

## THAILAND UPDATE

### **14<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit and Related Summits in Phuket Rescheduled**

• The 14<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit and Related Summits, initially proposed by Thailand to be held during mid-June, will be rescheduled to a later date as the proposed dates were inconvenient for some leaders. Two alternative dates have been suggested by some ASEAN countries and its dialogue partners, namely, either after the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM)/Post-Ministerial Conferences (PMC)/ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in July or combined with the 15<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in October.

• Senior Officials' Meeting of ASEAN, East Asia Summit (EAS), and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) will meet in Phuket on May 18-20, 2009, during which the new dates of the Summits will be discussed.

• ASEAN leaders and ministers will meet through out the year, including ASEAN-Republic of Korea (ROK) Commemorative Summit on Jeju island and the UN Conference at the Highest Level on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development in New York in June.

### **Thailand Never Banned US Pork Imports**

• In response to inaccurate press reports about Thailand's banning pork imports, the Government of Thailand has never banned the importation of US pork or pork products during the current swine flu outbreak. To ensure safety of consumers in Thailand, the Department of Livestock, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives has requested the International Animal Quarantine Station to step up the import inspection on live animal and animal remains. The importation of pork products are not subject to any extraordinary inspection. Despite the outbreak and preventive health measures implemented by the Thai authorities, Thailand still welcomes US pork and pork products.

### **Foreign Minister Kasit Calls for Release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi**

• FM Kasit on May 15, 2009 held a press conference to address issues on Myanmar. Gist as follows: First, on the concerns over Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's recent health problems, the FM stated that he had conveyed his concerns regarding her health and difficulty in accessing necessary medical services to the Government of Myanmar. He welcomed the news that the Myanmar Government had taken the necessary steps to ensure Ms. Suu Kyi had adequate access to medical services.

• Second, as the period of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's detention would soon come to an end, FM Kasit expressed his wish to see her release, which is in line with the view of ASEAN, as reflected in the Chairman's Statement of the 14<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in Thailand earlier this year, that "ASEAN encourages the Myanmar Government to facilitate the national reconciliation process to be more inclusive so as to strengthen national unity, thereby contributing to peace and prosperity in Myanmar". He added that the release of political detainees and the inclusion of all political parties in the political process leading to the 2010 elections would contribute significantly to the national reconciliation process and the Myanmar Government's 7-Step Roadmap, and would be welcomed by the people of Myanmar as well as those of its ASEAN neighbors and the international community.

• Third, regarding the recent incident involving a US national who swam across the lake to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's house, FM Kasit noted that the facts surrounding the incident remained unclear. The FM expressed his wish to see more details from the Myanmar Government.

• FM Kasit said that a meeting of ASEAN senior officials might be held to discuss the present issue on the sidelines of the EAS Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) on May 19, 2009 in Phuket. He also reaffirmed that Thailand would not take any action or measure to pressure Myanmar, adding that Thailand and Myanmar were friends who should be able to reason with each other, and that Myanmar should be aware of its responsibilities and the expectations of the international community.

### **Royal Thai Embassy to Host a Seminar on Business Development for the Thai Community**

• The Royal Thai Embassy will host the 4<sup>th</sup> session of the seminar series on "how the Thai-American Community can become an effective group in American Society" on June 8, 2009 from 6:00-8:30PM. The seminar will feature two invited speakers: Mr. James Busis, Director of Asia Pacific Institute, American Jewish Committee (AJC), and Mr. Barry Bogage, Executive Director of Maryland/Israel Development Center (MIDC). Please call Nipatsorn Kampa or Sansanee Dhanasarnsombat at (202) 298-4790 and 298-4811 for more details.

### **Kasetsart University to Host 10<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Genetics in Aquaculture**

• Kasetsart University will host 10<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Genetics in Aquaculture: roles of aquaculture genetics in global food crisis from June 22-26, 2009 in Bangkok. Participants will witness a variety of aquaculture activities in Thailand, especially shrimp farming. Please see <http://www.isga2009.org> for more details.

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