



ADDRESS BY  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA  
AT  
THE FOURTH PREPARATORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING FOR THE WORLD SUMMIT  
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Denpasar, 5 June 2002



PRESIDENT  
REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, allow me to welcome you all to Indonesia. On behalf of the people and the Government of Indonesia, I wish to convey my appreciation and gratitude to the United Nations for the confidence extended to us to host this very important gathering. I sincerely hope that Bali, with all its nuances of cultural beauty, would give more impetus to our joint effort to make this preparatory committee meeting a success.

I believe we all have put our high hope in the success of the Conference on Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg in September this year. I therefore have conviction you would share with me that whatever agreement we could reach at this meeting will significantly affect the final outcome of the Conference in South Africa.

In Indonesia, we have been attentively following the deliberation on the issue from the previous meetings. My government is hence determined to do its utmost for the success of this very meeting. It is all based upon our awareness and understanding that this fast changing and more globalized world, with all its immense influence in the existing value system, has affected the approach and perspective of many nations in developing their ideals and in pursuing their future as well as their vision as to how the chain of humanity should continue.

I believe that we all share the same perception and dreams about an advanced life that is prosperous, just, independent and dignified. A life that communally reflects the harmony of nations with all the diversity in their social structure, culture and their political system, as well as a life that maintains harmony with surrounding nature.

Each nation has certain condition and capacity in managing its social, cultural, economic and political development. This, in turn, will determine the level of its achievement and accomplishment. Whatever system the nations may apply in their respective national lives, we witness the difference.

A nation will enjoy high quality of life if it has qualified human resources and sufficient ability to master, develop and apply the science and technology. With such capacity at their disposal, nations will be able to develop their economic strength and accomplish their well being. They are even in position to develop themselves into strong and well-developed nations in every aspect of life. These nations effectively manage their natural resources --however limited such resources in their possession,- and conserve them. In real term, they are able to live inharmony with nature. They soon become the inspirer, the driver, and later act as the supervisor for other nations about the importance of managing and benefiting from natural resources for development.

Meanwhile, human history also presents realities about other group of nations, which in fact constitute the majority in

the world community. While the cause and background cannot be precisely comprehended, these nations are endowed neither with fortunate level of the quality of life nor with better level of advancement. Many of them see the poor capacity of their human resources as an obstacle, particularly in relation with the level of social discipline or with the ability in mastering, developing and implementing science and technology. While some others associate the obstacle with the incapacity of the existing social system, particularly politics to accommodate the need for human resources development.

We are here not to seek too far the cause and background, let alone to prejudge. However we witness how those nations still depend much their struggle to build the future on the natural resources. Some of them are fortunate enough to enjoy the value added of their limited natural resources by making them into processed materials.

Those who are not fortunate, will have to directly sell them as raw materials. They often see the issue of conservation as a luxury. To a number of nations, the ideals of living in harmony with environment can only be enjoyed at the stage of ideas. In many cases, such a condition is the only choice available. For them, dilemma is part of their difficult reality that they have long experienced.

We still witness the continued exploitation of natural resources that tends to disrupt the conservation of sustainable environment. We are so concerned. Nevertheless, we should try to understand. Even when we are not in the position to help find the solution, we can always share our vision about conservation. However small, it is better to offer tolerance rather than to punish or alienate the doers. After all, they need to have the safety net and funding resources to secure their plans and development programs. 'I am convinced that they are in fact worried about the decline of the quality of the environment as well as the depletion of their natural resources,' particularly those that are non-renewable.

I understand that we have long discussed and even argued about the disruption of natural balance and environment. The tendency to blame one another has become part of any discussion about environment. The destruction as a result of uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources, as in the case of forest exploitation, has been blamed as the main cause of the global climate change. However, we must not forget that similar devastation has actually taken place as a result of experiments or excessive utilisation of a technology product.

The bottom line is that the differences in approach as well as ways and means in pursuing a better and more advanced life are problematic in themselves and in some instances become the sources of conflict and instability in some regions of the world.

Nevertheless, those differences have also provided us with a lesson that in this more globalized and rapidly changing world, efforts by any nation to materialize its dreams for better life will only be effective if they carry close cooperative endeavours as well as mutual support and help from other nations. Obviously, we have further lesson to learn, namely that interdependence is real and cooperation is imperative in our global village.

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our understanding about the problem is not merely derived from our observation or analysis over the events happening around us. We have actually experienced it. For more than three decades we pursued our development by primarily relying on our natural fortune. The implication of such a model and the consequences of its application have in turn led us to reconsider our approach to and our basic concepts on development.

Based upon our long experience, we believe in what we have realized from the outset that development is a process; a sustainable process. It necessitates efforts to ensure the sustainability of resources, both natural and biological to support the process of development. It requires sustained steps to build the capacity of human resources ready to manage the development in the right way.

In the early 1960's, when the world went through the uncertain period of the cold war, Indonesia's first President, who happened to be my father, addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations. He called on the international community and entitled his address "To Build the World Anew." The content was certainly related to particular situation and challenges of the world of the time.

We however believe that the spirit and principles of the address remain relevant to our current situation and challenges, especially in building the world anew through sustainable development. Should we manage to make the concept work, it would simply mean that we actually materialize the ideals of building the world anew.

Against the afore-mentioned description, I then come to a conclusion that we cannot but work together, mutually complement, support and help each other, for we share the same perception and ideals. We all want to make our national life better, prosperous, just, independent and dignified. We all concur that it must go through development. We also share common understanding about the importance we should attach to maintain and sustain the development process.

To that end, we should have determination to work on feasible and workable program. I believe we have similar and simple guidance to follow, namely to utilize natural resources in such a way that both supports development activities and serves utmost function of our ecosystem. In addition; the science and technology should be easily accessible and affordable with a view to meeting development necessity and, at the same

time, to sustaining conservation measures over natural resources and environment as the common heritage of mankind.

Ten years have passed since we adopted Agenda 21. It is timely for us to follow it up with concrete programs and activities. If we can work on them at this preparatory meeting and agree on them in the forthcoming Conference in Johannesburg next September, I am convinced that not only do we build solid foundation for sustainable development, but also make real contribution to humanity.

In conclusion, in the name of God, Most Gracious Most Merciful, I declare open the Ministerial Segment of the Fourth Preparatory Committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development. May God always bestow us with guidance and strength in discharging this noble task.

Thank you.

Denpasar, 5 June 2002

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

MEGAWATI SOEKARNOPUTRI