



PRIME  
MINISTER

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELENCY THE PRIME MINISTER  
KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE VII BALI DEMOCRACY FORUM**

**“Evolving Regional Democratic Architecture”**

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Palácio do Governo,  
Avenida Presidente Nicolau Lobato,  
Dili, Timor-Leste

Your Excellency, President of the Republic of Indonesia,  
Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono

Your Majesty, Sultan of Brunei Darussalam, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin  
Waddaulah,

Your Excellency, President of the Republic of the Philippines, Benigno S. Aquino III

Excellency, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr Marti Natalegawa

Distinguished Heads of Delegations

Distinguished Participants

Ladies and Gentlemen

The theme for this year, if it does not offer an answer to some of the important issues facing our region; will at least open more comprehensive perspectives on the challenges of today.

The regional context can be both applied to ASEAN and beyond it. ASEAN is a well-known decades-old regional organisation, with a past of historical achievement and a present that demands response for greater challenges, taking in to account the current global issues. The future will depend on what, today we believe, we can do to ensure ASEAN is solid and vibrant, bearing in mind that this century is, as all say, Asia's Century.

And it will be ASEAN, or those nations composing ASEAN, that is the subject of my analysis. It will therefore be within this social, political and economic framework that I will share my points of view in regard to the theme of this year: 'Evolving Regional Democratic Architecture'.

Ladies and Gentlemen

As I have highlighted several times, in previous BDF's, without development there can be no democracy - a healthy democracy, a responsible democracy, a democracy where there are rights for all as well as duties for all citizens.

In the current world juncture, western nations or the developed democracies demand the integral accomplishment of all the standards, imposed on us under the guise of all sorts of conventions, regardless of whether we are able or not to implement them.

Developed democracies are not able to understand that we follow, daily, their own problems, in regard to the violation of human rights and in regard to the unfortunate democratic answers they provide to their crises.

Today, the headlines in the western press, that influence civil society and the press in our countries, focus excessively on corruption in developing countries. We do not deny it exists.

Nonetheless, the BBC at the start of this year, revealed that Europe, currently in financial crisis, registers annually more than 12 billion euros in corruption. And what can we say about the crime of fraud and speculation, driven by greed for profits, of the most important banks in the world? A few months ago, the Bank of America itself handled fraud of about 16 billion dollars!

This follows a successive wave of declarations of fraud and of speculation by well-known banks in America and throughout Europe, while the standards of international financial organisations require us, in our own countries, to have banks with a 'triple A' rating! A week ago, the very curious news was that millions of customers of JP Morgan had their bank accounts hacked, adding to the scandal of recent years.

All of this only reveals the total inconsistency in the application of standards, for underdeveloped and developing nations, while, on the other hand, the violation of human rights in developed democracies is always justified by too often referring to the 'internal security' of such countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I had the privilege of presiding, for one year, at the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, based in Bangkok.

The problems we identified, are concerned with social and economic inequality in each and between the countries of the Asia Pacific.

While the reality of poverty, in our own region and in each of our own nations, is of concern to us, the world evaluates us through the lens of democracy and human rights

ASEAN, as an organisation of cooperation, between 10 member nations, not only deals with the economic sector, but across others as well, including the political sector, in regard to the common perception and equal points of view, without prejudice to the political options of each one.

Mr. President

Distinguished Participants

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is, within this perspective that I would like to mention the role of ASEAN, in the frame of this year's theme, at this VII BDF.

ASEAN has ensured its mechanism of mutual respect for the sovereignty of each nation, of non-interference in the internal affairs and of a collective policy in regards to important areas that all agree to be of common interest.

Following decades of existence, I am of the opinion that there should be a review of its mechanisms for cooperation, so that it becomes more efficient in responding to several questions that are posed individually and to all members.

In this globalised world that demands each country to respond, with better sense of duty, to the crucial issues facing humanity, we must consider how our region positions itself with regard to the demands of today's world.

