

Keynote Address
Dr. Boediono
Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia

*Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

We are here today driven by a common concern. We are concerned that we no longer live under a friendly and stable climate condition of a country blessed by tropical weather. For the last decades we have witnessed more and more extreme weather hits our country and elsewhere, causing severe flood during the wet season and prolonged drought when we enter the dry months. These climatic changes have led to massive flooding, landslides, and droughts in many parts of Indonesia, causing extensive damage to property, assets, and human life. Floods that covered a wide area of West Java and Banten in February 2007 alone have left almost half a million people homeless or displaced. Commerce and telecommunications systems were disrupted for several weeks, causing economic damage totaling as much as \$US 1 billion.

It is widely believed that climate change is largely the result of human actions on the environment. From the start of the industrial revolution more than 200 years ago, human activities, particularly in developed nations, have come to affect our atmosphere, oceans, and biodiversity. The emission of greenhouse gases, associated with industrialization and strong economic growth from a world population that has increased six fold in 200 years, is causing global warming at a rate that began as significant, has become alarming and is simply unsustainable in the long-term. Let me quote some key facts. Between 1970 and 2004, global greenhouse gas emissions increased 145 percent, annual mean temperature increase 0.1°C to 0.3°C between 1950s and 2000s, followed by increase sea level 1 millimeter to 3 millimeter per year over the course of that period. I can think of no reason to ignore such compelling evidence as this, obviously, will have profound effects on Indonesia's growth and development.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Indonesia, clearly, is vulnerable to climate change. As an archipelagic country, we have the longest coastlines in the world with high concentration of population and economic activity in coastal areas, heavy reliance on agriculture for livelihoods; and high dependence on natural resources and forestry. Global warming threatens to raise sea levels and inundate coastal farming areas. Increased temperatures, shortened rainy seasons, intensified rainfall and prolonged droughts could all bring serious food security and health threats and endanger the habitats and livelihoods of our coastal communities. With such obvious devastating impacts, it is clear that timely actions are what we need to avert disaster. It is now that with foresight and strong will such action can be taken without disturbing the essence of our way of life, by adjusting behavior not altering it entirely.

Ladies and gentlemen,

There are two key ways of dealing with the impacts of climate change in Indonesia and elsewhere. First is to work to reduce the growth of greenhouse gases, and eventually to halt and then reverse global emissions. Second is to prepare for and adapt to changes as best we can, throughout our economies and societies. However, as many regional and international forums have demonstrated, having a global consensus on emission cut proves to be a complicated political task. Many doubt that climate change can be addressed seriously while the world's top priority is to cure global economic crisis. Despite of all those problems, Government of Indonesia has committed to reduce our emission up to 26% by 2020. With international support, we are even confident that we can reduce emissions by as much as 41 percent. Because most of our emission comes from forest related issues, such as forest fire and deforestation, we believe that such target is achievable. Science and technology, I believe, are an essential component to achieve this target without sacrificing our economic development.

I am, therefore, pleased that Universitas Indonesia and its university partners within the Association of Asia Pacific Rim University (APRU) takes the initiative to host a scientific forum where new ideas shall be discussed and formulated to address the challenges of climate change. Just as science and technology have given us the evidence to measure the vulnerability of the climate change impacts to our society, so it can help us find safety from it. With such diverse skill and talent from within and outside UI, this meeting has the potential for innovation, for scientific discovery and hence, of course for business investment and growth. The unique and special role of university as a center for human development also have the potential to create new ways of better thinking, changing of values and behaviour in anticipating the impacts of climate change. I am particularly keen to see a more active involvement from academia and scientific community to achieve our emission cut through sound researches in forest and natural resource management, alternative energy, and low carbon technology. I am looking forward to learning the outcomes of this important gathering.

I thank you.