

PRESS RELEASE
PRESIDENT OF INDONESIA
DR. SUSILO BAMBANG YUDHOYONO
AND PRIME MINISTER OF NORWAY JENS STOLTENBERG
IN BALI, INDONESIA, 1-2 SEPTEMBER 2006

“President of Indonesia Dr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Prime Minister of Norway Jens Stoltenberg are launching an important initiative to jointly co-sponsor a “Global Inter-Media Dialogue” which will be held in Bali, Indonesia, on 1-2 September 2006.

The aim of the Global Inter-Media Dialogue is provide a forum of discussion for leading media figures from different continents, cultures, and civilizations to share experiences and perspectives, which is expected to help promote greater freedom of expression, increase tolerance, and advance peace.

In carrying out this initiative, the two leaders share a deep appreciation towards the key role of the media in the life of any society, any democracy, any statehood, and in promoting global peace. The recent controversy surrounding the cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad SAW showed that the media can also cause an international crisis, and reminded us of the sensitivities which the media should be aware of.

This is why, Indonesia, as a democratic country with the largest muslim population in the world, and Norway, as a Western country that has actively promoted peace and human rights, are closely cooperating to convene this Global Inter-Media Dialogue. The two Leaders believe that Indonesia and Norway have a unique opportunity to help bridge gaps between religious, cultures, and peoples.

In preparing and developing the concept for this Global Inter-Media Dialogue, the Governments of Indonesia and Norway actively consulted media figures in Indonesia and Norway, and also conducted a Preparatory Workshop in Oslo, on 23-24 May 2006.

Eight-two major media figures from forty countries in Asia, Middle East, Europe, Africa, North America and Latin America are expected to attend the forum.

Yesterday, 11 July 2006, President Yudhyono and Prime Minister Stoltenberg sent their joint-invitation to media figures in various countries to take part in the Dialogue. The embassies of Indonesia and Norway in various countries will coordinate in facilitating their participation.

The discussion at the Global Inter-Media Dialogue will consist of plenary sessions which will then be divided into several working groups to discuss specific topics, such as ; the issues of diversity, freedom of expression, responsibility, as well as the identification of challenges and problems for the media in the 21st century.

President of Indonesia Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Foreign Minister of Norway Jonas Gahr Store will open the Global Inter-Media Dialogue in Bali, on 2 September 2006.

It must be underlined that the role of the Governments of Indonesia and Norway in the Global Inter-Media Dialogue is to act as facilitators only, while the contents of the discussions will be strictly the domain of the media figures taking part in the Dialogue.