

world relate not to some modern problem—although there are modern problems, like sophisticated weapons—but they’re rooted in the oldest, most primitive problem of human societies? We’re still afraid of people who are different from us, who look different from us, who act different from us, who have different views about how to worship God or live their lives.

That’s why AmeriCorps is so important. For all the things I’ve been involved in all these years as President, all the things I’ve worked to do, I really believe, looking toward the future, if every young person has a chance to be a good citizen—and we don’t give up on anybody; we always give them a chance to come back, here; we had a lot of comeback kids here today talking—and if America can remain committed to building one America across all the lines that divide us, recognizing that our differences make life more exciting but what’s important is our common humanity, if those two things can prevail, more than any modern discovery, you’ll be proud of the America your children and grandchildren have.

That’s why AmeriCorps matters and why I am so grateful to you. Thank you very much.

Now, I want to ask the newest class of AmeriCorps volunteers to stand up and repeat the oath after me. Raise your right hand.

“I will get things done for America to make our people safer, smarter, and healthier. I will

bring Americans together to strengthen our communities. Faced with apathy, I will take action. Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground. Faced with adversity, I will persevere. I will carry this commitment with me this year and beyond. I am an AmeriCorps member. And I will get things done.”

[Audience members repeated the pledge line by line after the President.]

Congratulations.

Good for you. Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to ask you, in advance, to give a warm round of applause to the Howard University Choir. They’ve waited through this whole thing to sing “America The Beautiful” with us. [Applause]

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:55 p.m. in a tent on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Andre Crisp, AmeriCorps volunteer, who introduced the President; Eli Segal, former Chief Executive Officer, Corporation for National Service; Alan D. Solomont, former national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; and the late Dan Dutko, Democratic Party fundraiser. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

## Statement on the Election of Abdurrahman Wahid as President of Indonesia

October 20, 1999

I congratulate Abdurrahman Wahid on his election as President of Indonesia. He and the people of Indonesia deserve enormous credit for the democratic process that led to this peaceful change in government. This election, conducted fairly and transparently, has been a true triumph of democracy.

Indonesia still faces many challenges: achieving national reconciliation, consolidating eco-

nomic recovery, and building institutions accountable to its people. With a democratically elected leadership, I am optimistic that real progress will be made toward all these goals.

I look forward to working closely with the new President and his government.