

**VICE PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA
OPENING KEYNOTE ADDRESS
AT 8TH ASEAN LEADERSHIP FORUM
JAKARTA, 8 MAY 2011**

*Bismillaahirrohmaanirrohiim
Assalamu'alaikumwarrohmatullahi
wabarokatuh*

Yang Mulia Bapak Dato Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia, Excellency Cham Pradish, Senior Minister of Cambodia, representing the Prime Minister of Cambodia, Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, Secretary-General of ASEAN,

Bapak Aburizal Bakrie, Chairman of the 8th
ASEAN Leadership Forum,
Dato' Michael Yeoh, Chairman, Organising
Committee & CEO of ASLI,
Distinguished Participants of the 8th
ASEAN Leadership Forum,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to first of all congratulate the
organisers for convening this prestigious
event here in Jakarta. It is indeed a great
honour for me to be here tonight
representing Bapak Presiden, among
leaders of ASEAN, prominent business
leaders and policy thinkers.

The 18th ASEAN Summit has indeed been very productive. Our leaders acknowledged several challenges to establishing the ASEAN Community, and agreed to step up the efforts of each individual member state and our collective efforts to establish the ASEAN Community in 2015.

During the two-days of deliberation, as Chair of ASEAN, Indonesia identified three main priorities. First of all, we have to ensure the attainment of concrete progress in realising the ASEAN Community.

This means a process of widening and deepening our efforts to strengthen the

three pillars of ASEAN: The Economic Community, The Political and Security Community and The Social and Cultural Community.

Secondly, we have to ensure the maintenance of order and condition in the region favourable for the achievement of, our common goals, through the enlarged East Asia Summit while maintaining the centrality of ASEAN;

Thirdly, we have to ensure successful discussions on the urgent need for a “post 2015 ASEAN” vision, namely the role of ASEAN Community in a Global community of nations. So, by the time we achieve an ASEAN Community in 2015, we will be quite prepared for our next step forward.

How we deal with the global challenges will be a testimony of ASEAN's solidarity and strength.

We resolve to work hard together with other ASEAN members to ensure progress along the three priorities. We take note also that our efforts are based on the premise that all our endeavours will be people-centered in nature. Our peoples will not only be the main beneficiaries of our initiatives, but they should also be the drivers of community building activities.

Businesses, academics, Civil Society organizations, people such as those present here this evening are truly the

primary stakeholders of an ASEAN Community.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are at an important juncture in our journey to achieving an ASEAN economic community by 2015. When ASEAN leaders met in 2003, the size of the ASEAN economies was only \$700 billion.

Now, it has reached \$2.9 trillion. If we are to include ASEAN and the six partners with which it already has trade agreements – China, Japan, Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand - then the size would be a staggering \$15 trillion. These figures translate to strength and opportunities.

Indonesia's vision of ASEAN is also to ensure that we narrow the development gap between ASEAN economies and within the member countries of ASEAN.

If we truly mean that we wish to build a community, we need to aspire to a more equitable and inclusive ASEAN. In this respect, we believe that ASEAN connectivity is crucial. But it should mean that it is not just about efficiency but also about reducing disparities.

Through enhanced connectivity, the 'periphery', the isolated regions would be connected to economic centers. ASEAN Connectivity must impact our peoples,

especially those who are still underprivileged.

It is therefore imperative each ASEAN Member State must simultaneously develop its own reliable domestic or internal connectivity. In this regard Indonesia is now also working hard to improve our domestic connectivity within the far-flung archipelago through the development of six economic corridors.

ASEAN will also continue to strengthen its cooperation and regional mechanism, to respond to emerging challenges. Among these challenges relate to food and energy security.

To remind you, the world population will reach 9 billion in 2045 according to the recent UN projection. Meanwhile, according to the latest national census Indonesia's population alone now stood at 237 million with an annual increase of 1.49%. ASEAN currently has a total population of 590 million.

In response to this situation, ASEAN have agreed on a number of cooperation aimed at ensuring that our peoples have secured access to food and energy.

In 2009, ASEAN adopted an ASEAN Integrated Food Security Framework, and a Strategic Plan of Action on Food

Security in the ASEAN Region as its detailed work plan. Reminded of this important commitment, the ASEAN Leaders in their just concluded Summit had agreed among others on prioritising research and development, and also renewed their call on increasing investment in food sectors.

ASEAN is quite prominent in agricultural research. We have the world-renowned International Rice Research Institute in the Philippines. Food research institutions are also to be found in every ASEAN Member States.

With this network of research institutions and their pool of talented peoples, I do not see any reasons why ASEAN should not feel confident in its effort to ensure food security for their own region, and even to make a significant contribution to the global food security.

Energy sector is also on the ASEAN to-do-list. Our Leaders have made a pledge to increase access to electricity for all ASEAN peoples while at the same time reducing our region's dependence on oil and other fossil fuels. Within this framework, the only option left for ASEAN is to step up efforts in finding new and renewable sources of energy.

ASEAN has integrated the efforts to maintain energy security through the adoption of the ASEAN Plan of Action on Energy Cooperation. Let me note here that at the national level, Indonesia has also moved forward by committing to generate at least 17% of its energy needs from non-fossil fuels by 2025.

Excellencies, Distinguished Participants,

The huge optimism with the current progress in the region puts heavy responsibilities on all of us to realize the potentials of the ASEAN Community.

There are rich opportunities lurking around the corner, but at the same time we also encounter difficult challenges. Among the most visible of these challenges are the lingering bilateral issues and disputes between the member states of ASEAN. In our view it is important that in the spirit of ASEAN, we should work in earnest to solve ASEAN problems in the ASEAN way.

As we evolve to become a community, new common problems will emerge, existing common problems will assert their intensity. More effective cooperation and mechanism to deal with issues such as transnational crimes, people trafficking, disaster management and terrorism must be developed.

The development of an ASEAN Political and Security Community should therefore not lag behind efforts to create an ASEAN Economic Community, for security and development are in reality indivisible.

ASEAN also needs to speed up the engagement process between all parties in the region, particularly between governments and Civil Society groups, to ensure that the creation of ASEAN Community contributes to the welfare of all, not just to the well-connected private sector or government elites. A caring and sharing community, as envisaged for an ASEAN Social and Cultural Community, must characterise our regional endeavour.

In our view there is plenty of room for us to enhance cooperation to strengthen this third pillar of ASEAN community.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to close my remark by expressing my hope that the discussions and exchanges that will be taking place in this Forum -The 8th ASEAN Leadership Forum- will enrich our understanding about the importance of ASEAN Community 2015 and, as important stakeholders, to maximize your contributions to the realization of that vision.

The engagement of major key players in the region, ranging from academics, policy makers, public and private sectors in the ASEAN Leadership Forum, is an important step towards a more inclusive people-centered ASEAN.

Furthermore, I also hope that this Forum could cross fertilize ideas from different stakeholders and provide recommendations that can strengthen public-private initiatives towards a truly inclusive ASEAN Community. I wish you a productive deliberation.

Thank you.

Wassalammualaikum Wr.Wb

Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia

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