



# The Holy See

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***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI  
TO H.E. Mr. SUPRAPTO MARTOSEMOTO  
AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA TO THE HOLY SEE\****

*Monday, 12 November 2007*

*Your Excellency,*

I am pleased to welcome you to the Vatican as you present the Letters by which you are accredited Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Indonesia to the Holy See. I thank you most heartily for the greetings which you have brought me from the Indonesian Government and people, and I ask you kindly to convey my own greetings to President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, together with the assurance of my prayers for the peace and prosperity of the nation and its citizens.

Your Excellency has spoken of Indonesia's commitment to pursue policies aimed at advancing the noble goals of democracy and social harmony enshrined in the Constitution and eloquently expressed in the national philosophy of Pancasila. This determination, which calls for sacrifice, resolute efforts to discern and promote the common good, and the cooperation of all political and social groups, is indispensable for overcoming the forces of polarization and conflict, carrying forward the renewal of economic life and consolidating a just democratic order in full respect for the rights of every individual and community.

Certainly at present one of the gravest threats to Indonesia's cherished ideal of national unity is the phenomenon of international terrorism. I deeply appreciate your reaffirmation of the Government's position of condemning terrorist violence, under whatever pretext it occurs, as a criminal offence which, by its contempt for human life and freedom, undermines the very foundations of society. This is particularly the case when the holy name of God is invoked as a justification for such acts. The Church at every level, in fidelity to the teaching of her Master, unequivocally condemns the manipulation of religion for political ends, while urging the application

of international humanitarian law in every aspect of the fight against terrorism (cf. *Message for the 2007 World Day of Peace*, 14).

Indonesia, as a multi-religious country with the largest Muslim population of any nation in the world, plays an important and positive role in promoting interreligious cooperation, both within its borders and in the international community. Dialogue, respect for the convictions of others, and collaboration in the service of peace are the surest means of securing social concord. These are among the noblest goals which can bring together men and women of good will, and, in a particular way, all those who worship the one God who is the Creator and beneficent Lord of the whole human family. A promising development in this regard is represented by the growing instances of cooperation between Christians and Muslims in Indonesia, aimed particularly at the prevention of ethnic and religious conflicts in the most troubled areas.

Although Indonesia's Catholics are a small minority, they desire to participate fully in the life of the nation, "to contribute to the material and spiritual progress of society, and to be sources of cohesion and harmony" (cf. *Address to the Diplomatic Corps Attached to the Holy See*, 8 January 2007). Through their network of educational and health care institutions, they seek to offer a significant service to their brothers and sisters, regardless of religion, and to instil the ethical values fundamental for authentic civic progress and peaceful coexistence. While their right to the free exercise of their religion in complete equality with their fellow citizens is guaranteed by the national Constitution, the protection of this fundamental human right calls for constant vigilance on the part of all. In this regard I note that Indonesia has recently acceded to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and I am confident that this will help to further consolidate the freedom and legitimate autonomy of individual Christians and their institutions.

As Indonesia now sits as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, I take the present occasion to express my confidence that the principles which inspire your own national policies of pacification, dialogue and tolerance will enable Indonesia to make a fruitful contribution to the solution of global conflicts and the promotion of a peace based on international solidarity and concern for the integral development of individuals and peoples.

Your Excellency, as you undertake the mission of representing the Republic of Indonesia to the Holy See, please accept my personal good wishes for the success of your important work. Be assured that you may always count on the offices of the Holy See to assist and support you in the fulfilment of your high responsibilities. Upon you and your family, and upon all the beloved Indonesian people, I cordially invoke the abundant blessings of Almighty God.

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