



PRESS RELEASE

INDONESIAN-CANADIAN INTERFAITH DIALOGUE Indonesian Embassy, October 24, 2007

This morning, the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Ottawa successfully facilitated a Indonesian-Canadian Interfaith Dialogue entitled "Inter-Religious Partnership to Promote Understanding and Tolerance" to foster friendship and partnership among citizens of different faiths and beliefs. This forum was intended not only to promote religious understanding and tolerance, but also to enhance people to people contact between Indonesia and Canada.

This special program was motivated by the belief that in this volatile world, inter-religious cooperation will promote understanding and tolerance. The things that make people different from one another should not be regarded as a divide but as assets in order to achieve a common purpose.

In his opening remarks, the Indonesian Ambassador, H.E. Djoko Hardono, stressed that religious diversity is a blessing that mankind must embrace and celebrate. The Government and the People of Indonesia remain committed to promote dialogue and cooperation among religious leaders in the world to avoid misunderstanding, tensions and violence as a result of ignorance and lack of knowledge which are the primary sources of prejudice that can be easily inflamed by religious pretext.

The Dialogue was very well attended. Prominent Indonesian and Canadian citizens, academics, as well as leaders of religious communities such as the Ottawa Muslim Association, Notre Dame Cathedral Basilica of Ottawa, Canadian Baptist Ministries, Canadian Baha'i Community, Canadian Ahmadiyya Council, and the Sikh Temple of Ottawa shared their personal spiritual experiences and discussed a wide range of interfaith issues relating to both countries.

The discourse touched on the importance of fostering friendship and partnership, through which greater understanding and harmony of different faiths can be actively nurtured, and through which the shared values of peace, compassion and tolerance can be translated into practical deeds within our communities.

The need to continuously bring the importance of promoting interfaith dialogue to the attention of our communities was clearly signaled during the discourse.

At the conclusion of the roundtable discussion, all participants unanimously agreed to adopt the "Interfaith Message".

Ottawa, October 24, 2007

Mr. Iswayudha
Minister Counsellor for Public Affairs