



ASEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ORGANIZATION
27TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
10 - 15 SEPTEMBER 2006 ▲ CEBU CITY, PHILIPPINES

Statement delivered by

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(Speaker of the Legislative Council, Brunei Darussalam)

*Mr. Chairman,
Dear Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

I am very honoured and pleased to be here today and joining my fellow friends at this very important meeting as special observer. Like the rest of my colleagues before me, I would like to express our appreciation to you and the government of the Philippines for hosting the 27th AIPO General Assembly as well as for the kind and wonderful arrangement of this meeting..

Since we last met, we all observed some development or challenges in the region such as natural disasters in Indonesia and the Philippines, the threat of avian influenza and the rising oil price. Terrorism also remains to be the main threat to our peace and security.

Despite all these problems, I am pleased to note that ASEAN continues to make progress including in its joint efforts to address these current challenges. Regular consultations are taking place at all levels including among our leaders. Cooperation is expanding in many areas.

We are also happy that ASEAN is making every effort to realize the ASEAN community by 2020. The ASEAN economic ministers at their recent meeting in Kuala Lumpur agreed to recommend to our leaders to achieve ASEAN economic community by 2015. Consultations are also underway to implement the ASEAN security community and the ASEAN socio-cultural community.

Mr. Chairman,

A landmark decision was also made at the last ASEAN Summit, where our leaders agreed to establish the ASEAN Charter. This reflects the leaders' commitment to realize ASEAN goals and objectives for the benefits of all ASEAN member countries.

Mr. Chairman,

The progress of ASEAN integration is also moving along quite well. I am glad to see the continued commitment of ASEAN member countries as well as our dialogue partners to provide assistance to the four C.L.M.V countries through the I.A.I Programs.

Mr. Chairman,

I regret to note that some of us especially Indonesia and the Philippines had suffered recent natural disasters such as earthquakes. For this reason, cooperation in natural disaster management has been placed high in ASEAN agenda as well as in our consultations with other countries.

ASEAN foreign ministers last year signed an agreement for disaster relief and emergency response aimed at providing response to natural disasters in our region. We would like to call for early ratification of this agreement by ASEAN member countries.

To me, Mr. Chairman, this is where AIPO can play a role. AIPO can encourage the relevant agencies to do more to alleviate the sufferings of the victims.

Mr. Chairman, Fellow Delegates,

Moving on to developments outside the region, Brunei Darussalam is very concerned with the situation in the Middle East. We condemned all acts of terror, violence and destruction. We call upon all parties concerned to respect and implement the United Nations security resolutions, including the ceasefire.

Moving on to AIPO matters, I see that our officials have been working hard to realize our long-term goals of turning A.I.P.O into a more effective and closely integrated institution. I believe our working group has met twice this year and they have come up with constructive recommendation, which has been presented to us here today.

I also believe the Committee on Legal Cooperation to combat human trafficking in women and children held in Vietnam has also conducted much important work. The discussion on this topic is most timely, as human trafficking has become a serious problem and is a serious violation of human rights.

Brunei Darussalam view this problem seriously and has further enhanced its effort to combat human trafficking by bringing into force, legislation which criminalises any form of human trafficking and imposes heavy penalties upon offenders.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, let me express my sincere congratulations to the President of AIPO for hosting this 27th General Assembly and I wish you all the best.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.