

RISING 50 THEN & BEYOND

A DIPLOMAT'S JOURNEY



Ngurah Swajaya



Ngurah Swajaya presented his credentials as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Indonesia to the President of the Republic of Singapore on 25 February 2016. He is a career diplomat who has been in the diplomatic service for almost 30 years.

Prior to assuming his current post, he had served as Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the Republic of Indonesia to ASEAN (2010-2013) and Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to the Kingdom of Cambodia (2009-2010). He also served as Head of Economic Diplomacy Task Force at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 2013 to 2015.

Other posts that Ambassador Ngurah Swajaya had held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs include, among others, Director of ASEAN Political Security Cooperation (2006-2008) and Director of Development Cooperation and the Environment (2004-2006).

During his tenure, Ambassador Ngurah Swajaya has served as Head of Alternate Head of Delegation for many ASEAN and UN Meetings. He was the Chair of the Working Group to draft the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism and involved in the drafting of the ASEAN Charter.

Ambassador Ngurah Swajaya holds a Law Degree from Udayana in Bali and a Master of Arts from Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, Boston, USA. He is married with Mahaswi Swajaya and has 2 children, Apri Swajaya and Bella Swajaya.

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by Ngurah Swajaya

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Dedication

*This book is in loving memory to my parents,
especially my father who always taught me to think positive.*

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FOREWORD

by **H.E. Retno L.P. Marsudi**
Minister for Foreign Affairs,
Republic of Indonesia



I HAVE KNOWN and worked closely with Ambassador Ngurah Swajaya, whom I call Ngurah, for many years. At one point in our careers, during our assignment at the multilateral Department, Ngurah was like my “tag-team” partner in handling issues pertaining to macroeconomy and sustainable development, especially when Indonesia served as the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee of the World Summit in Sustainable Development (WSSD) and other multilateral meetings.

I remember working with Ngurah when he helped Prof. Dr. Emil Salim in serving as the Chairman of WSSD process that took two years, which led to the convening of the Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa. He played instrumental roles in bridging the gaps between the UN processes, which to some extent is quite unique and requires institutional and procedural memories. Further on, Ngurah became deeply involved in ASEAN works, from the drafting of Political-Security Community Blueprint, to ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism, and the ASEAN Charter.

As a fellow professional diplomat, I can relate to and see myself reflected in many situations Ngurah experienced throughout his career. I witnessed some of them and I also experienced them working with Ngurah in undertaking in our respective functions.

Being a diplomat is not as simple as participating in receptions, diplomatic functions or anything laidback and fancy, as perhaps imagined by many. Being a professional diplomat involves loads of hard work, making great efforts at understanding matters, and formulating strategies to anticipate unexpected problems. Bridging and upholding different national interests in multilateral negotiations also requires skills acquired from experience. The UN negotiations themselves can be very lengthy, where some last for more than 24 hours to reach consensus, hence requiring deep concentration and a lot of stamina.

The contemporary job of a diplomat covers not only negotiating and representing the interests of one's government at home, but also protecting citizens and even private sectors, which are not limited to consular issues alone. Dynamics of technology and social media revolution also require every diplomat to keep up and to be able to anticipate and address new emerging issues. Diplomats will always be at the frontline, and therefore need to embrace and utilize every opportunity that comes with globalization.

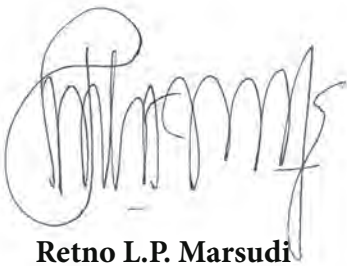
RISING 50 THEN and BEYOND, a Diplomat's Journey takes you through Ngurah's personal journey as a diplomat for the past 30 years. His writings and observations will be valuable in understanding the transformative mindset needed by every diplomat in performing his

or her duties in the constantly changing environment. I therefore commend Ngurah's willingness to share his priceless experiences in this book.

RISING 50 THEN and BEYOND, a Diplomat's Journey also provides glimpses of the conduct of Indonesian foreign policy on some issues in different eras and presidencies, from Ngurah's experience and personal standpoint. The book also shares different approaches in handling different issues, as well as challenges and opportunities in the work of bilateral, regional and multilateral spectrums; all the while being consistent with Indonesian foreign policy objectives.

