



**Remarks by
H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary-General of ASEAN
at the Presentation of Logo to Commemorate
50 Years of ASEAN-New Zealand Dialogue Relations**

ASEAN Hall, ASEAN Headquarters / ASEAN Secretariat, 9 January 2025

Excellency Dr. Ton Thi Ngoc Huong, Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to ASEAN,

Excellency Stuart Calman, Ambassador of New Zealand to ASEAN,

Excellencies Permanent Representatives to ASEAN

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

Good afternoon,

1. Today marks a memorable occasion as we unveil the commemorative logo celebrating the golden jubilee of ASEAN-New Zealand Dialogue Relations. This half-century milestone celebrates a relationship that is deeply rooted in mutual trust, mutual respect, mutual understanding, and shared vision for regional peace and prosperity.
2. Since the inception of our Dialogue Relations in 1975, ASEAN and New Zealand have cultivated a dynamic and multifaceted partnership that has expanded in both scope and depth over time. This partnership serves as a beacon of cooperation, promoting peace, prosperity, and progress. Together, we have confronted global challenges, championed sustainable development, and fostered innovation and collaboration across the region while enriching and improving the lives of our communities and citizens.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. As small and middle powers committed to multilateral diplomacy and a rules-based system, ASEAN and New Zealand share an important synergy rooted in common values and mutual interests. ASEAN holds significant geo-strategic and geo-economic value for New Zealand and as a gateway to the Indo-Pacific, ensuring

peace and stability along critical trade routes, strengthening security cooperation on non-traditional threats, and driving economic growth by promoting open and free trade through a broad network of free trade agreements. Equally important, ASEAN-led mechanisms serve as key platforms for New Zealand to extend its diplomatic reach far beyond its shores, contributing to regional stability and fostering collaboration on global issues.

4. In turn, New Zealand's steadfast advocacy for free trade, economic cooperation, and regional integration complements ASEAN's pursuit of peace, stability, and inclusive development. Together, our efforts in multilateral diplomacy and international cooperation amplify our collective voice on the global stage, reflecting our commitment to open markets, respect for sovereignty, and cooperative progress in an increasingly complex world.
5. Our partnership has delivered remarkable achievements that span the entire spectrum of regional cooperation. In the political-security field, ASEAN and New Zealand have been cooperating closely in addressing non-security challenges, including countering terrorism and disrupting transnational crime networks to strengthening cybersecurity. New Zealand is also a committed and constructive member in various ASEAN-led mechanisms, and I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for its steadfast support of ASEAN Centrality and ASEAN community-building.
6. On the economic front, New Zealand has long been a committed partner alongside ASEAN in fostering inclusive and sustainable growth and advocating for an economic order based on open cross-border trade and investment that have greatly benefitted our businesses and consumers alike. The ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) are key milestones in our shared pursuit of economic prosperity through strengthening economic ties, expanding market access, and driving innovation across our economies.
7. The transformative power of our partnership is perhaps most visible in education, where we have invested in our region's future leaders. Through New Zealand's scholarship and training programs, we are cultivating a new generation of public sector leaders equipped with expertise in crucial areas - from public health management and good governance to food and agribusiness and international trade. These initiatives have built bridges that sustain fruitful and enriching connections between our peoples.

8. In the critical arena of environmental stewardship, our collaboration has set new benchmarks for regional climate action. ASEAN certainly appreciates New Zealand's contribution to the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity in the Philippines to support the ASEAN Biodiversity Plan. We also greatly value New Zealand's contribution to the ASEAN Centre for Climate Change in Brunei Darussalam, especially in generating policy recommendations to address climate challenges faced by ASEAN Member States. Together, we are pioneering solutions that protect our shared natural heritage while promoting sustainable development.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. As we celebrate fifty years of partnership, today's unveiling of the commemorative logo embodies the essence of our journey together – our resilience through shifting times and eras, the connections we've built through trade, commerce, digital networks, and education, the bonds forged between our peoples, and the shared future that we are committed to building. This is not merely a celebration of the past, but a powerful symbol of our determination to further advance this relationship.¹

10. As we step into the next chapter, we carry forward not just five decades of achievements, but also the commitment to deeper collaboration and stronger ties. This golden jubilee year presents us with a momentous opportunity to reimagine our partnership into the future, which is full of potentials, possibilities, and opportunities.

11. I am particularly excited about our upcoming Commemorative Summit, to be held alongside the 47th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits in Malaysia later this year. This gathering will not only celebrate our shared history but also set the new course for our next half-century of cooperation and partnership.

12. Together, we have proven how a partnership grounded in shared goals and mutual respect can deliver meaningful results for our peoples and our two sides. Together, we will continue to write new chapters in this remarkable journey of regional partnership and mutual progress.

Thank you.

¹ As stated in the Concept Note of Logo for the 50th Anniversary of ASEAN-New Zealand Dialogue Relation, "Reflecting on Our Past, Looking Toward Our Future."