



## **CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT THE BALI DEMOCRACY FORUM II**

### **Promoting Synergy between Democracy and Development in Asia: Prospects for Regional Cooperation**

#### **I. OPENING**

1. The Second Bali Democracy Forum (BDF II) was held on 10-11 December 2009 in Bali. The President of the Republic of Indonesia, H.E. Dr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, officially opened the BDF II. Also present at the Opening Session of the Forum were His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei Darussalam; H.E. Mr. Yukio Hatoyama, Prime Minister of Japan – the Co-chair – and H.E. Mr. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao, Prime Minister of Timor Leste. The BDF II was convened at the ministerial level. The presence of leaders from the Asian region signified the importance they gave to cooperation in the promotion of democracy in the Region.
2. The BDF II was attended by representatives from 36 countries in Asia, namely: Afghanistan, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, China, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor Leste, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam.

In addition, representatives of 13 countries from outside Asia, namely Austria, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, were also present as observers.

3. H.E. Dr. R.M. Marty M. Natalegawa, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, reported on the preparations for the BDF II and also on the progress of the forum since the BDF I, including the activities of the Institute of Peace and Democracy. The Minister underscored the need for synergizing the twin objectives of promoting democracy and economic development. The democratic process, he said, must be anchored on the rule of law in order to be sustainable. He also stressed the importance of access to information in building a sense of public participation in and

ownership of democracy. The Minister expressed gratitude to Dr. Hassan Wirajuda, the former Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, for his pivotal role in establishing the Bali Democracy Forum as well as the Institute of Peace and Democracy.

4. In his opening statement, President Yudhoyono stated that even though democracy and development are two different concepts, they are intertwined. Development without democracy would go limp, he stated. Whereas democracy without development would be meaningless. Thus, democracy and development are two processes that can strengthen one another. The relationship between economics and politics cover a very wide area of topics. Every nation also has a unique historical background and process of development. Many are also of the view that democracy is not the end goal. The end goal of democracy and development is the ultimate welfare of the people which would then create a true sense of justice.

## **II. LEADERS' SESSION AND GENERAL DEBATE**

5. The Leaders' Session was co-chaired by the President of the Republic of Indonesia, HE Mr. President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, and the Prime Minister of Japan, HE Mr. Yukio Hatoyama. The General Debate was chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia.
6. In his introductory remarks, President Yudhoyono recalled that the first Bali Democracy Forum last year raised the close correlation between democracy and development in the Asian region. He stressed the importance of searching for the right political and economic format of governance in order to promote economic development and democracy that fits the socio-economic conditions of the countries in the region.
7. The Prime Minister of Japan as the Co-chair underlined the importance of the BDF as a platform for dialogue among Asian governments and for drawing insights from their experiences. He also stressed that we should be proud of the fact that we charted a unique course in accordance with our unique circumstances, so that we made a transition to democracy, while also achieving economic growth and developing civil society. He referred to the spirit of *yu-ai*, or "fraternity", which guides our aspiration for a society in which diversity is respected and people coexist in dignity. He said that peace and security were essential to making democracy truly take hold. Moreover, he stated that Japan would continue to actively provide development assistance as a way of strengthening the foundations of democracy and to support the democratization process itself.

8. In his remarks, His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei Darussalam underlined the responsibility of government to represent their people and guard their values. Governments should also be able to maintain people's confidence in a way that respects faith, ensures social stability and fosters goodwill.
9. Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao of Timor-Leste in his speech stressed that it is imperative that nations in the region promote the central issue of democracy and development. It is through democracy and development that nations can deliver social and economic progress for the people and ensure that their voices will be heard as their leaders chart the way to the future.
10. The Leaders, Ministers and Heads of Delegation acknowledged that democracy can occur in a variety of ways and stages of evolution, and that such a variety should be cherished. This is why it is all the more important that common features of democracy, such as freedom of expression, rule of law and human rights be upheld throughout the spectrum of this diversity. Thus the Leaders, Ministers and Heads of Delegation reasserted the importance of collective efforts by the Asian countries in nurturing cooperation in the field of democracy through sharing of experiences and best practices to strengthen national capacities, which is the soul of the Bali Democracy Forum.
11. The Leaders, Ministers, and Heads of Delegation agreed to develop areas of priority for cooperation in democracy as a strategic agenda and to promote synergy between democracy and development in Asia and other forms of regional cooperation.
12. The Leaders, Ministers, and Heads of Delegation also underlined the need for collective efforts to intensify capacity building in the field of democracy through, inter alia, sharing of experiences and best practices in strengthening national institutions, including those involved in the election process. In this context, the Forum called for the continued role of the Institute for Peace and Democracy in organizing such efforts.
13. The Leaders, Ministers and Heads of Delegation underscored the integral role of women in democracy and therefore they must continue to be fully engaged in their role of nurturing the promotion of nation building. Gender equality must be an explicit goal for the democracy building process and supported by the necessary institutions. If democracy is to be realized and practiced holistically, it is crucial that there must be gender equality.

14. The Leaders, Ministers and Heads of Delegation highlighted the interlink of efforts at the local, national and international level in strengthening cooperation in democracy as integral to the pursuit of global economic recovery.
15. The Leaders, Ministers and Heads of Delegation acknowledged that democracy is central to building peaceful societies and economic prosperity. In order to achieve such a goal, democracy must strengthen a number of factors, which include but are not limited to a strong legal instrument, an independent and fair judicial system, free media, education, commitment to upholding human rights, and constitutionally empowered institutions to protect the right of minorities, women and children.

