

## Remarks Following a Meeting With the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Singapore

November 15, 2009

*President Obama.* Well, good afternoon, everybody. We have just concluded the first-ever meeting between a United States President and the leaders of all 10 ASEAN countries. And I'd like to thank my friends Prime Minister Lee for hosting and Prime Minister Abhisit for cochairing this historic meeting.

As I said in Tokyo yesterday, the United States is a Pacific nation, and we enjoy deep historical ties to Southeast Asia, one of the most important and dynamic regions of the world. As the first U.S. President to have a personal connection to the region, I reaffirmed to my ASEAN friends that the United States is committed to strengthening its engagement in Southeast Asia both with our individual allies and partners and with ASEAN as an institution.

During our meeting, we talked about how the United States and ASEAN can work together as close partners, both within this region and throughout the world. We discussed the importance of meeting common challenges like climate change, nuclear proliferation, and working together in support of G-20 efforts to promote a sustained and balanced global economic recovery. And I reaffirmed the policy that I put forward yesterday in Tokyo with regard to Burma.

We also recognized the need for expanding high-level engagement on these and other major issues. I proposed sending Energy Secretary Steven Chu to the region next year to talk with his ASEAN counterparts about clean energy, and we agreed that our trade ministers should develop new initiatives to promote trade and investment that could create jobs and improve living standards in all our nations.

And finally, I stressed my strong support for ASEAN's ambitious goal of creating a community by 2015, including its bold effort to achieve economic integration, which will contribute to a sustained and lasting prosperity within this region and throughout the world.

We know that there's much work left to be done, but we also know that continued dialogue and engagement between our nations can help us meet the common challenges of the 21st century and achieve our common goals.

So it was an honor to take part in this historic meeting. I look forward to a second leaders meeting next year. And I am so appreciative that we had such an outstanding chair during the course of this meeting. Thank you very much.

*Prime Minister Abhisit Wechachiwa of Thailand.* As the President just said, we just had an historic meeting with the leaders of ASEAN and the United States. This has been made possible not because of—just because of the longstanding partnership between individual countries in this region and the United States and more than three decades of partnership between the U.S. and ASEAN, I think also due to his personal leadership and his commitment to reinvigorate engagement with the region.

We had a discussion on an impressive range of issues, particularly with the U.S. support for the community building efforts of ASEAN, ranging from issues like our cooperation on disaster management, trade and investment, and the creation of the economic community in ASEAN, as well as providing support for some of the new institutions like the Intergovernmental Human Rights Commission, which will be going to the U.S. to talk with the experts and consultations next year.

ASEAN also stands ready to be a reliable partner of the U.S. in attacking the various global and regional challenges, whether it's climate change, whether it's the Doha round, or counterterrorism and other security issues.

So this has been a historic meeting. We are pleased with the progress that this enhanced partnership has achieved. And we look forward to similar meetings next year.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:16 p.m. at the Shangri-La Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singa-

pore. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks Following a Meeting With President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia in Singapore

November 15, 2009

*President Obama.* Hello, everybody. I just wanted to make a brief statement about the wonderful relationship that I've been able to develop with President Yudhoyono. As many of you know, I have some historic ties to Indonesia, but I am also extraordinarily impressed with the progress that Indonesia has made in developing its democracy. I want to congratulate the President for his recent reelection, and he now has his Government in place.

Indonesia is not only regionally important, but as a member of the G-20, as one of the world's largest democracies, as one of the world's largest Islamic nations, it has enormous influence and really is, I think, a potential model for the kind of development strategies, democracy strategies, as well as interfaith strategies that are going to be so important moving forward.

We had a strong discussion about a range of issues and how we can create even better bilateral relations than we already have, a comprehensive agreement—comprehensive partnership agreement that we're developing that will cover things like education, working on clean energy issues, expanding the Peace Corps' presence in Indonesia, counterterrorism issues. These are all areas in which we intend to focus in the months and years to come.

We discussed some of the broader challenges of getting a meaningful Copenhagen agreement and continuing to stabilize the world economy and promoting growth, both through trade and investment and also through what has been discussed throughout the ASEAN summit, the idea of inclusive development and growth where it's not just at the top but is spread out among the population.

So I am very excited about our prospects for deepening relations in the future, and I want to

make sure that everybody knows that I intend to be visiting Indonesia next year. The invitation that's been extended to—by President Yudhoyono is one that I want to take up, and I'm hoping to be able to take Michelle and the girls as well so that they can take a look at some of my old haunting grounds. [Laughter] And again, I want to thank you, Mr. President, for your leadership and your commitment to improving ties between the United States and Indonesia. Thank you very much.

*President Yudhoyono.* Thank you. Yes, President Obama and I had a very good discussion on wide range of issues of common interests. President Obama is a friend of Indonesia. He knows Indonesia very well, and he is well respected in Indonesia.

In this meeting, I told President Obama that I really appreciate his fresh, new approach to the world, to many international issues, including his positive outreach to the Islamic world.

We also renewed our commitment to elevate our relation at higher level for comprehensive partnerships, and I welcome also the future cooperation between Indonesia and the United States in various fields such as trade and investment, education and technology, climate change, food and energy security, countering communicable diseases, and also counterterrorism and people-to-people contact.

And lastly, as has been shared by President Obama, I look forward to welcoming President Obama to Indonesia next year, and he will be warmly welcomed by the Indonesian people.

Thank you.

*President Obama.* Thank you so much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:06 p.m. at the Shangri-La Hotel. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.