Although it does not cover all the aspects of the life of an Indonesian diplomat, the book certainly serves as a solid example of a "*diplomat zaman now*" and "*diplomasi membumi*", as what I have instructed to all Indonesian diplomats in making a difference for the country and the people.

Thank you.



Retno L.P. Marsudi

Chapter 1

Diplomat's Diary: From Udayana University to Global Stage

I G NGURAH Swajaya, known as Ngurah Swajaya is the first Indonesian Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the Republic of Indonesia to ASEAN after the entry into force of the ASEAN Charter and the establishment of Committee of Permanent Representative to ASEAN. Currently he serves as the Ambassador of Indonesia to the Republic of Singapore. Prior to the ASEAN assignment, Ambassador Ngurah Swajaya served as the Ambassador of Indonesia to the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Ambassador Swajaya joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1986 through a direct recruitment process by the Ministry to the University of Udayana in Bali and got his first assignment overseas as the Third Secretary at the Indonesian Embassy to the Federal Republic of Germany, in Bonn (1991-1995). He was later assigned at the Indonesian Permanent Mission to the United Nations (UN), in New York, USA (1999 - 2003). At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he had served as the Director for Multilateral Economic and Environment Cooperation, and the Director for ASEAN Political Security Cooperation.

Ngurah Swajaya was sworn in by the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Dr. H. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, as the Ambassador

Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Indonesia to the Kingdom of Cambodia on January 30, 2009, where he served the post from 2009 to 2010. He presented the Letter of Credence from the President of the Republic of Indonesia to His Majesty, King Norodom Sihamoni, the King of Cambodia on April 22, 2009.

He was later assigned as the first Permanent representative/ Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Indonesia to ASEAN based at the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Indonesia in Jakarta. He served as the Ambassador to ASEAN during Indonesia's rotating Chairmanship to ASEAN in 2011. In the ASEAN circle, Ambassador Swajaya served as the chairman of the drafting committee of the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism and Indonesia's drafting team member as part of Indonesia's High-Level Task Force on the drafting of the ASEAN Charter. During his tenure in ASEAN, Ambassador Ngurah Swajaya chaired the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN, the Coordinating Committee on ASEAN Connectivity in 2011 and various other ASEAN institutions.

Post ASEAN Ambassadorship assignment, he was named as the Indonesian Representative to the ASEAN High Level Task Force on the Strengthening of the ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN Organs in 2014. He was involved in many international/United Nations and ASEAN negotiations and served as the Chair or the facilitator of UN and ASEAN negotiations. He also frequently delivered lectures in Indonesia and overseas, and wrote articles in English newspapers and journals published in Indonesia. Ambassador Swajaya holds a Law Degree from Udayana University in Bali and a Master of Arts from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University,

Boston, USA. He took up the post as the Ambassador of Indonesia to Singapore in February, 2016. Ambassador Swajaya is married and has 2 children.

Born on the 11th of March 1962, in Singaraja, Bali, Ngurah Swajaya was the eldest son to I Gede Kawijaya, S.H and Made Sutini. His father was a civil servant and the young Ngurah was raised as a child in Surabaya and Bali with three of his younger brothers. As a young student at the faculty of law, he always dreamt of becoming a diplomat to serve his country in the interactions and cooperation between Indonesia with the international community. Learning different cultures and meeting people from different nations have been his passion. Thus, mastering foreign languages, particularly English and French was his priority in his younger years. Learning International Private Law, however, was his choice when he wrote his thesis to graduate from the university.

He joined the Ministry in 1986, and the timing coincided with the growing international stature of Indonesia as a nation playing an active part in the regional and global affairs in areas, such as the convening of the Jakarta Informal meetings for Cambodian that led to its peace processes. It was also the time of Indonesia's economic growth surge and the country was one of the Asian Tigers. This trend continued in the 1990s, and according to international expert on Southeast Asia, Mr. Michael R.J. Vatikiotis, Indonesia's more active phase then was partly because of President's Soeharto's "decision to enhance his own global and regional stature" and in doing so, "he had drawn on latent nationalist sentiments that had always perceived Indonesia as a medium-sized power with activist ideals."

