and Investment Coordination Committee should be used not only to identify and solve problems, but also to enhance cooperation for mutual growth. Governments should continue bilateral and regional efforts to lower barriers to trade in goods and services, to reduce subsidies, protect intellectual property rights, facilitate economically sound investment, and to avoid taking unilateral actions and linking non-trade issues to trade matters. Such measures are consistent with, and complementary to, the recently completed Uruguay Round. Both private and public sector representatives welcomed private sector participation in the Dialogue.

9. The Meeting exchanged views on international economic issues and the United States and ASEAN economic outlooks. The United States indicated that the U.S. economy is in the best shape in a generation. GDP growth in 1994 is expected to be three percent or higher; the U.S. is experiencing an investment boom; personal consumption remains moderate; and inflation figures are at the lowest level in more than 20 years. The ASEAN region, whose two-way trade with the world and with the United States in 1993 was, respectively, \$372 billion and \$70.6 billion, is characterized by high growth, rapid economic integration, significant investment and growth from foreign capital, a central private sector role in growth and integration, and sound government policies. The meeting welcomed the improved economic outlook and hoped that this would engender greater trade and investment flows.

10. The U.S. and ASEAN were pleased that negotiations for an International Tropical Timber Agreement were successfully concluded and was hopeful that negotiations for a Third International Natural Rubber Agreement could be completed this year.

11. The Meeting agreed to pursue the Alliance for Mutual Growth (AMG) to improve trade and investment through mutual cooperation. The TICC meeting on May 11 will look at the six areas being emphasized under the AMG: human resources, infrastructure, small and medium sized enterprises, standards, technology, and trade promotion.

12. The U.S. and ASEAN discussed the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA), and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). They agreed that APEC would contribute positively to regional economic cooperation. They recognized that the successful APEC Leaders and Ministerial meetings in Seattle last November moved APEC to a new level of maturity and provided strong momentum for further development in 1994 under Indonesia's chair. ASEAN and the United States briefed each other on the AFTA and the NAFTA, and encouraged each other to take advantage of the new trade and investment opportunities offered by these agreements. The ASEAN Secretary-General also briefed on developments on the EAEC.

13. Both sides remain committed to the multilateral trading system, the importance of the recently concluded Uruguay Round, and the significance of the World Trade Organization. The United States

noted the President's commitment to seek bipartisan support for passage this year of the Uruguay Round implementing legislation. ASEAN confirmed that they are also preparing for early ratification of the Uruguay Round agreement. The United States, ASEAN, and the private sector all stressed the need to fully implement the Uruguay Round.

14. The Meeting recognized the ASEAN Private Investment Trade Opportunities (PITO) program's important role in promoting investment and trade activities in the Asia-Pacific region. The Meeting also discussed funding by the United States Agency for International Development through PITO and the ASEAN Environmental Improvement Program (EIP). The private sector underlined the possible role PITO could play in implementing AMG.

15. The United States looks forward to participating in the first meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum in Bangkok in July 1994 to further regional security dialogue in Asia. The Bangkok meeting will include ASEAN foreign ministers, foreign ministers from ASEAN Dialogue Partners, including Secretary Christopher, and observers and guests. The U.S. affirmed that it will remain engaged in the region and that U.S. security policy will continue to be based on U.S. alliances and other bilateral defense ties, supplemented by active participation in the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference and the ASEAN Regional Forum. ASEAN expressed appreciation for the constructive role which the United States plays in the region.

16. Participants also exchanged views on current international and regional issues of mutual interest, including Korea, Myanmar, Cambodia, Vietnam, the Middle East, Bosnia-Herzegovina, narcotics, and nonproliferation [*sic*].

17. It was agreed that the 13th U.S.-ASEAN Dialogue would be held in Indonesia on a date to be mutually agreed upon.

18. The ASEAN delegations expressed appreciation to the Government of the United States for the warm hospitality accorded to them and the excellent arrangements made for the meeting.

19. The Meeting was held in the spirit of United States-ASEAN cooperation and cordiality.

SOURCE: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Singapore.