

In this regard, it is my distinct honour on behalf of the Government of Indonesia to extend my country's gratitude and highest appreciation to the support extended to us by the Government of Canada. We are most particularly grateful for the support for the continuing consolidation of democracy in Indonesia through the contribution of \$5 million for voter education under the auspices of the UNDP.

Such assistance has helped prove to the world that Islam and democracy are compatible. The tender shoots of democracy bloom healthily in our populous largely Muslim country.

We must remember that civil Islam in Indonesia has not been merely passive or coincidental with democratization, it has been a catalyst. World leaders understand and appreciate the critical role that Islamic civil society has played in promoting democracy in Indonesia. There are great expectations that Islamic mass organizations, universities, pesantren, and nongovernmental organizations will continue to play an important part in developing the political culture and public expectations necessary to make Indonesia's nascent democratic institutions truly representative.

What we have seen is that the general elections in Indonesia have set a strong example for the region and emerging democracies everywhere. It is now an undeniable reality that Muslim nations can - in peace, in vigorous debate and with the fullest participation of people - travel the exciting road to freedom.

Indonesia's democratization under Megawati's presidency has indeed allowed the country to follow a foreign policy in line with the founding fathers' line of active neutralism and peace.

Our foreign policy now sets a priority on ASEAN with Indonesia as its most populous member. The full integration of an ASEAN community is foreseen in 2020 as decided by the Bali Concord II with the progressive establishment of an ASEAN Security Community, Economic Community, and Socio-cultural Community. It can be expected that a democratic Indonesia will have a more decisive voice in ASEAN in the years to come, especially in ASEAN's cooperation with China, Japan, South Korea (ASEAN +3) as well as that with APEC and the European Community.

I might add that Megawati's administration has laid the groundwork for a democratic and economically sound Indonesia in the eyes of the international community. She has accepted defeat with dignity and grace and will go down in our nation's history books as one of the great leaders of our democratic transition. Her successors