Thus, by the time Ambassador Swajaya joined the diplomatic service, Indonesia was already seeking a more active role in international and regional diplomacy. Indonesia's then vice president, a senior diplomat, and former Foreign Minister, Mr. Adam Malik had said at that time, "We believe that no nation in this age of rapid technological progress and scientific advances can live in isolated self-sufficiency. That is why I am making it my mission as the Minister of Foreign Affairs to regain what goodwill we may have lost, not by promises but by proving Indonesia as a reliable partner in political as well as business matters."

The Executive Summary from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Indonesia, confirms that within the international-domestic context, Indonesia's diplomacy has indeed demonstrated strengthened performance in the bilateral, regional and multilateral relations. The current Indonesian foreign policy continues to actively seek to improve relations with countries in Asia Pacific, Africa, America, and Europe and aspires to bring it to a higher level to achieve the country's national interests. International acknowledgment of Indonesia's foreign policy activism has been significant at the regional and global levels. Its independent and active foreign policy continues to shape the future, and also reflects the democratic transformation that has taken place at home.

Ambassador Ngurah Swajaya's diplomatic journey also included the most difficult period that Indonesians faced in the post financial and multi-dimensional crisis that fundamentally transformed Indonesia to its current situation, a more democratic Indonesia that embraces international values and norms, including human rights protection, good governance and sustainable development. Another difficult phase encountered by Indonesia's diplomacy was the post East Timor

referendum, particularly for Ambassador Ngurah Swajaya, when he served as Indonesian diplomat in the United Nations. These varied experiences of diplomatic ups and downs at the domestic, regional and global levels shaped not only his personal perspectives but also his better understanding and contributions to various issues, ranging from environmental protection, sustainable development, climate change and regional ASEAN issues that have been shaping Indonesian diplomacy over the past three decades.

During his assignment in Singapore, bilateral relations have continuously grown from strength to strength. The regular annual leaders' retreats alternately taking place in Indonesia and Singapore have strengthened further collaboration between the two countries. RISING 50 was one of the highlights of his assignment in Singapore when both countries celebrated the 50th anniversary of bilateral relations in 2017 and was marked with many events that took place in Singapore. RISING (Republic of Indonesia – Singapore) became a buzzword for many bilateral initiatives that come after the celebration.

My Perspectives

By Ambassador Swajaya

AS A FRESH graduate, my idea of diplomacy involved travelling abroad, engaging with people of different nationalities, cultures, races and ethnicities, understanding different perspectives in international affairs, and learning new languages. Based on these ideas, I had joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), the career I have been consistently pursuing during the earlier period at the university. Joining diplomatic corps allowed me to understand the different perspectives of many issues, insights behind international issues, and it also allowed me to learn different languages and perfect my English. My journey started when I was recruited by the MOFA in 1986, but the seeds of this aspiration were sown much before that.

A Tale of Two Cities

Bueleleng (Singaraja), Indonesia, was my first home where I was born. It was a place characterised as northern port city of Bali, where in the old part of the city we could still see white columns of Dutch colonial buildings lining the winding gravel roads and connecting the seat of government to the sea port. In the past, the main roads were shadowed by huge tangerine trees on either side. These served as reminders of Bali's history as the maritime capital that had bled through the walls of its architecture. The Verandah, and porticos showed glimpses of the western influence amidst Indonesian heritage. And this made the city, the former capital of the island of Bali, diverse, unique, and dynamic. It never lost its multi-cultural charm and the Puri Agung Singaraja (The Royal Palace of Singaraja), with its intricate gold carvings and burnt orange pillars, stood proudly at the southern tip of Bueleleng as a testimony to this. Bueleleng is also known for its historic and heroic

struggles to freedom against the Dutch colonial power that took place at the village called Jagaraga (defence ourselves) famously known as, “the battle of Jagaraga” in the eastern part of the city of Singaraja.

The first known European contact with Bali is thought to have been made in 1512, when a Portuguese expedition reached its northern coast. In 1946, the Dutch constituted Bali as one of the 13 administrative districts of the newly proclaimed State of East Indonesia. Bali was later included in the United States of Indonesia when the Netherlands recognised Indonesian independence on 29 December 1949 and the first governor of Bali was appointed by President Sukarno in 1958 when Bali became a province of Indonesia. However, tourists began arriving at Kuta beach and it continued to grow when the first ten-storeyed Bali Beach hotel was built at Sanur beach in the 1960s and the Ngurah Rai International airport started operating in the 1970s.

