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PRESS RELEASE

German Foreign Minister: Indonesia is a “Rising Star” of the Asia-Pacific Region



The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr. Guido Westerwelle, for the first time participated in a working luncheon of the Asia-Pacific Ambassadors’ Group in Berlin. The luncheon which was also attended by 18 ambassadors, 3 Chargé d’Affaires a.i. and 2 Deputy Chiefs of Mission was hosted by the Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia in Berlin, Eddy Pratomo, at his residence in Berlin-Dahlem. The German Minister was accompanied

by the Head of Department for Asia-Pacific Affairs and by 4 other officials of the Ministry.

In his welcome address, Ambassador Pratomo thanked the German Foreign Minister for accepting his invitation to attend the luncheon as the Guest of Honor and said that this proves the importance Germany attaches to the Asia-Pacific region. He added that many believe that the region will become the “economic powerhouse of the world” and that the diverse cultures and religions in the region will be an agent of positive and harmonious change. In this vein, the Indonesian Ambassador said that Indonesia endeavors to contribute in a positive and constructive manner to create an architecture of peace and harmony in the region.

The German Foreign Minister underlined the significance of the Asia-Pacific region for the European Union and Germany in many fields. In the economic sector, the region with its significant growth rate is a major partner for Germany. The progress made by ASEAN and the East Asia Summit as well as the emergence of the “rising stars” like China, India and Indonesia are also observed closely by Germany. The Minister said that the principle of “long term and sustainable cooperation” conducted through exchange of young people and students as well as vocational training for instance is at the basis of cooperation with the Asia-Pacific region. Moreover, the Minister underlined the significance in expanding cooperation in the energy sector, in particular renewable energy.

Westerwelle added that the Asia-Pacific region is still under-represented in the UN and in the international community despite of its importance. Germany, as a non-permanent member of

the UN Security Council, will therefore undertake to reform the UN, including a more balanced representation of the region.

With respect to Indonesia, the Foreign Minister once again expressed his sympathies on the recent natural disasters which caused heavy loss of life and material damages. He went on to state that ASEAN will demonstrate clear progress to attain the ASEAN Community under the leadership of Indonesia.

The Ambassadors and other representatives of the Asia-Pacific countries in Berlin used the opportunity of the presence of the Foreign Minister and at the same time Vice-Chancellor to raise questions regarding German relations with the Asia-Pacific region. The questions focused on the issues concerning political relations of Germany with the Asia-Pacific region and with ASEAN. It was agreed that the expansion of relations between ASEAN and the EU constitutes a priority.

The Participation by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Vice-Chancellor Westerwelle at the Residence of the Ambassador of Indonesia constitutes a single honor for Indonesia. This historical event in the German-Indonesian relations also testified to the close relations between the two countries especially in the economic fields, their efforts in their respective regions as well as their active endeavors to address global issues such as climate change and financial crisis.

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