

Curriculum Vitae: Ambassador Muhamad Noor Yacob

Ambassador Muhamad Noor Yacob is the Executive Director of the APEC Secretariat based in Singapore, the coordinating, technical and advisory body that supports sustainable economic growth and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region. In this role, Ambassador Noor advances APEC's agenda by effectively executing APEC's work programmes as mandated by Leaders and Ministers who meet annually. He is the first appointee to be recruited through an open selection process and holds this appointment until December 31, 2012.

Ambassador Noor has also held several senior positions within the Malaysian public service. Prior to taking up his current position, Ambassador Noor was Malaysia's Permanent Representative to the World Trade Organisation in Switzerland until 2009. He was appointed in October 2003 and was elected Chair of the following WTO bodies:

- General Council (2007) which is the highest decision-making body of the WTO outside of the Ministerial Conference;
- Dispute Settlement Body (2006); and
- Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation (2004 – 2005).

Before moving to Geneva, for two years Ambassador Noor served as Deputy Secretary General of the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development.

Ambassador Noor began his career in Malaysia's Public Service at the Ministry of Plantation Industry and Commodities in 1974. During this stint, including as Trade Commissioner in the United Kingdom, he represented Malaysia extensively in international trade fora, including ASEAN, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and various international commodity organisations. Notably, Malaysia was then the world's leading producer of a number of commodities, including of rubber, tin, tropical timber, cocoa and palm oil. At the same time, these industries then accounted for more than 60 per cent of Malaysia's GDP, which attests to the importance of the negotiating tasks involved.

The suspension of buffer stock operations by the International Tin Council in October 1985, in particular, required participation in complex and intensive negotiations involving industry as well as banks and brokers. At the same time, it provided practical exposure to public international law and its interface with municipal commercial law and trade finance.

Ambassador Noor was honoured to have been elected:

- Vice-Chairman, International Cocoa Council (1995);
- Chairman, Management Board of the International Tin Research Institute (1986);
- Chairman, Executive Committee, International Rubber Study Group (1985); and
- Vice-Chairman, International Tin Council (1984).

In recognition of service to Malaysia, Ambassador Noor was awarded the 'Kesatria Mangku Negara' in 1998 by HM the King of Malaysia, 'Darjah Indera Mahkota Pahang' in 2006 by HRH the Sultan of Pahang and the Excellent Public Service Award by the Ministry of Plantation Industry and Commodities in 1995.

Ambassador Noor graduated with honours in economics from the University of Malaya in 1974. He took leave to seek a Master of Public Policy at the University of Wisconsin at Madison in 1981-82 and attended the Advanced Management Program at Harvard Business School in 2002.