



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

**Remarks at the
*Farewell Dinner hosted by the Outgoing Ambassador of the EU to ASEAN***

10 August 2026, Ayana Midplaza, Jakarta, Indonesia

Your Excellency Sujiro Seam, Ambassador of the EU to ASEAN,

Your Excellencies, Heads of Mission of the EU Member States based in Jakarta,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very good evening to all of you. It is a great pleasure to welcome you this evening. Although every farewell carries a touch of sadness, tonight is first and foremost an occasion to celebrate a valued friend of ASEAN. We are gathered to express our appreciation to Ambassador Sujiro Seam as he concludes his successful tenure as Ambassador of the European Union to ASEAN.

Ambassador Sujiro, I have to say that you have taken the expression "*leaving no meeting behind*" rather seriously. Before packing your bags for your next posting back home in Paris, you made sure that we completed all the major ASEAN-EU meetings on this year's calendar: the 25th ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting in Brunei Darussalam in April, the 33rd ASEAN-EU Joint Cooperation Committee Meeting here in Jakarta in June, and, most recently, the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference with the EU in Manila just last month. Only after ensuring that every important meeting was behind us did you finally allow us the opportunity to bid you farewell. So you really have been so diligent.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

While we may smile at that demanding schedule, it reflects something that all of us have come to know well about Ambassador Sujiro: his professionalism, commitment and quiet determination to move our partnership forward decisively. Your own journey—from being born in Phnom Penh, to serving the European Union in the Pacific, and now in ASEAN—has taken you across regions and cultures, bringing with it a breadth of experience that has greatly enriched our engagement, and of course, our relations. Throughout your time in Jakarta, you have brought that experience to every conversation and every meeting, always with courtesy, openness, frankness and a genuine commitment to partnership.

Those qualities have earned you not only the respect of colleagues across ASEAN, but also many lasting friendships. Your tenure has coincided with an important period for ASEAN-EU relations. Built on nearly five decades of dialogue, our partnership continues to grow from strength to strength, grounded in mutual trust, shared interests and steadfast respect for ASEAN Centrality. Together, we have expanded practical cooperation across an increasingly wide range of areas, delivering tangible benefits for our peoples while contributing to peace, stability and prosperity in our respective regions.

Ambassador Sujiro, you have made your own contribution to this journey over the past three years. Under your stewardship, ASEAN-EU engagement has remained active, substantive and indeed, forward-looking. At the recent Post-Ministerial Conference in Manila, we endorsed the Concept Note for the ASEAN-EU Commemorative Summit in 2027 and exchanged views on how our partnership can deliver even more meaningful and tangible outcomes in the years ahead. You leave your successor a very ambitious agenda, and a very solid foundation on which to build on.

The timing could hardly be more significant. Next year, ASEAN will celebrate its 60th Anniversary, while ASEAN and the European Union will commemorate our 50 years of Dialogue Relations. These milestones will provide an opportunity not only to reflect on how far our partnership has come, but also to shape its next chapter as we work together. I am confident that the ASEAN-EU Commemorative Summit in 2027 will reaffirm our shared commitment to an even stronger, more dynamic and future-oriented partnership. And of course, we also look forward to working together to elevate our partnership, I hope we can do it.

Ambassador Sujiro, while we look forward to working closely with your successor, we also recognise the legacy that you leave behind. The initiatives you have advanced, the partnerships you have strengthened, and the friendships you have cultivated will remain an enduring part of ASEAN-EU relations, cooperation and partnership. For that, you have our sincere gratitude.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

No farewell gathering is complete without a toast. May I now invite all of you to raise your glasses with me. To Ambassador Sujiro Seam; we sincerely thank you for your friendship, your dedication, and your valuable contribution to ASEAN-EU relations. We wish you every success, good health and happiness in the next chapter of your journey. And to the enduring friendship and cooperation as well as partnership between ASEAN and the European Union, and to an even stronger ASEAN-EU Dialogue Partnership in the years ahead. Cheers! *Au revoir*, Ambassador Sujiro. Thank you.
