



H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary-General of ASEAN

**Keynote Address at the
Welcome Reception for the Ambassador of the United States to ASEAN**

7 July 2026, Residence of the United States Ambassador to ASEAN, Jakarta

Your Excellency Kevin Kim, Ambassador of the United States of America to ASEAN,

Your Excellency Noy Choumneanh, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Cambodia to ASEAN and as Country Coordinator of ASEAN-US Dialogue Relations,

Excellencies, Ambassadors, Members of the Committee of the Permanent Representatives to ASEAN,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends and Colleagues,

A very good evening. It is a real pleasure to be with you all this evening. Our main and most delightful task this evening is to extend a truly warm welcome to Ambassador Kevin Kim as he steps into his important role as the new United States Ambassador to ASEAN.

Ambassador Kim, you certainly know how to time your arrival. You are joining us at a moment when the energy is absolutely electric. We have all just witnessed the historic celebration of America's 250th Anniversary only a few days ago and the excitement is still up in the air.

But let's be honest and with a light heart this evening; even with a 250th birthday and the World Cup underway, the biggest news of the week happened just last week, when Taylor Swift got married! Between a monumental wedding, a global football tournament, and a historic national milestone, it is very clear that the United States has been in peak celebration mode!

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

That exact spirit of energy, teamwork, and bringing people together is what defines the ASEAN-U.S. partnership. As we look ahead to next year, we are gearing up for our own massive milestones: the 50th Anniversary of ASEAN-U.S. Dialogue Relations and the Fifth Anniversary of our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Over the past decades, ASEAN and the United States have forged a robust, forward-looking partnership grounded in mutual trust, mutual understanding, shared interests, and a steadfast respect for ASEAN Centrality. Together, we have advanced cooperation across a broad range of interests that have contributed to peace, stability, and prosperity in our region and beyond.

Ambassador Kim, your appointment sends a clear and strong signal of the United States' enduring commitment to this bond. I am entirely confident that your able leadership will take us to even greater heights. I look forward to working closely and proactively with you, especially as we plan the upcoming ASEAN-U.S. Commemorative Summit or a Special Summit in the United States.

It will be a historic opportunity to look back at what we've achieved and to renew our shared commitment to a future-oriented partnership that delivers real, tangible benefits to the combined one billion people of ASEAN and the United States.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

An evening reception is nothing without a shared moment of celebration. May I invite you all to raise your glasses with me.

To Ambassador Kevin Kim, we wish you the absolute best of success, joy, and fulfillment in your new assignment. And to the enduring friendship and prosperous future of ASEAN-United States relations. Cheers!

Have a wonderful evening everyone. Thank you very much.
