

**REMARKS**

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
INDONESIA**

**AT**

**THE OPENING CEREMONY  
INTERNATIONAL TOURISMUS BÖRSE 2013**

**Berlin, 5 March 2013**

**[18:00-18:20]**

**Your Excellency Chancellor Angela Merkel,  
Your Excellency Mayor of Berlin, Klaus Wowereit,  
President and CEO of Berlin Messe, Raimund  
Hosch,**

***Guten abend,***

**Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,**

**It is indeed a great pleasure and honor for me – together with Chancellor Angela Merkel – to open the International Tourismus Börse 2013 in this beautiful and historic city of Berlin. I would like to convey my sincere appreciation to Chancellor Merkel for inviting me to this prestigious event. And**

through you, I would like to thank the millions of Germans who have visited Indonesia over the years.

I would also like to convey my appreciation to Raimund Hosch, President and CEO of Berlin Messe, for the excellent organization of tonight's Börse. Indonesia is privileged to be invited as this year's ITB partner. I hope through our participation, we will see more German and European visitors come to Indonesia.

All of us have great stakes in a thriving tourism industry, which bring enormous benefits to local, national and global economy. Tourism and international travel create over 285 million jobs worldwide. Tourism accounts for nine percent of the world's

**GDP, and it is a critical engine that drives investment and stimulates economic growth.**

**Today, many parts of the developed and developing world are still struggling to recover from the ongoing economic difficulties. Still, the tourism industry has continued to grow strong. The World Tourism Organization reported that international tourism has increased by 4 % in 2012 and reached 1 billion tourists. This growth is evident worldwide.**

**In Indonesia, some 8 million international visitors came to visit last year. The income from this industry has reached 41 billion US dollars and has created around 9 million jobs.**

**We are aiming to reach 10 million tourists by 2014, and I hope our friends here at ITB Berlin can help us achieve this target.**

**Let me tell you why Indonesia is one great travel destination.**

**Indonesia is perhaps the most diverse country in the world. We are a nation of a quarter billion people, coming from some 1,128 ethnic groups, speaking hundreds of dialects, who live across 3 time zones, in the world's largest archipelago consisting of over 17,000 islands - yes, you heard it right, over 17,000 islands.**

**Which is why I believe that, while our nation is blessed with plenty of natural resources, the true**

**riches of Indonesia lie in our people - in our traditions, folklores and cultures.**

**And although each and everyone of them is different and unique, all our cultures have one thing in common : they are earth-loving cultures. They all pay tribute to the terrestrial environment that give them life - our forests and rivers, our mountains and seas, our blue skies and white beaches.**

**This is the reason why Indonesians, like Germans, are strong believers in the challenge of climate change. By way of direct experience, we are convinced that climate change is real, it is NOT fake or imagined. Thus, we have been a progressive advocate for green growth and low carbon development path. For the same reason, we have**

also become very protective of our tropical rain forests, which serve as the lungs of our planet.

Indonesia is situated right on the equator, so you can hop on a plane anytime and be spoiled by our warm weather and sunshine.

And where should you go?

Well, in the world of tourism, everybody knows Bali - known also as the island of the God - and voted many times by several travel magazines as "the world's best island". Of course, I do not dare to dispute them, and Bali practically sells itself.

I am obliged, however, to let you know as a tourist destination, Indonesia is a lot more than the island of Bali. A lot, lot more.

**Indeed, Indonesia is a microcosm of a universe that offers something for everybody.**

**For those who wish to travel to the past, and wish you were living in a scene from "The Lord of the Ring", you might want to see the magnificent Borobudur, the largest and the most spectacular Buddhist temple in the world. It was built in the 8th Century, and the civilization that built it was lost for several centuries, until the temple was rediscovered under volcanic mud in 1814.**

**For those who wish to see "Jurassic Park", well, you can skip the movie and go directly to Komodo island, home of the Komodo dragon, a pre-historic reptile which has not changed since the dinosaur era. You may want to come a little close to**

them, but do not play with them, because they might think you are their supper.

For those who love "The Deep", diving or snorkeling, there are thousands of pristine spots to go to, such as Bunaken, or Maluku.