Surabaya was my second home, and it has rather similar characteristics. It had been an important harbour city for centuries and the symbol of independence struggle which was famously known as “Battle of Surabaya”. By the 1980s and early 1990s, it had re-emerged as a second largest city in Indonesia after Jakarta, and acted as a hub for export-oriented industrial base. According to the Economic Historian, Howard W. Dick, the greater Surabaya area, by the mid-1980s, had encompassed neighbouring Gresik and Sidoarjo, and was poised to attract investors seeking cheaper land, labour, and other competitive industrial costs as compared to those available in the increasingly packed Jabotabek conurbation centred around the capital city of Jakarta. Additionally, Dick, in his book, *Surabaya : City of Work*, mentions how the 1990s saw this East Javanese industrial corridor swell with new factories, giving rise to major new developments in the urban society.

The late 1980s and early-mid 1990s saw the emergence of a real-estate boom and by then, the population of Surabaya had exceeded even Jakarta's. As the second largest city in Indonesia, it got filled with tourists who were wide-eyed and who gawked at our culture. In the past, we could see fleets of betjak chauffeuring straw sun hats and khaki Bermudas at the main roads and bringing its passengers to famous ice cream and soup shops, or to the coveted Museum Sempoerna. There are a lot of attractions to see there and in the nearby areas. Mount Bromo, one of the most active volcanoes and unique tourist attractions in Indonesia, that can be reached from Surabaya, is one such spectacle. The Ciputra water park is a fantastic way for both parents and children to beat the glare of the Southeast Asian heat, while Cheng Hoo mosque is a beautiful bright red and green structure, in stark contrast to the azure sky above. It's no wonder that people enjoy exploring Indonesia.

In those early days of my childhood, spent in both cities, I remember seeing the occasional tourists in Bali and was intrigued by them. They would invariably be clad in sunglasses, vibrant shirts and obnoxiously thick layers of sunscreen. They would stop by at what they thought was a peculiar sign, clicking pictures with their cameras. Then they would announce something in foreign phrases which I could not understand and they would admire the local culture and traditional dances. Despite a short period of my stay at Surabaya, I still vividly remember my childhood in both the cities, particularly their sights, sounds and culinary delights.

While we enjoyed sharing our cultures and practices with these foreigners, we also often hoped that they would understand our traditions more. For example, we wanted them to understand that eating with left hand was frowned upon, and raising your voice,

wearing loud colours or being too expressive was antithetical to the Indonesian norm. Nevertheless, in spite of these differences, it soon became evident that these people, who we had thought of as strange, had brought popularity through their kodak lenses, and that it was because of them that Indonesia's tourism industry had begun to pick up pace. It was then that I found myself wondering how my cities looked like through their eyes.

To me these cities were home. These two loveable cities, Singaraja and Surabaya, with their comforting smells and exotic attractiveness to the outside world, were where my childhood memories were made. Watching these cities develop into the melting pot of ethnicities, languages and traditions of Indonesia has been my joy for the past thirty years now.

Diplomatic Journey

Ambassador Swajaya started his journey in the diplomatic service through hard work, perseverance, persistence and discipline. Being the eldest of four boys in the family, he had probably developed his leadership skills from an early age. Being enrolled into the reputable local University of UDAYANA in Bali, he majored in International Private Law. He completed his Junior level of diplomatic training at the Ministry in 1984, after which he went on to complete the Masters' degree at the Fletcher's school of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University in Boston, USA. He was admitted to join the foreign service after a direct selection process undertaken by the Ministry to different universities in different provinces Indonesia, including the UDAYANA University, Bali. One of the requirements to join the selection process was a recommendation letter from the Rector of university based on strong academic credentials. Only two out of many candidates from

the University were finally admitted and he was one of them. This was the beginning of his interesting and rewarding journey to diplomacy.

