

**The 3rd ASEM CONFERENCE ON COUNTER-TERRORISM
SEMARANG, INDONESIA, 14-15 NOVEMBER 2005**

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**WELCOME REMARKS BY H.E. MR. ARIZAL EFFENDI
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**Excellencies,
Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is indeed a profound pleasure for me to welcome you all to Indonesia, particularly to Semarang, the capital city of the Central Java Province. Semarang is the city where the Jakarta Center for Law Enforcement Cooperation or the JCLEC is situated. The Center as you may have known was established at the Bali Regional Ministerial Meeting on Counter-Terrorism (BRMMCT) and formally opened at the middle of last year. It is a regional resource center with a focus on law enforcement capacity building and equipped with forensic laboratory and training capacity for counter-terrorism unit. I understand that you are all invited to visit the Center tomorrow with the hope that you will be more acquainted with its facilities, activities and potentials.

Distinguished Participants,

It is also very reassuring to meet so many distinguished colleagues and representatives from counter-terrorism authorities across Asia and Europe at this Conference. Your presence to us reflects not only your continued support to ASEM commitment in combating terrorism, but also that this deliberation is taking place at an important moment of our fight in Indonesia against terrorism. As you may have learned, only last week, the Indonesian Police Force was able to track down the most dangerous terrorist in Southeast Asia-- Dr. Azahari. In his country, he was known as "the Demolition Man".

Unfortunately, he was killed during the police raid as he could be the most important resource person on the network and activities of terrorism in this region. Nonetheless, with the capture of his followers, the Police now also able to track down his arsenal and training ground here in Indonesia.

This success does not mean that we can now be at ease. We have learned from our lessons well. Indonesia is among the few which is able to capture and bring to justice the various perpetrators of this heinous crime. Still, the terrorists were not deterred. What is even more worrying, Dr. Azahari's compatriot, Noordin Top, was not at the site when the Police raid was launched. He is known to be even more dangerous than his leader. At the moment he is still able to escape justice. We are also dismayed upon learning the escape of Omar al Farouq from the maximum security prison in Afghanistan.

With this new encouraging development, though continue to be worrying, I believe that it is not an overstatement to say that the convening of this Conference in Semarang is very timely. Two days ago, the Police raid a house in this city used by the terrorists.

We humbly acknowledge that this breakthrough and our ability in tracking down the terrorists is a result of international cooperation extended to us by various friendly countries. It is a result of working together to build capacity and capability through the sharing of technology, know-how, and intelligence information. The result serves as evidence to us of the importance of international cooperation if we are to win the battle against terrorism anywhere and everywhere.

At the same time, however, we have no illusions that police works, no matter how effective they are, will put an end to terrorism. That is why, at the national level, we are just as determined to address the root causes of terrorism—poverty, ignorance, and prejudice.

We are very much aware that there are people who considered that these are not in anyway the root causes of terrorism. They may point out that people like Dr. Azahari was a highly educated person. He earned his doctoral degree from an English university and taught at a Malaysian university of technology. One of his counterparts in Indonesia is a civilian engineer graduated from a university here in Central Java. However, we must not fail to recognize that the "mules" of the bomb were mostly the poor and the ignorance. Due to poverty, they were under educated, and thus they were easily manipulated by those architects of terror by leading

them to believe that they will attain eternal prosperity in the life after death should they sacrifice themselves to carry out such attack.

Our current conference is not designed to discuss the issue of the root causes of terrorism. However, this Semarang conference, if not more, is of equal importance. It provides an opportunity for us to evaluate the progress of ASEM's cooperation in combating terrorism. The essence of this Conference is on cooperation. It is hoped that our deliberations would produce tangible and deliverable results.

I do not think that they are unreachable hope. The three broad topics chosen to be discussed are very concrete. There is cooperation on border control and security, covering the sharing of intelligence information as well as on customs and immigration relating to terrorist networks. The next important topic is cooperation on law enforcement, covering joint investigation of terror attack, mutual legal assistance and preventing terrorist financing. Last but certainly not the least is on cooperation to benefit from the potentials of various regional centers on counter-terrorism to support ASEM cooperation to combat terrorism. We are, therefore, especially encouraged by the participation of the representatives from the JCLEC of Indonesia, SEARCCT of Malaysia, as well as representatives from Interpol and UNODC.

Distinguished participants,

As I mentioned earlier, the convening of this Conference has never been timely. The peoples we represented from the various countries of East Asia and Europe put high hopes on our endeavor. They even expect us to keep on working harder than we ever did before in order to eliminate this heinous crime, hanging on the heads of our society like the sword of Damocles.

Thus, I wish you all to have a successful and fruitful conference as well as a pleasant stay here in Semarang. Should you have the time, do not forget to visit the Borobudur Temple, considered by UNESCO as a heritage of mankind and one of the wonders of the world. The temple is only a few hours drive from this city.

By way of conclusion, I wish you a happy and safe journey home. Since Christmas Day and the New Year are already in front of us, I also wish you all the best for the holiday season.

Thank you for your kind attention and cooperation. -