



OPENING REMARKS BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MAKMUR WIDODO
At the brainstorming meeting of ASEAN Plus
New York, 3 – 4 November 2001

Distinguished Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed a privilege for me to welcome you all at this brainstorming meeting of ASEAN Plus organized by the Indonesian Mission. Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Nitin Desai for his appointment as the Secretary-General for the World Summit on Sustainable Development. I am convinced that a combination of experienced leadership of both Prof. Salim and Mr. Desai, the World Summit would be able to produce meaningful and successful outcome in support of our common endeavor to a more sustainable future.

Distinguished Colleagues,

The preparatory work for the World Summit on Sustainable Development at the sub-regional and regional levels will be

completed at the end of this month in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. As we recall, a number of common issues have emerged during the preparatory meetings. Major constraints and challenges that have been identified include poverty and food insecurity mostly in the developing countries, unsustainable patterns of consumption and production particularly in developed countries and most importantly the lack of means of implementation hindering the full implementation of Agenda 21. The meetings also highlighted some critical situation of forests biodiversity, land degradation, depleted marine resources and lack of appropriate energy sources to support sustainable development.

Although the regional preparatory processes are very rich and engaging also active participation of relevant stakeholders, however, the substantive ideas generated at those meetings are fairly general and need to be crystallized into concrete propositions. It is within this context, we are of the view that ASEAN as the sub-regional mechanism of 10 countries in the Southeast Asian could develop a number of meaningful and concrete initiatives on sustainable development. This exercise is conducted in cooperation with the World Summit Secretariat, UNEP and UNDP as an effort to identify potential concrete projects and initiatives on sustainable development and to pursue common understanding on issues pertaining to sustainable development. I hope that this brainstorming meeting could provide an opportunity for the permanent representatives of ASEAN member countries to provide concrete contribution to our respective headquarters so as to

enable each of our them to prepare themselves for the forthcoming Asia and the Pacific regional meeting of the preparatory committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development. This meeting is also especially designed to include some of the ASEAN dialogue partners and international organizations that have a very intensive engagement and cooperation on various fields. I also have to mention that we have an honor to include our colleague from South Africa as the host country of the World Summit in order to share with us the preparation of Johannesburg as well as to share their valuable information on substantive ideas to be developed within the context of the World Summit.

Distinguished colleagues,

In an effort to help our deliberation, a background document prepared in cooperation with the WSSD Secretariat, UNEP, UNDP and ESCAP Secretariat is available before you for your consideration. This document provides information concerning the state of Asia and Pacific regional preparation, particularly that of the Southeast Asia and proposed some concrete project ideas develop from the existing activities. In addition to the political outcome and program of action to be developed in the World Summit, we are also of the view that the Summit should develop concrete initiatives on sustainable development at the sub-regional, regional and global. With this, I sincerely hope that we will be able to identify some potential concrete projects and initiatives to be

submitted to our government and channeled through appropriate ASEAN mechanism to be further elaborated and developed in cooperation with dialogue partner countries and relevant international organizations.

I would like to end here and give the floor to H.E. Ambassador Kumalo of South Africa to brief us on the status of preparation for the World Summit and inform us of concrete initiatives that might emerged from the World Summit in Johannesburg.