

Welcoming Speech of the Governor to the
Meeting for Governors/Mayors of ASEAN in Jakarta

Yang terhormat Bapak Wakil Menteri Luar Negeri,
Excellencies Ambassadors,
Colleagues and delegates from the Capitals of ASEAN,
Colleagues from Local Government Association in ASEAN,
Yang terhormat Bapak Dirjen Kerjasama ASEAN Kementerian Luar Negeri RI
Yang terhormat Bapak Dirjen Otonomi Daerah Kementerian Dalam Negeri RI
Hadirin yang saya hormati,

Selamat pagi dan salam sejahtera.

A very warm welcome here in the JW Marriott Hotel in Jakarta. It is a great pleasure and honor for me personally and also for the citizens of Jakarta to be your host for the next two days.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

“One Vision, One Identity, One Community” – that is the motto Southeast Asian Nations, a region with over 600 million people - gave themselves as a guideline and inspiration. And I believe you will agree with me that this is truly an ambitious motto, worth to strive for.

In this respect, the approaching launch of a common market in 2015 is going to mark the beginning of a big step forward towards this goal. The ASEAN Economic Community with its free flow of goods, services, investments and skilled labor will have a considerable impact on national economies and therefore also on the daily lives of the citizens all over ASEAN - whether they may be aware of it or not.

Are they aware of it?

A study recently released by the ASEAN Secretariat and conducted in the Capitals of ASEAN found out that from 2.200 respondents 3 out of 4 people (76%) “... lack a basic understanding” of what ASEAN is and what it is striving to do.

A survey conducted by Benny and Kamarulnizam in 2011 in Indonesia paints a more optimistic picture of the people’s perception of ASEAN. It shows that Indonesian people generally have high awareness of the ASEAN’s existence, functions, and objectives. They also have a good understanding of Indonesia’s roles in the ASEAN as well as the importance of closer mutual agreements between Indonesia and other ASEAN members.

Although they seem to know much about the ASEAN, also Indonesian people appear to have only little knowledge about the idea of the Asean Economic Community. According to this survey, around 80% have never even heard or read about the ASEAN Economic Community and its founding document.

Even here in Jakarta, where the ASEAN Secretariat is located, I guess besides government officials only very few politically interested and informed persons and businessmen may have an idea what the removal of economic barriers between our

countries would actually mean for the future and how it would affect our local decision-making and leadership and the economic life in our cities.

Dear Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It would be too shortsighted to consider the upcoming single market as a complicated matter, which has to be dealt with by governments and businessmen only. It implies an enormous challenge also for us as local leaders since the Capitals, major cities and metropolitan areas in ASEAN play a key role in the regional market. With its most concentrated resources and potentials for innovation and creativity, cities are the drivers of regional economic growth and prosperity. However, cities are also places where problems such as unemployment, segregation and poverty are concentrated and where under the conditions of a common market matters can get even worse.

In order to actively contribute to make the ASEAN single market a success-story and a win-win-situation for all our cities and citizens, we need to better understand what is about to come and how we can prepare the people in our cities and ourselves for the ASEAN Economic Community. "ASEAN goes local – towards the ASEAN Economic Community 2015" is the title of this meeting. "Think global, act local" is a paradigm, which fits perfectly into this context.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The creation of a sustainable future is a collective task. I would like again thank you very much for your coming and willingness to discuss how we as local leaders can take action towards an integrated ASEAN economy, how we can work together in terms of mutual benefit and healthy competition and how we can support the ASEAN Community building efforts. We need to build on our common interests on the basis of respect of the diversity in our cultural traditions, values and development models and show leadership in addressing the upcoming challenges for our cities.

I am very much looking forward to your proposals and views and our discussions. But besides that, I am wishing all of you a very pleasant stay and a good time in Jakarta.

Thank you.