This necessity arises because we must be masters of our destiny and we must not continue to be startled by the evaluations that the powerful make of us. The international press is unstoppable in researching and revealing our weak points and to place us as countries, resistant to democracy and the standards that experts and journalists write about us in their reports.

Our region is still vulnerable in many aspects, particularly in the political environment. None of us can avoid external criticism, especially in regard to the government's systems, which, we must acknowledge, are not homogeneous among us.

We must consider how we can avoid that powerful countries, as they are sophisticatedly organised and trained in this matter, from promoting or provoking an Asian spring to destabilise our economies, our processes and destroy our societies.

ASEAN is already a reference for tolerance within a multi-dimensional cultural diversity, but it lacks a greater synergy in economic terms, so we can truly be part of the so called 'Asian Century'. The social and economic inequality in our region must always be a focus in our work agenda, reminding us that these are the preferred topics of external aid and intervention that always highlight, whenever possible, the problem of human rights, democracy and corruption.

ASEAN should or could have a political body, at the highest level, to exchange points of view and accommodate perspectives that would be of crucial importance for the integrity of the organisation, for its current credibility and its future vitality.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The interests of the world are evaluated by the great powers, according to their own values and their economic interests, as many reports produced by them can attest to it. For this, the great multinationals never, but never, wasted any opportunity to practice fraud, acting deliberately with dishonesty, in collusion with those rich and developed countries. Those western democracies preach transparency and international law, while supporting the multinationals undermining the society of developing nations, under the guise of freedom of the press, to create instability and, according to their plans, provoke changes in government, when and where the same multinationals can impose, by all means, for their own profit.

And when they are able to create instability, they classify the nation as a 'risky country' or the State as 'heading towards becoming a failed State', so that they can impose more favourable conditions for the exploitation of resources, always in collusion with rich and developed countries. Alternatively, as long as everything benefits their economic interests, the country is considered stable and a friendly nation meaning 'a pretty workable country'.

But if differences emerge, those multinationals activate their networks, also in collusion with their own governments, to undermine society and control the key institutions of the State, including the judicial sector, ordering their local agents, recruited to discredit the government and its agencies and, we believe, through financial mechanisms and bonuses. Such networks, set up in poor nations, act with extraordinary consistency, aware of the country's weaknesses and exploiting them, in the same manner as colonial times, through 'divide et impere'.

It is up to each nation's society to create and enhance a patriotic spirit that defends first and foremost the national interests. There is currently a tendency to devalue and minimize everything achieved within the nation itself. And, in my humble opinion, this fact takes place because the intellectual component of society, in each of our nations, seeks power and incorrectly believes that, when in power, they can resolve all the problems of the nation.

The societies of developing countries do not understand that developed countries have already established everything over hundreds of years, by using the forced labour of slaves and by exploiting the wealth of their colonies (from infrastructure to State Institutions, from large sectors of the economy to human resources and technology) and that, nowadays, changes in power occurs only to respond to the immediate social and economic problems of the nation. In developing countries, poverty and social inequalities, the capacity building of State institutions and stability are, among others, the great challenges faced by governments.

If our societies are not able or do not want to understand these substantial differences, there will be no room for national cohesion, when faced with the threats of instability provoked by external influences. And, the more fragile and politically unstable our nations are, political subservience becomes, shall we say, the result which is translated into a dependency on those who can, to those who like to teach, and those that order.

Societies in our nations must know that the ideal of 'a disinterested support' does not exist, and it is worse when there is a noted interest in offering 'support', as occurs on some occasions when they force it, even if the beneficiary country does not accept, or because it is not a priority or because it is not through the national system.

And many powerful nations prefer to provide financial support to some organisations from civil society to shout against corruption and violation of human rights, but these very same organisations of ours do not know how to be transparent about how much money they receive, from whom and how they use the money. Nowadays and in our countries, intellectuals and experts, politicians and activists have lost the notion of sovereignty, they have lost the notion of national interests, they have lost the notion of the superior interests of the people, as they have become enthralled by the heat of human rights, of democracy and of transparency, which they absorbed in a very conventional manner.