After an intensive 8 months of diplomatic training at the Training Centre of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) of Indonesia, his first working experience as a junior staff was on the issue related to economic diplomacy and the main responsibility was to help develop strategy and international collaboration to increase Indonesia's export promotion overseas, particularly to the European countries. His first diplomatic assignment overseas was as a junior diplomat at the Embassy of Indonesia to the Federal Republic of Germany in Bonn. During the term of his assignment as the Secretary to the Ambassador, he was fortunate to have been given the responsibility of a special task of coordinating commemorative events throughout Europe in 1995, to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Indonesia's Independence. In helping the Ambassador coordinate the commemorative events, his main task, among others, was to promote Indonesia by coordinating visits of Indonesia's cultural performance groups to different cities in an efficient and organised manner. Coincidentally, at the time, Indonesia was named as the "Partner Country" of the prestigious Hannover Industrial Fair in Hannover, Germany, which was attended by the then President of Indonesia, Soeharto. With its impressive economic success, Indonesia was then also known as one of the Asian Tigers.

The commemorative events celebrating Indonesia's 50th Independence Anniversary encompassed many cultural and economic activities, giving Indonesia a great opportunity to showcase its economic progress and potential to both European countries and the Indonesian communities. As a junior diplomat, being given such a big responsibility of assisting and coordinating events, including

month-long cultural tour by the Balinese Arts Institute, was indeed a learning opportunity that his other colleagues or peers may not have had. During the entire event, he had the chance to learn to work on matters, which were sometimes delicate. This included, albeit a small part, the coordination to ensure the smooth running of the Indonesian President's State Visit to Germany and his attendance at the opening ceremony of the Hannover Fair. That experience was not only rewarding for him, but it also taught him many aspects of diplomacy and international relations, very early in his career. It also helped to shape his diplomatic journey in his next assignments.

The early days of his diplomatic career taught him a lot. In spite of being a junior diplomat, he was entrusted by his Ambassador to take on bigger responsibilities. It was a unique opportunity that he treasured. He always shared his experiences with his junior colleagues, narrating, how it was to be a young diplomat, a rookie, except for the training and his previous experience at MOFA before posting, and yet how in spite of that, he managed to complete the important tasks that he had been asked to shoulder. The first overseas posting in Bonn, Germany and the exposure of organising the 50th anniversary commemoration of Indonesia's Independence gave him a clearer understanding on how to promote Indonesia better overseas through diplomatic events. He realised that diplomacy was not only about organising events or meeting counterparts, but it also included almost everything, right from working deeply on issues that one may not be familiar with, to maintaining good network in order to get information, to even organising cultural shows and industrial exhibitions. These experiences taught him multitasking and the importance of doing his best in whatever he did, with whoever he worked with and regardless of wherever he was.

The next chapter was an exposure to multilateral diplomacy as he was later assigned to work at the Indonesian Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, handling macroeconomics, environment and sustainable development issues. The lessons he learnt here gave him a different perspective and a changed understanding of the nature of his job. One of the most obvious was the agenda setting of the work, whereas in the bilateral post, it was about setting agendas and creating events, in the multilateral post, the agenda was set by the relevant international organisations. In both the posts however, hard work, innovation and creativity remained crucial. In New York, he had another privileged opportunity to help in pursuing Indonesia's agenda as the President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations, with the roles of helping the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), the review process of the Rio "Earth" Summit. Here, the work was not only to deliberate and negotiate, but also to coordinate a negotiating group, such as the Group of G 77 and China, and facilitating, as the chairman of the negotiations, on specific agendas or topics. Concrete takeaway from the multilateral assignment was mainstreaming environment and sustainable issues to policy making processes in Indonesia.

The next journey was towards making ASEAN a more people-centred or people-oriented organisation. In other words, it was about making ASEAN relevant to the people at the national, regional and global levels. This brought him to his exciting diplomatic journey to ASEAN, particularly the work in preparing the establishment of the ASEAN Community, the drafting and the follow up of the ASEAN Charter and the drafting of many important instruments supporting the Community development, such as the Declaration on the Promotion

and Protection of Migrant Workers, ASEAN Counter Terrorism Convention and ASEAN Inter-governmental Commission on Human Rights that led ASEAN to transform from a loose Association to rules-based and people-centred organisation. He had the great privilege to witness and experience the work of new ASEAN institutions formed by the ASEAN Charter, particularly, the transformation of the Charter's bodies/mechanisms, such as the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN and a strengthened ASEAN Secretariat over the past years after the entry into force of the ASEAN Charter.

