

Keynote Speech

**H.E. Dr. R.M. Marty M. Natalegawa
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Republic of Indonesia**

**At the Senior Officials' Meeting
for the Establishment of ASEAN Supreme Audit Institutions (SAI)
Jakarta, 13 October 2011**

Yang Terhormat Bapak Hadi Purnomo, Chairman of the Audit Board of the Republic of Indonesia,

[Excellency Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, Secretary General of ASEAN]

Distinguished Delegates of the Audit Board of ASEAN Member States

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning,

Assalamu'alaikum wr.Wb.,

1. Allow me to first of all congratulate Bapak Hadi Purnomo and all representatives of Supreme Audit Institutions from ASEAN Member States, for convening the first Senior Officials' Meeting for the Establishment of ASEAN Supreme Audit Institutions (ASEAN SAI).
2. I am truly honoured and privileged to be part of this important endeavor. I am confident that the establishment of ASEAN SAI will very much contribute to our common effort to achieve an ASEAN Community that is based on the principles of accountability, good governance and the rule of law.
3. Indeed, in today's world, where advancement in information technology has empowered so many people, raising their expectations to their Governments, the questions of accountability and good governance are thus central.
4. Your role, distinguished participants, is therefore truly important: to ensure that we can meet public expectation for accountability, good governance and the rule of law.
5. And to do so at all levels: nationally, regionally and internationally.

6. And this is why the planned establishment of ASEAN SAI this coming November is a much welcome initiative.
7. I believe there are so many potentials, so many possible roles, that ASEAN SAI can play, and I will speak more in detail on this later on.
8. But in essence, we expect the ASEAN SAI to generate fresh ideas and concrete projects to further enhance the capacity of ASEAN member States in good and sound auditing, their capacity for good governance.
9. To ensure that our practices are on par with international standard.
10. And to ensure that we remain faithful to our vision of a people-centered ASEAN, where all our actions and programs are accountable to the people.
11. Needless to say, good governance and the rule of law also serve as strong fundamentals towards sustainable economic growth.
12. And as exemplified by the current global economic challenges, countries that apply prudent fiscal and budgetary policy are those who can withstand economic and financial crisis.
13. Hence, even more reasons for prudent auditing, and for enhancing regional cooperation towards that direction.
14. Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
15. Drawing many valuable lessons learned from our past experiences, Indonesia strives to make continuous improvement in good governance and the rule of law, and in corruption eradication.
16. This is something that we do nationally, and also in partnership with other countries and the international community.
17. In May this year, for instance, Indonesia hosted the "International Conference on Foreign Bribery in International Business Transactions" in Bali.
18. On that occasion, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono underlined that fighting corruption was not just a moral imperative - it encompassed democratic, social and economic imperatives as well.

19. Indeed, corruption and bribery serve as impediments to good governance, justice and economic growth. And
20. I am sure that key to our success to eradicate corruption, fraud and manipulation lies in our concerted effort to develop such a transparent and accountable auditing system and institutions at all levels.
21. In doing so, we need to learn from each other, from each others' success and lapses.
22. This is why the establishment of ASEAN Supreme Audit Institutions (SAI) becomes very strategic, as this forum can serve as **an organized learning process**.
23. To facilitate a comprehensive dialogue to advance good governance and rule of law from the side of public audit institutions.
24. Moreover, the establishment of ASEAN SAI is a reflection of our commitment for a stronger partnership and cooperation among public auditors in the region. It is also our commitment to consistently adhere to the principles of good governance and rule of law.
25. Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
26. For the ASEAN SAI to succeed, I believe there are at least three vital elements that we can emphasize on.
27. **First**, we should aim our cooperation at enhancing the capacity of each country's Supreme Audit Institution, so that they can truly fulfill their intended role to promote accountability and transparency over public activities.
28. With this tremendous responsibility, the institutional capacity of national SAI must be strengthened, while professionalism and integrity of their officials must be continuously enhanced.
29. I believe that as the capacity of national SAIs within ASEAN member countries improves, so will the chances of realizing good governance and the rule of law in our region.
30. And ASEAN SAI can play an important role in this regard - to facilitate exchange of knowledge and experiences among its members, and at the same time to set benchmark for best practices.

31. **Second**, in conducting their responsibility, the ASEAN SAI needs to further engage and collaborate with all relevant stakeholders.
32. Advancing good governance is not a work only for the government.
33. The ASEAN SAI needs to engage private sectors, academes, civil society organizations, mass media and other interested parties, to promote a better understanding of their roles and task, to harness public support for good governance.
34. This engagement will also help facilitate discussion on possible new concepts and methods in enhancing transparency, accountability, public participation, and effective auditing.
35. The **third**, the establishment of ASEAN SAI is a means to an end. It is not the end of the process itself.
36. Indeed, advancing good governance and rule of law through prudent financial auditing is a never-ending process. The Supreme Audit Institutions have the responsibility to serve as the guardian of this process
37. Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
38. Before concluding, I should like to once again reiterate how very much I look forward to the official establishment of the ASEAN SAI in Bali this November.
39. I have every confidence that once established; ASEAN SAIs will be able to significantly contribute to the development of a viable and sustainable ASEAN Community, one that is based on accountability, good governance, and the rule of law.
40. Finally, I wish you all a productive meeting and every success in your endeavor.
41. I thank you.
42. Wassalamualaikum wr. Wb.