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ASEAN MUST BE UNITED IN NOVE TOWARDS INTEGRATION OF REGIONAL ECONOMIES

KUALA LUMPUR, April 16 (Bernama) -- Asean should stand united and move forward towards the integration of regional economies, newly-appointed Asean secretary-general Rodolfo Severino said today.

He said Asean should develop a collective voice in dealing with the financial crisis affecting the region as it has both global and regional dimensions.

A collective voice was necessary as it would greatly contribute towards influencing the evolution of an international financial system, he said.

"Currency trading should be an important element of this evolution," he told reporters after his first official visit as the grouping's new secretary-general to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the latter's office here.

Severino said that apart from the haze, discussions during his half hour meeting with the Prime Minister centred on the financial problems as well as the haze facing Asean at present.

He also said that Dr Mahathir stressed the need for Asean to stand united in facing the currency crisis.

"He was particularly concerned with efforts in dealing with the changing financial structure of the international system," he said.--BERNAMA

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