A NOTE ON AMBASSADOR NGURAH SWAJAYA by Prof. DR. Hasjim Djalal, M.A.

AS I REMEMBER, Ambassador Swajaya was the same generation as that of my son, Dr. Dino Patti Djalal. This was at the School of Diplomacy (Sekdilu), organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After graduation, he joined the Badan Litbang (Research and Development Agency) of the Foreign Ministry which I headed from 1985-1990. I know Ambassador Swajaya from that period as a young diplomat who had a potential in developing his career. As a young officer at that time, he was curious in expanding his knowledge and experience in foreign policy and diplomacy. He was respectful to his seniors and his colleagues, and worked diligently on the assignment that was given by his seniors. He was also open to cooperative relations with his friends of the same level in the Foreign Ministry and other Ministries that worked together with the Foreign Ministry.

Later on, when I was assigned as Indonesian Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) from 1990-1993, Ambassador Swajaya somehow was also assigned to the Embassy as a very young diplomat, and worked, as I remember, in the economic division of the Embassy. In this context, I had the opportunity to watch very closely, his active and innovative ideas in developing economic relations between Indonesia and the newly united Germany at that time.

His career later on developed and he became active in the development of ASEAN Cooperative Relations in Southeast Asia.

After my assignment in Germany, I immediately retired as a civil servant in March 1994, but I was later very active in pursuing Indonesian maritime and law of the sea views, and was appointed as Ambassador-at-large for the Law of the Sea and Maritime Affairs from 1994-2000. There has been quite a lot of development in the Indonesian diplomacy from my time up to now, particularly on maritime diplomacy, on regional co-operations, on bilateral relations with many countries, on global cooperation in political, economic, cultural, and other areas. These developments require the increased capacities of Indonesian diplomats and their knowledge with regard to national, regional and international issues and developments. At the same time, the interest of various other government institutions and society as well as other state institutions, such as Parliament and political parties, also increased in foreign policy and diplomacy. Thus, I notice that the Indonesian diplomacy is increasingly shared and conducted by career diplomats that have passed through various stages of education, and non-career diplomats that come from various sources, either political or business, or others, whose education and training in diplomacy may not have taken place at a similar level. This factor did not affect the career of Ambassador Swajaya as he was a well-trained diplomat.

To be a good diplomat, one has to develop his personal character, education and experience. A good diplomat, in my mind, must fully understand the policy and the aspiration of his country that he is trying or oblige to, defend, and promote. In addition to knowledge (which usually can be obtained through education and training), and experience (which are usually obtained through long practices, passing through various stages)

there also should be the ability to understand the various views on the subject that may support or oppose his views or the views of his country that he's trying to promote.

On this basis, I'm happy to note and observe that Ambassador Swajaya is one of the good Indonesian diplomats who has passed through proper education, and has had various levels of experience in diplomacy, and therefore I am confident that he is now in a position to achieve what Indonesia would like its diplomats to achieve. In my view, diplomacy is a good career for people who have an interest in foreign policy, particularly for those who have planned it from the very beginning by passing through various levels of education in foreign policy and diplomacy as well as various stages and level of experience in foreign policy, particularly those who are making careers through and in the Foreign Ministry.

“I regard Ambassador Ngurah Swajaya as one of Indonesia’s finest diplomats. I had the great pleasure of working with him on two occasions. The first was in drafting the ASEAN Charter. The second was in organising the celebration of the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Singapore. Ambassador Ngurah Swajaya did an outstanding job on both occasions. I am one of his many admirers.”

- Prof Tommy Koh, Singapore's former Permanent Representative to the United Nations; presently Ambassador-at-Large at Singapore's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was also the Chairman of the Centre for International Law of National University of Singapore (NUS), Special Advisor of the Institute of Policy Studies, Chairman of the National Heritage Board and Rector of Tembusu College at NUS.

Chapter 2

Transformation of ASEAN

TO UNDERSTAND THE pace of ASEAN's transformation, it is advisable to look back, reviewing what has been achieved, particularly in the past decade. Looking at the glass half full, rather than half empty, will enable an optimistic overview of ASEAN's relevance to the region, and particularly to its peoples. Since its inception on August 8, 1967, ASEAN has not only been an important driver of efforts towards maintaining regional peace and stability, but has also developed to become the world's 5th largest economy. After the entry into force of ASEAN Charter, the One Vision, One Identity and One caring and sharing Community is slowly taking shape.

