

WELCOMING SPEECH – IAPC CONFERENCE, BALI.

Bismillahirrahman Nirohim....

Your Excellency..., The President of the Republic of Indonesia, DR. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono; Excellencies the Coordinating Ministers and Ministers of Kabinet Indonesia Bersatu; Governors, Heads of Regents and Mayors of cities from various Provinces, who are directly and democratically elected by their constituents; Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen...,

Good Morning..!

On behalf of the Asia Pacific Association of Political Consultants it gives me great pleasure and honor to welcome you to this 'very special' annual conference of the International Association of Political Consultants.

This conference is indeed 'very special' for the following reasons :

- This year marked the 40th anniversary of IAPC as an organization, a major milestone and one that we, as members, are very proud of.
- This year also marked the first time, ever, that an IAPC conference is held in Asia.
- Lastly, and perhaps the most important milestone, is that this is the first time in its history, an IAPC conference will be opened by the sitting President of the host country.

Mr President, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, this conference will present and discuss various international political issues that are of world interest, such as :

- Islam and Democracy
- The East-West Divide. And...
- The environment and its effect on International Politics.

Our conference speakers include world-renowned individuals and experts as well as political pundits.

As political consultants we have challenging tasks ahead of us as we exist in a World Divided. Conflicts that exist in this world, whether it is local,

national or even international are often caused by misperceptions or lack of understanding of the underlying issues that lead to the conflicts.

Thus, if wrong advises are given – then wrong policies are issued,

We, as Political Consultants, are challenged to offer solutions that are philosophically sound and yet still able to respect the culture within which we must operate.

Hence, it is my hope and wish that this conference will result in better understanding of issues and one that all participants feel the benefit of attending.

Your Excellency President Yudhoyono, allow me on behalf of the Asia Pacific Association of Political Consultants, to extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to you and all Ministers of Kabinet Indonesia Bersatu for gracing and honoring us with your presence here today.

I also like to thank the IAPC members who traveled the distance, and I know that some have traveled half the world, to be here for the conference. These, also include the Governors, Heads of Regents and Mayors who traveled

from various provinces in Indonesia, at a short notice I may add, to be here with us today.

Lastly, but certainly not the least, I would like to thank all sponsors who helped us make this conference possible.

I would now like to invite and introduce the President of IAPC, Mr. Ben Goddard, who will give his welcoming speech.

Thank you.