

**Welcoming Remarks of H.E. Jakob Tobing
At the Friendly Dinner
on Wednesday, February 1, 2006, at 18:30, at Wisma Duta.**

**Excellencies,
Dear friends,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for your kind attendance in this friendly dinner tonight. It has been quite a while since I wish to meet Your Excellencies and dear friends who always take much interest in and have already contributed a lot to build good relationship between Indonesia and Korea.

Basically, our two countries have enjoyed mutually complementary and supporting relationship. It has already been 40 years since we entered into consular relationship and 33 years since we established diplomatic relations. Heads of States, high ranking government officials as well as a lot of businessmen, scholars, and tourists have visited each other's country. About 25,000 Indonesian people are now living in Korea while more or less 40,000 Koreans are residing in Indonesia, doing business in various sectors.

Korea and Indonesia traditionally cooperate and support for mutual interest in the international forum. Indonesia has always offered supports for Korea's endeavors for peaceful reconciliation and denuclearization in the Korean peninsula. To mention one instance, on the sideline of the Asia-Africa Summit in April 2005 in Jakarta, Indonesia facilitated a meeting between Korean Prime Minister Lee Hae-chan and the President of the Presidium of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly Kim Yong Nam, which produced an agreement to reopen the inter-Korean dialogue that was suspended several years. Likewise, Indonesia always tries to do whatever we can do in our capacity to help ease tension in the Korean peninsula.

I believe that the relation of Indonesia and Korea covers a wide range of and long term cooperation. This cooperation, in my view, needs to be more developed and enhanced not only for the sake of both countries and people and also to create peace and stability in the Northeast as well as Southeast Asian region.

Our bilateral trade has been increasing from year to year, and reached US\$10.3 billion in 2004, and US\$11.5 billion during the period of January unto November 2005. Korea is ranked as the 7th biggest investing country to Indonesia and the largest foreign investor in terms of project among foreign investors in Indonesia. Korean corporations generate one of the largest employment opportunities.

Our sustainable cooperation is not just confined to the political and economic sectors, but also reflected by increasing exchanges in socio-cultural sectors. People to people relationship are also remarkable. Korean film and songs are now very popular in Indonesia. Every TV Stations in Indonesia are showing Korea's daily soap operas and lots of Indonesian people visit Nami Islands, Jeju Island, or Yong Pyong just to see the location of shooting film "Winter Sonata", and so on. In the meantime, increasing number of Korean wedding couples take trips to Bali, Lombok and other places to spend their honeymoon.

We will never forget the sympathy and aid offered by the people of Korea when the terrible earthquake and tsunami hit the area of Aceh and Nias. Prompt and substantial aid in the form of money, medicine, medical assistants, etc. was really meaningful to relieve the pain of the victims.

Our cooperative relations continue to grow in other fields. We are now collaborating in the sectors of nuclear power for peaceful purpose, research of nano technology and biotechnology, labor, transportation, tourism, sister cities, and academia.

Dear friends,

Tonight's dinner is a friendly gathering to remind our friendship and to further promote the existing close relations. Taking this opportunity, I would like to say about my plan and wish. I feel that for the continued promotion of our close relationship, we need to establish a kind of friendship society to support and deepen the cooperative and friendly ties between our two countries. It must be very meaningful if we could forge more strengthened friendship through the friendship association by participating and assisting cultural exchange program and various events organized by the Indonesian Embassy such as Indonesian fun run, Indonesian Speech and Essay Contest, Indonesian Night, etc.

I think that the timing is fortune, because we are expecting the exchange of the State Visit of the Presidents of our two countries in this year. During the bilateral meeting of our both heads of States on November 20, 2005 in Busan, H.E. President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and H.E. President Roh Moo-hyun agreed to pay a state visit to each other's nation. H.E. President Yudhoyono is planning to visit Korea in May 2006 and a return visit by President Roh in December. It is my hope that the association could also add a great importance to the above-mentioned State Visits.

Last but not least, I would like to wish you all the best for a happy, successful and prosperous New Year 2006. 새해 복 많이 받으십시오. (Se He Bok Mani Ba Du Sip Sio !)

**Excellencies,
Distinguished friends,**

May I ask you to join me in a toast to the continued friendship between the Republic of Indonesia and the Republic of Korea and to the good health of all of us. Cheer!