Initiated by its founding members, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand that had signed the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) and with the later inclusion of Brunei, Viet Nam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia, ASEAN became a 10 Members organisation, and over the past 5 decades, made significant contributions to the regional peace, stability and growing prosperity of its people. However, if it needs to remain relevant, significant challenges still remain to be addressed by ASEAN, thus leaving no room for complacency.

At present, the organisation has been growing from an insignificant economic player when it was founded, to becoming an economic powerhouse. In addition, it is also projected to be the

world's fourth largest economy and single market by 2030. Its steady economic growth above 5 percent annually, its increasing number of middle income populations, a more competitive ASEAN as a single market and its production base makes ASEAN a significant grouping economically. Considering that all of the Permanent Members of the UN Security Council acceded to the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC), and important global platforms it initiated to continue constructive dialogues, ASEAN has gained significant recognition globally. Significant and unprecedented challenges caused by geo-political dynamics and economic disruptions however, have once again placed ASEAN with a difficult test to address.

After the establishment of the ASEAN Community in January 2016 and the celebration of its 50th anniversary of its foundation, ASEAN was immediately confronted with regional power rivalries beyond a simple rhetoric. Unforeseen implications of “trade-wars” and strategic competition between China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the US Indo-Pacific Strategy should be responded by cohesive and unified strategies to maintain its constructive roles in accordance with ASEAN centrality. Other significant challenges it has been confronting for the past decade are trans-national in nature, such as terrorism and rising radicalism, humanitarian crisis caused by conflicts and natural disasters, drug and human trafficking and environment issues like climate change.

As the organisation continues its aspiration of shaping an open, transparent and rules-based regional architecture, and working towards attaining the objectives of the ASEAN Community, unity and centrality is fundamental. Continuously strengthening

constructive dialogues, cooperation with external partners, under various ASEAN initiated frameworks, like ASEAN Plus One Dialogue Partnership, ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN Plus Three, East Asia Summit, and ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting is also essential. Economic comprehensive partnership agreements that ASEAN developed with external partners represent ASEAN's strong commitment to pursue common objectives through collaboration and partnerships.

Furthermore, under its economic pillars, ASEAN is now pursuing for the early conclusion of the negotiations of the world's largest economic partnership of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnerships (RCEP), involving ASEAN 10 and 6 of its Dialogue Partners that cover almost half of the world's population. To reinforce its economic integration, enhanced regional connectivity through infrastructure and people-to-people connectivity as stipulated in the Master Plan of ASEAN Community, are being implemented, while the conclusion of new Free Trade Agreement and upgrading the existing ones are either concluded or being finalised.

Since the entry into force of the ASEAN Charter on 15 December 2008, institutional mechanisms, and the way ASEAN works have been transformed and will continuously be adaptable to the new emerging issues. Strengthening ASEAN unity and promoting awareness through simple, but meaningful measures, like adopting ASEAN Anthem, flying ASEAN flag at foreign missions of ASEAN countries, including strengthening the roles of ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta have been undertaken in the past decade. To accommodate the growing number of meetings and enlarging capacity, the enlargement of the ASEAN Secretariat provided by the Indonesian

government should enable the Secretariat to accommodate more people-to-people interactions.

The growing numbers of Ambassadors from dialogues and other partner countries accredited to ASEAN in Jakarta in the past decade, reaffirms not only the growing relevance of ASEAN for international community, but also the increasing numbers of interactions and cooperation to take place. Increasing number of countries from different continents are expressing their interest to accede or have acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC). This is another example of the growing relevance of ASEAN.

As one of the founding members, Indonesia has always kept ASEAN as the cornerstone of its foreign policy. Indonesia continues to commit to be at the center of ASEAN's continuous path of transformation so as to enable the organisation to tap emerging potentials and address more complicated challenges. To ceaselessly enhance ASEAN unity and centrality, Indonesia tabled its proposal on an ASEAN Indo-Pacific Outlook that emphasises on ASEAN leadership on dialogues, maintaining peace and stability, and enhancing peoples' prosperity across the wider region covering the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean. The outlook offers a new perspective of viewing the two oceans as interconnected where ASEAN continues to play its central and strategic roles.

