



**Opening Remarks by Mr. S. Pushpanathan, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for
ASEAN Economic Community at the World Bank - ASEAN Secretariat Staff Seminar
on Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG)
ASEAN Secretariat, 2 June 2009**

Mr. Joachim von Amsberg, World Bank Country Director - Indonesia

Distinguished Officials from the World Bank

Colleagues from the ASEAN Secretariat

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning.

My warmest welcome to all of you to the ASEAN Secretariat. It is indeed my pleasure to say a few words at this opening session of the World Bank - ASEAN Secretariat Staff Seminar on Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG). I have learnt that this staff seminar is the first ever between the two institutions to discuss issues of FLEG. Taking this opportunity, I would like to encourage all of you to build our working partnership and take further steps in addressing FLEG, which I believe is a common agenda for our two institutions.

We are all aware of the fact that illegal logging is an issue that many different stakeholders are involved in across the board - from domestic to regional and global levels. It is an issue that countries cannot tackle alone at the national level. It requires combined, collaborative and complementary efforts at national, regional and international levels. ASEAN has seriously taken up the FLEG issue at its meetings and agreed to specific actions in its Community Blueprints. Both in the ASEAN Economic Community and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprints, there are specific actions and measures with specific timelines to promote FLEG. It is also covered in our Priority Integration Sector of wood-based products.

The latest initiative has been the Work Plan for strengthening FLEG in ASEAN (2008-2015) This Work Plan was formally endorsed by the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry in 2008. The Work Plan has three key objectives. First is to strengthen forest

law enforcement and governance in respective countries consistent with prevailing national laws, rules and regulations. Second is to enhance collaborative activities and programmes such as regional customs and trade cooperation, forestry sector transparency, joint approaches in timber certification, country diagnostics and experience sharing. Third is build upon East Asia FLEG initiative as a meaningful platform for synergistic partnership and cooperation.

Specifically on the third objective of building upon East Asia FLEG initiative, the World Bank has taken an active role since the launch of the initiative in 2001. ASEAN FLEG Work Plan goes beyond the forestry issues to address cross-cutting areas as well as cooperation with other law enforcement agencies.

Ladies and gentlemen

Let me take this opportunity to encourage all of you to use this staff seminar as a platform to build further our cooperation on FLEG and in other areas. I am very sure we will find many other issues and areas of cooperation common to both of our institutions. Whilst ASEAN as a regional organisation has grown and diversified in terms of its economic structure and trade, the forestry sector continues to play a vital role in terms of bringing economic benefits and development within the region and beyond. Equally, proper forest management practices must be in place to ensure sustainable management of our forest and environment. In this regard, ASEAN is seeking to pursue concerted efforts in collaboration with international and regional organisations as well as our Dialogue Partners.

As ASEAN pursues economic integration and expansion of intra-ASEAN and external trade, our partners have been very supportive in extending their assistance to ASEAN. The ASEAN Secretariat and World Bank have been working closely on several fronts from finance to forestry and social safety nets.

Finally, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to the World Bank officials for coming here and participating in this staff seminar. I believe this meeting will serve as a catalyst to forestry cooperation between ASEAN Secretariat and the WB and open up new areas for future cooperation. Starting from this seminar, we look forward to advancing

technical cooperation and trade promotion activities in the forestry sector between our organisations for the benefit of the ASEAN Member States.

On behalf of the Secretary-General of ASEAN, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the World Bank for supporting this staff seminar. I wish all of you a fruitful discussion and very productive outcomes.

I hope your stay in Jakarta will be an enjoyable one.

Thank you.