For those who are "Born to be Wild", and adore orangutans and wish to see endless rain forests, you might want to see the island of Borneo, with its unique river transportation system.

For those who want to see "Paradise Lost", you might want to check the breathtakingly beautiful Raja Ampat in Papua, said to be the closest thing on earth to paradise.

For those who wish to trek through a long-stretch of volcanic mountains and giant lakes, you might want to go to Sumatra.

For those who are crazy about food, you might want to sample rendang—beef simmered in coconut milk, lemongrass, galangal, garlic, and turmeric. Rendang was voted by readers of CNNgo in 2011 as the yummiest food on the planet! You would not want to skip nasi goreng and satay either. Surely, they are all *lecker!*

For those who cherish the achievements of humanity, you might want to experience our landmarks designated by UNESCO as world heritage sites. From the exotic temples of Borobudur and Prambanan; to the Subak ancient water

management system in Bali; to the Sangiran Early Man site.

You might also be charmed by the craftsmanship of keris, batik, angklung, wayang puppet theater, and the dynamic Saman dance from Aceh. These treasures have all been selected by UNESCO as intangible cultural heritage of humanity.

And, for those who want to experience a more modern Indonesia, you can visit the bustling cities of Jakarta, Surabaya, Medan and others.

All in all, Indonesia is a complete destination: from family recreation to international conferences; from water sports to volcanic mountain expeditions; from traditional exotic *kampong* villages to modern

**shopping and entertainment centers in Indonesia's big cities; and many more.**

**You may find it remarkable that the most diverse country in the world is also a tolerant and harmonious one. Yes, we still have to tackle the challenges of poverty. Yet, in general, Indonesians live free, and they live as one, just the way our ancestors did. While we have the largest muslim population in the world, Indonesia is not an Islamic state. In fact, as a constitutional imperative, the Republic of Indonesia respects religious freedom and has 5 state-sponsored religions : Islam, Christianity, Hindu, Buddhism and Confucianism. Collectively, we celebrate Eid, Isra Miraj, Christmas, Easter, Nyepi, Waisak, Chinese New Year as our**

**national holidays. Yes, that amounts to LOTS of national holidays, and I think there are very few countries that go to such levels of religious tolerance.**

**When you go to Indonesia, what you may find a little surprising is our traffic. But in a way, that is also a good sign : Indonesia is in the midst of rapid development. Smith Travel Research claims that Indonesia has become the country with the third highest concentration of hotel developments, just behind India and China. Indonesia has also become a top destination for foreign investment on tourism.**

**Indeed, Indonesia is now the largest economy in Southeast Asia, with the largest middle-class in the region, and last year we recorded the second**

highest economic growth in Asia after China. We have recently become a 1 trillion dollar economy, and a member of the G-20, which is where I have the pleasure to meet Chancellor Merkel twice a year. Indonesia is also slated to be within the top 10 world economy in the coming decades.

I have been telling you good things about Indonesia, but as an honest salesman, I do have to warn you about something.

So I warn you this : Indonesia can be addictive. One way or another, those who come to Indonesia usually get charmed, and get hooked, and they come back again, and again. This may happen to you, so please consider yourself warned.

**For those who are willing to take that risk, well, the good news is that Indonesia is very convenient for German and western European tourists. Citizens of Schengen states can take advantage of our visa-on-arrival services. And our warm weather means that you can wear your shorts and sandals anytime of the day. But contrary to what some may think, please do not wear your shorts and sandals to offices or to weddings.**

**So, Chancellor Merkel, I am glad you are giving me only 15 minutes to speak, because when it comes to talking about my country, I can go on endlessly, and my staff usually do not dare to interrupt me. But, I am under your good watch, and I hope you all get the basic message that you will be warmly welcomed to visit Indonesia, and I do believe**

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that your Indonesian experience will be a memorable and treasured one.

*Est ist wirklich wunderbar!*

Thank you. Terima kasih. *Danke schön.*

Berlin, 5 March 2013

**PRESIDEN REPUBLIK INDONESIA**

**DR. H. SUSILO BAMBANG YUDHOYONO**