### III. INTERACTIVE SESSIONS

- **Interactive Session I: “Democracy and the Rule of Law”**
16. The Interactive Session I was chaired by Dr. N. Hassan Wirajuda as the Patron of Institute for Peace and Democracy. Hon. Mr. Brendan O’Connor MP, Minister of Home Affairs of Australia and Mr. Zainul Abidin Rasheed, Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Singapore were the panelists.
  17. In his introductory remarks, Dr Wirajuda stated that there is a profound relationship between democratic promotion and the rule of law. The rule of law makes possible respect for human rights and freedom, which is the very core value of democracy. Democracy’s processes must be transparent and within a system run on the basis of a nationally agreed set of laws. However, there exists a danger of leaning towards “procedural rule of law” that results in too much institutional rigidity. This is where law becomes an instrument of state control.
  18. The session exchanged views and ideas on the countries’ experiences in building democracy and rule of law, which cannot be separated from each other. There are some common pillars consisting of developing legal frameworks, independent judiciary processes and systems, reformed and accountable public institutions, freedom of speech, respect for diversity, public participation in the political process and a modern and accountable police force. The pursuit of democracy, the building of democratic institutions and promoting a strong legal system among countries will influence the evolution of democracy and rule of law in the region. Therefore, it is a necessity to develop international legal and law enforcement cooperation in the region.
  19. Participants underscored the critical role of women in democracy and rule of law. They said it was important to move beyond slogans such as those

on the empowerment of women. Instead, the role of women must be supported by rule of law in order to truly contribute to nation building.

20. There was a consensus that countries in democratic transition should demonstrate that they could solve their governance problems and meet their citizens' expectations for freedom, justice, a better life, and an equitable society. They deemed it important to strike a balance between political freedom and the rule of law that guarantees stability and effective governance.
  21. The session underlined that fair and regular elections were a sign of a healthy democracy, so there must be mechanisms in place to guarantee that political aspirations could be realized in a legal way within a widely accepted national process. Legal and political institutions must be in place to safeguard democracy's promise and provide a framework through which representation would always be fair and the majority's pursuit of its interests would always be within the law.
  22. The meeting agreed that democracy should be reinforced by a strong system of legal and regulatory oversight, so that all individuals are equal under the law and all public officials are responsible for their conduct under the Constitution and the prevailing laws.
- **Interactive Session II: "Democracy and the Development in the Information Age"**
23. The Interactive Session II was chaired by H.E. Dr. Ahmed Shaeed, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Maldives. H.E. Dr. Zacarias Albano Da Costa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor Leste and H.E. Mr. Zha Peixin, Vice-Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress of China were the panelists.
  24. The meeting formed a consensus that the Information Age provides unprecedented horizontal and vertical access for all active members of a democracy to participate in—and reap the benefits of – development. Through the era of knowledge and information, democracy could prosper and ensure the free flow of information, encourage creative thinking and dialogue which lay the foundation for greater inclusiveness and continuous democratic process.
  25. The meeting agreed that the information age has provided a large number of channels through which members of society could engage in public discourse, whether to put forth an agenda or discuss the merits of ongoing policies of Development. It was also agreed that issues and real-world problems come to the fore when democratic channels for discourse are diverse, thus increasing the possibility that each segment of society enjoys the benefits of Development.

26. The meeting agreed that it is in the best interest of Governments to ensure that the development they have achieved is disseminated to and acknowledged by their constituents. The Information Age makes use of media channels in a democratic way, whereby news of developmental success is not forced upon the public but is freely available to a voluntary audience, be they readers or listeners or viewers. The plethora of new media available provides Governments with an abundance of ways for presenting their core message of upholding democracy while fostering development.
27. On the sideline of the BDF II and under the same theme as this session, the Government of Indonesia, the Kingdom of Norway, the Indonesia Press Council and the International Federation of Journalists held the Conference on Ethical Journalism Working for Democracy: Media Accountability in Practice in Nusa Dua, Bali, on 9-11 December 2009. The Forum welcomed the outcomes of the Conference that sent the message that journalism could be a driving force for change, building confidence in society and opening the door to new and dynamic forms of democratic exchange.

#### **IV. FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

28. The Forum exchanged views on the possible future direction, themes and work program of the Bali Democracy Forum and the Institute for Peace and Democracy. They agreed on goals and objectives of the Bali Democracy Forum, strategy and principles as well as priority areas of cooperation.
29. The Meeting recommended activities, which were also suggested by the Co-chair, in priority areas of cooperation, including workshops and seminars, training, election visits, policy-oriented research, and field studies. The Forum requested the Institute for Peace and Democracy to organize these activities.

#### **V. CLOSING**

30. The Bali Democracy Forum II was appreciated and commended by the participating countries as it provided a platform for open and frank discussions that reflected both a degree of comfort among participating countries and a sense of confidence in the process. During the two-day proceedings, the participating countries not only shared their respective success stories and best practices but also identified their own shortcomings and the challenges they faced.
31. The participants expressed appreciation to the Government of Japan for co-chairing the Forum. The Forum acknowledged the important

contributions of the chairmen of the interactive sessions as well as the panelists.

32. The participants also expressed gratitude to the Government of Republic of Indonesia for hosting the Bali Democracy Forum II and fostering the cordial discussions that took place in the Forum.

Nusa Dua, 11 December 2009