

INDONESIAN-AUSTRALIAN JOINT STATEMENT

At the conclusion of official discussions held at Parliament House, Canberra, on 7 February, 1972, President Soeharto of Indonesia and the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr McMahon, issued the following joint statement.

"President Soeharto and Mr McMahon expressed their satisfaction at the close relations which had developed between the two countries.

They recorded their belief that strong and enduring ties of friendship and co-operation between Australia and Indonesia would be a major element for the future peace and development of the region.

They reviewed developments in the Asian and Pacific region. Their talks confirmed the basic similarity of the two countries in their approach to developments in the region.

Their talks were very timely because of the rapid developments taking place in the region, and they believed that the two governments should keep closely in touch through frequent and frank consultations. In future regular annual meetings of officials of the two countries would be held on foreign policy matters.

President Soeharto stated that in order to build stable and developing societies, the countries of South-East Asia needed political stability and tranquillity. Security and calm were essential for the improvement of the economic situation and the implementation of development.

He explained that Indonesia believed that the countries of South-East Asia could meet and overcome subversive pressures and threats to regional security through building up their national self-reliance and national resilience.

He said that Indonesia believed that the responsibility rested on his country and the other countries of South-East Asia to meet the challenges by using their material and spiritual resources for more progress and more welfare for their peoples.

Mr McMahon said that security and tranquillity in South-East Asia were of the greatest national importance to Australia. He said that under President Soeharto's leadership, Indonesia had been able to create and maintain national stability which contributed greatly to the stability of the South-East Asian region.

"He went on to say that the Australian Government and people were committed to the policy of supporting the governments of South-East Asia in their efforts to secure their freedom and independence, to build their national institutions, and to create more welfare and greater opportunities for their peoples.

Australia's economic aid and technical assistance had been steadily increasing year by year in accordance with the development of Australia's economy. This policy would be maintained in the future. Mr McMahon referred to the current three-year aid programme of \$A53.8 million for Indonesia. He said that Australia would continue to give high priority to Indonesia in its aid programme.

He agreed that security and stability went hand in hand with economic improvement and development. Australia's programmes of assistance would help strengthen the capacity of the administrations, the networks of communications and transportation, and the security of the neighbouring countries.

President Soeharto said that Indonesia welcomed Australia's growing interest in and contribution to regional development, peace and modernisation in South-East Asia. He expressed the appreciation of his government and people for the aid provided by Australia which was given without any obligation for repayment and was planned over a period of years. He also welcomed the growing involvement of Australian humanitarian and welfare bodies in rendering assistance.

His Government noted and encouraged the growth of Australian business and investment activities in Indonesia. He welcomed the opportunity which his present visit would give him to meet with Australian business leaders. His Government looked to a developing economic partnership between Indonesia and Australia.

Mr McMahon explained to President Soeharto Australia's policy of promoting the economic development and political advancement of Papua New Guinea. Australia would accede to the wishes of the people of Papua New Guinea, expressed through their elected representatives, about their political future.

President Soeharto and Mr McMahon noted the growing cultural, intellectual and professional links between Australia and Indonesia. These were being stimulated by the exchanges of artists and groups under the agreement of cultural co-operation and by the programmes of support for Indonesian universities undertaken by the Vice-Chancellors Committee of the Australian Universities. Mr McMahon drew President Soeharto's attention to the increasing study of the Indonesian language, culture and history in Australia, which brings home to us the vitality and richness of Indonesian civilisation.

"President Soeharto and Mr McMahon welcomed the partial seabed boundary negotiated between the two countries early last year. They agreed that all outstanding seabed boundary questions should be negotiated at an early date.

The President and the Prime Minister expressed their faith in the future of the friendship of the two countries based on wider understanding and deeper co-operation. President and Madame Soeharto extended an invitation to the Prime Minister and Mrs McMahon to visit Indonesia. The invitation was accepted with pleasure.

The President said that he and Madame Soeharto and members of their party expressed their deep appreciation of the warm welcome and gracious hospitality accorded to them by the people and Government of Australia."

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CANBERRA,  
7 February 1972