

STATEMENT BY
H.E. MADAM ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA AT THE STATE LUNCHEON
HOSTED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA,
H.E. DR. SUSILO BAMBANG YUDHOYONO
MONDAY, 25 MARCH 2013

(As Delivered)

Mr. President;
Honorable Minister;
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;

I am most pleased to visit this beautiful and progressive country almost two months after the historic visit of you dear Colleague, H.E. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, and your delegation to Monrovia. We are particularly gratified by the very kind courtesies and excellent hospitality accorded me and my delegation by the good and gallant people of Indonesia since our arrival in this beautiful and bustling metropolis of Jakarta.

Mr. President, your historic visit to Monrovia last month and my present visit here are in fulfillment of the yearning of our two countries and peoples for an enhanced and mutually rewarding friendship. We share common views at international fora including the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Countries Movement and the Group of 77. I recall that our two countries collaborated in the formation of the Non-Aligned Movement nearly sixty (60) years ago.

Our two countries have experienced a common history of pain, violence and brutality in our recent past. Liberia is just emerging from a senseless and fratricidal war in which about thousands of our compatriots perished during the war. We are grateful for the contribution of the Republic of Indonesia to the restoration of peace to Liberia through Indonesia's participation in the United Nations peacekeeping efforts in Liberia. This morning, I was moved to have visited and laid a wreath at the Kalibata National Heroes Cemetery to the

sacred memory of your national heroes. At your National Cemetery, about 7,000 of your compatriots from military casualties and late veterans from the Indonesian War of Independence have been buried.

Against this background of shared experiences of national tragedy and violence, I am not surprised by the speed with which we have achieved so much in bilateral cooperation in so short a period. The progress under your leadership is nothing less than exceptional. The peace and development you have achieved is nothing less than exemplary. The bilateral discussions held earlier between our two governments applauded this progress as we attest to our commitment to share values and share responsibilities with a determination to consolidate our relations and cooperation.

In this regard, our two sides have reached agreements in several areas of cooperation including Agriculture, Human Capacity Development and Commerce and Industry. We are especially grateful for the assistance and expertise to be provided to the Republic of Liberia by the Republic of Indonesia in rice production including rice breeding, irrigation management, and harvesting technology aimed at increasing rice production and achieving food security for the people of Liberia.

The scholarships offered to young Liberians both in graduate and post graduate studies as well as training courses will definitely boost our human capacity development. I am heartened that in just two years, the volume of trade between our two countries has exceeded forty (40) million USD. Today, Golden Veroleum, an Indonesian conglomerate, holds one of the biggest investment concessions in Agriculture in post-conflict Liberia, estimated at 1.7 billion USD. When this Agricultural project fully matures, it is projected that forty thousand (40,000) Liberians would be employed.

Mr. President, Indonesia has made the transition from the supply of primary commodities to industrialization through value added activities. We want to learn from you, to follow your example, particularly in the area of wood and agriculture processing. WE are tired of shipping logs and tired of importing rice to a high rice consuming country.

Your great country, Mr. President, has become a powerful voice and a positive example for developing countries within the international community. It is an Asian Tiger, a member of the G-20, and is fast achieving the status of an

emerging global market. And for the fact that you are prepared to share your lessons on achieving such significant progress, we are immensely grateful.

Mr. President, we applaud your leadership as one of the Co-chairs for the High Level Panel on the Post 2015 Global Development Agenda and we look forward to a path breaking outline for this fourth and final session in Indonesia under your inspiration.

Mr. President, I wish to assure you of Liberia's support as we work cooperatively for the mutual benefits for our two countries and peoples and for a better world for today's generation and future generations.

TOAST:

And now ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to join me in a toast to the good health of H.E. Dr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of the Republic of Indonesia, and for the prosperity of the people of Indonesia, and for a flourishing Liberia and Indonesia friendship.