

Earlier this week, I signed two MOUs for very interesting development co-operation projects. The first, co-signed by your Minister of Finance, Mr. Mar'ie Muhammad, dealt with reform of the financial services sector, specifically in the areas of pensions, insurance and non-tax revenue. The second project MOU, co-signed by your State Minister for the Environment, Mr. Sarwono, represents a further initiative to build on years of Canadian-Indonesian co-operation in the area of the environment.

I hope that what I have been a part of this past week, and what has occurred these past few months, in terms of high-level political interest and business success, is just the beginning of a flourishing and mutually beneficial partnership.

I believe that the Maple Leaf Club will be an essential pillar upon which we can further build an enduring partnership. They are leaders in your community. The members of the Maple Leaf Club are alumni of Canadian universities and colleges. Even Industry Minister Ariwibowo is a graduate of a Canadian university. My government believes that education linkages is one of the best ways to foster people-to-people ties, which are critical to enhanced mutual awareness and understanding. And my government is doing something to foster these linkages.

As announced by our Prime Minister last year, Canada will soon establish a Canadian Education Centre in Jakarta. The objective of the Centre will be to promote Canada as a top-quality and affordable post-secondary education destination, where students can learn in a safe, clean and stimulating environment. The Centre will be able to provide information and counselling for Indonesian students.

It is our belief that through increased commercial and educational links, and continuing development co-operation, the people of our two countries will come to know each other better. It is imperative that we do so. And my visit here is a step in that direction.

I hope that in the next several months, we can continue to build pillars so that our relationship will expand and strengthen. Let's continue to work together on issues of peace and security. Let's work together on breaking down the barriers to trade and investment within the region and between us. Let's expand opportunities to get to know each other better, through cultural exchange and especially education links. Now that we have an Honorary Consul established in Surabaya and Canada's interests are better represented here, I am confident the future is promising. We are putting in place the pillars that will support an enduring and mutually beneficial partnership for the years to come.

Thank you.