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PRESS RELEASE

Vice-President Kalla welcomed President Obama's outreach to the Muslim world

February 5, 2009

Muhammad Jusuf Kalla, the Vice-President of Indonesia delivered remarks at a luncheon discussion co-organized by the United States-Indonesia Society (USINDO) and their sponsors. The luncheon in Washington, D.C. was attended by US Government representatives, the business community, academics, and the general public.

On behalf of the Indonesian people, Vice-President Kalla conveyed his congratulations on the inauguration of Barack Obama as the forty-fourth President of the United States of America. Indonesia looks forward to be a partner of the United States both to expand the bilateral relationships as well as in the immediate actions to face the challenges of the global economic and financial crisis.

Vice-President Kalla welcomed President Obama's reaching out to the Muslim world. Vice-President Kalla underlined that Indonesia has shown that Islam and Democracy are compatible and that this stems from Indonesia's long history in opening herself-up for international trade and the resulting people-to-people contacts.

Vice-President Kalla underscored that Indonesia has successfully brought stable security and better business climate through addressing a number of security threats and fighting anti-corruption. In today's global economic condition, Indonesia has shown resiliency despite the shocks to domestic capital and financial markets. Vice-President Kalla called for enhanced education cooperation. In addition, VP Kalla also called on both countries to work together to lessen and reverse the effects of climate change, combat illegal logging, promote international trade and investment, as well as restore global economic growth.

In his introduction of Vice-President Kalla, Ambassador Christopher Hill the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific underscored the commonalities that Indonesia and the United States share and emphasized the importance of enhancing cooperation in education, security, and the environment. Ambassador Hill underlined that the United States has "special

relations” with Indonesia and he is confident that the relationship will be more special under the Administration of President Obama.

Ambassador Hill conveyed that Indonesia’s progress in a number of sectors have been recognized. Indonesia’s designation as a country eligible for Millennium Challenge Corporation compact status, is one such appreciation. Ambassador Hill also expressed his appreciation for Indonesia’s reform of its armed forces.

The United States is keen to develop further the bilateral cooperation with Indonesia. The upcoming visit to Indonesia by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is a reflection of the high interest that the United States put on Indonesia-US relationship.

Meanwhile, Ambassador Sudjadnan Parnohadiningrat warmly welcomed the planned visit by the U.S. Secretary of State. Ambassador Parnohadiningrat stated that he is confident that the presidency of Barack Obama provides a unique opportunity to further strengthen Indonesia-U.S. bilateral relationship. “As our common bond grows, so must we work further to strengthen and fulfill the full potential of our partnership and elevate it to a new level.” expressed Ambassador Parnohadiningrat.

In his two-day visit, Vice-President Kalla also held meetings with Senator Christopher Bond (R-Missouri), Senator Jim Web (D-Virginia) dan Congressman Eni Faleomavaega (D-American Samoa Delegate to the House of Representative). Vice-President Kalla expressed his appreciation for the Senators and Congressman, all friends of Indonesia and discussed ways to realize the opportunities of advancing Indonesia-United States relations. Congressman Faleomavaega appreciated the challenges in infrastructure development in Indonesia, and assured United States cooperation to address the challenges.

Senator Bond is the Vice-Chair for the Select Committee on Intelligence, Senator Webb is the Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on East Asian and the Pacific Affairs. While Congressman Faleomavaega is Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and the Global Environment.

Vice-President Kalla also met with Vice-President Joseph Biden, CEOs of multinational companies and delivered a speech entitled “Crafting peace in Indonesia: peaceful settlement and reconciliation” at the International Luncheon of the 57th National Prayer Breakfast. In the Prayer Breakfast, VP Kalla shared his experiences in resolving conflicts peacefully based on the following principles: be knowledgeable of conflicting sides, strengthen moral courage, build trust, unite conflicting parties, limit exposure, and honor dignity.

Washington, D.C., February 5 2009