These citizens of ours have lost an understanding of the complexity of the problems of the nation and they imagine that international organisations, which they venerate, and the rich nations, to which they submit, can come with a magic wand and resolve everything in a short period of time.

Mr. President

Ladies and Gentlemen

Knowing that next year the ASEAN Community will be established, I believe ASEAN must take the necessary adjustments to its programmatic vision, so that it can present itself as a mature organisation facing the world's paradigms. ASEAN must also review its work methodology, so that it can present itself as an organisation that produces sensible results for the benefit of their populations.

ASEAN must avoid copying the way of thinking of the big international organisations that occupy themselves producing enormous reports, so they have enough material for countless meetings, where experts have the opportunity to only reveal themselves out of contexts, inherent to a region and of each nation, by giving the same prescriptions for all ailments.

Last year, here at the VI BDF, I highlighted the need for greater consciousness of the citizens of each nation to put the interests of the nation above the interests of groups and individuals. Today, I am extending the same thought to the region.

The BDF has been a forum of extreme utility, a forum that allows all participants to express not only their yearnings but also their concerns, and raise themes of global relevance and issues concerning universal principles and values, in an environment of total openness. It was for me, a privilege and an honour to be able to participate in this forum of discussion, where freedom of thought and of expression has been the prerogative.

In regard to complementarities to this valuable initiative of the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, on the occasion of his Excellency's visit to Dili, my President of the Republic, General Taur Matan Ruak, announced the need to establish a Centre of Dialogue, Reconciliation and Peace, based in my country.

My government is committed to fulfilling this noble ideal of the President of the Republic. My President made this announcement, conscious that we will be able to count on the participation of SBY, a great friend of Timor-Leste, as well as with the participation of international and national distinguished members, such as Dr Jose Ramos-Horta and Dr Mari Alkatiri. Timor-Leste wishes to decisively contribute to this collective effort in the region, in the affirmation of tolerance in diversity and in the joint commitment for the development of the human person, as the basis for the democratic stability and the consolidation of our States.

To conclude, allow me, Ladies and Gentlemen, to express here the feeling of gratitude of the people of Timor-Leste to Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, who even before and through both his mandates, played a crucial role in the development of relations between our two nations and our two States.

From Timor-Leste, we followed the democratic transition in Indonesia, while at the same time we began our own State building process. The democratic process in Indonesia will serve as a reference to many other processes that have not yet been able to break the 'status quo' for the situation of resilience.

In the first five years, President SBY faced two enormous challenges that required tough and consistent leadership on his part: the natural disasters, starting in Aceh, and the stability of the nation, starting with the bombings in Bali. The extremism that was spreading through the country required measures of an active and resolute leader, resulting in stability across the entire Archipelago.

The second mandate was fulfilled with an effort of consolidation of the institutions of the State, in particular of the judicial sector, allowing therefore an extraordinary progress in the system of 'checks and balances' and I affirm this with total respect for the opposite views. Beyond this, President SBY projected Indonesia onto the world stage, with great advances in the economic sector that, we can say, is a complex area where inequalities, across the entire Indonesian territory, cannot demand equal and immediate answers.

Democracy is not an immediate solution to the problems of the nation. The economic and financial system of the world is rigged, at the mercy of the rich and powerful. We must search for new ways of sustainable development, that respond to the potential and capacity of each nation, without losing sight of universal values because, we all agree, these values can ensure human dignity.

In our humble analysis, President SBY's two mandates were of crucial importance for the process of democratic transition in Indonesia, placing Indonesia as the world's third largest democracy, with a tolerant society, and with the potential of becoming an economic heavy weight, in the region and in the world.

Congratulations Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, for your enormous effort in the consolidation of values and principles, which even the more developed nations are depressing with a new notion of 'pragmatism' to defend their interests of economic hegemony, through armed interventions, directly or indirectly.

On behalf of my Government and of the People of Timor-Leste, I sincerely express our best wishes for great success for the next President of the Republic of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, to his team and above all to our brothers and sisters in Indonesia.

Thank you very much.

Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão  
Bali, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2014