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Malaysian-Indonesian ties cemented by common views

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I AM very honoured by the trust the Indonesian Government has put in me by appointing me ambassador to Malaysia.

Malaysia is one of our closest neighbours and holds much significance to Indonesia, be it then, now or in the future.

Relations between Malaysia and Indonesia are historically linked and developed even while our two nations were under colonial rule.

We have a common history, background and culture and have not encountered major problems that have halted or jeopardised our close cooperation.

This special relationship is the result of our level-headed leaders who have enhanced bilateral ties with frequent cross-visits, meetings and by keeping in close touch with each other.

President Abdurrahman Wahid's visit to Malaysia on November 6 1999 and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's visit to Indonesia on March 9 2000 mark the binding connection between the two leaders of the countries.

Close cooperation between our two countries is evident in many areas: the Indonesian workforce in Malaysia, the Malaysian students in Indonesia, bilateral consultation forums such as the Malindo (Malaysia-Indonesia) dialogue, the meetings of our Common Commission and also in our General Border Committee (GBC).

Malaysia and Indonesia have also established cohesive relations in regional and international forums. In the Asean forum, for example, both countries share a common view and perception of issues plaguing the South-East Asian region or the Asia Pacific.

Both seek to find the best ways to enhance Asean solidarity and play an active role in the Asean Regional Forum (ARF). In fact, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's opinions on several issues have been recognised and accepted in many countries.

As members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the G-15, the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) and the United Nations, Indonesia and Malaysia have a common view on international stability and peace.

As Asean members, economic and political stability in both countries is recognised as an important element for stability and peace in the region.

Personal relations among the leaders and ruling parties of both nations can be considered as intimate, helping cement better ties between our two countries. And throughout this year alone, both nations will observe rapid cross-visits by leaders and their businessmen.

Indonesia would like to see more visits by the leaders of our two countries as this will lead to better cooperation in all aspects of the economy.

Indonesia also hopes to see more Malaysian investment in our country, particularly in palm oil, agro-business and fisheries which offer abundant opportunities and good returns.

In trade, it is hoped Malaysia will buy more products directly from Indonesia without having to engage third parties.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude and appreciation to the Malaysian Government for its assistance to the victims of the Bengkulu earthquake and Timtim, not to mention its role in assisting us to find a way out of the economic crisis.

Such assistance is very meaningful as it has brought much relief and

comfort to our affected citizens.

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