

From the speech of Hillary Rodham Clinton,
Secretary of State of the United States of America,
East West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii
28 October 2010

"If consequential security, political, and economic issues are being discussed, and if they involve our interests, then we will seek a seat at the table. That's why we view ASEAN as a fulcrum for the region's emerging regional architecture. And we see it as indispensable on a host of political, economic, and strategic matters.

The United States has taken a series of steps to build stronger ties with ASEAN, including acceding to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, and opening a U.S. mission to ASEAN. Secretary Gates recently returned from Hanoi where he participated in the ASEAN Defense Ministerial Meeting. President Obama has personally engaged with ASEAN leaders twice to signal how seriously the United States takes our engagement. And we've taken a leading role in the ASEAN Regional Forum, where we have discussed ongoing security issues such as North Korea and the South China Sea. On the latter issue, we are encouraged by China's recent steps to enter discussions with ASEAN about a more formal, binding code of conduct."