The progress ASEAN has achieved and the community building it wishes to attain, has made ASEAN visible and placed it as an important stakeholder in maintaining peace and stability in the region and beyond. Therefore, expectations are high and it should

be complemented by growing responsibility of its members to continue the relevance of ASEAN, including to its people. Effective solutions to the humanitarian issue on the Rohingya refugees and helping to find lasting peaceful solution in the Rakhine State, Myanmar, addressing terrorism and radicalism, supporting the negotiations for an early completion the Code of Conduct (CoC) in the South China Sea, and concluding the negotiation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) are essential issues to be addressed and concluded.

One of Indonesia's strategic goals, as mentioned in Strategic Planning (2015-2019) is a strengthened Indonesian leadership in ASEAN. In this context, as the first Ambassador/Permanent Representative to ASEAN, Ambassador Ngurah Swajaya has been privileged to play his part in the transformation processes of ASEAN. The growing potential and progress so far, a population of over 640 million, combined with the dynamic economic growth and increasing middle income population herald ASEAN, as a region offering significant potential.

Its convening ability, by bringing all important global stakeholders to a constructive dialogue, has made it continuously relevant in the past 50 years. New mechanisms and instruments developed and functioned after the entry into force of the ASEAN Charter, will make it possible for ASEAN to remain relevant in decades to come. People oriented ASEAN that allows dialogues and interface between the leaders and the people, youth and civil society organisations with ASEAN has been organising in the past years, will not only strengthen ASEAN awareness and peoples' ownership, but is also crucially essential for ASEAN to remain relevant to its people.

My Perspectives

By Ambassador Swajaya

I WAS PRIVILEGED to join ASEAN department in the middle of the on-going transformation process of the organisation from a loosely based Association to a rules-based Organisation. After the adoption of the Bali Concord II (Declaration of ASEAN Concord II) in 2003, ASEAN was mandated by its leaders to start the drafting of the ASEAN Charter, and to establish the three pillars of the ASEAN Community. After the entry into force of the ASEAN Charter, transformation has continuously been faster than before, covering all sectors under Political Security, Economic and Socio-Cultural Pillars of the ASEAN Community. ASEAN Secretariat and the role of the Secretary-General have been strengthened and the establishment of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) to ASEAN, comprised of Ambassadors/Permanent Representatives to ASEAN in Jakarta, has allowed more frequent interactions for decision making and oversight for their implementations.

As the Director for ASEAN Political Security Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2005, I witnessed and participated in the various deliberations to follow the implementation of the Bali Concord II to the development of Bali Concord III. The most prominent among them was the drafting process of the ASEAN Charter which was started by the establishment of the ASEAN Eminent Person (EPG) tasked by the ASEAN Leaders to develop recommendations for the drafting of the ASEAN Charter, which was subsequently followed up by the establishment and the finalisation of the Charter by the High-Level Task Force (HLTF) of the drafting of the ASEAN Charter.

The ASEAN Eminent Persons which was comprised of dignitaries, such as Former Foreign Minister Ali Alatas of Indonesia, former President Fidel V. Ramos of the Philippines, Prof. S Jayakumar, former Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore and Tun Musa Hitam, former Prime Minister of Malaysia, recommended visionary and out of the box recommendations for consideration by the ASEAN Leaders for the drafting of the ASEAN Charter. I was honored to play a part in both the processes, including the ratification process of the ASEAN Charter by the Indonesian Parliament. Subsequently, I was also privileged to be appointed as the first Indonesian Ambassador/ Permanent Representative to ASEAN after my short assignment as the Ambassador of Indonesia to the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Although I was not directly and personally involved in the deliberations of the Eminent Persons, however, I was very much involved in the drafting of the Charter by the ASEAN High Level Task Force (HLTF). The deliberation was started in a very conducive and friendly manner in a strong camaraderie spirit, developed among all members and the team of the HLTF. Considering the sensitive nature of many of the issues to be deliberated, such robust spirit certainly helped in developing strong confidence to attain the common objectives of the drafting process. All of the recommendations of the Eminent Persons were carefully studied and taken into consideration when the Charter drafting, word-by-word, and article-by-article started.

The drafting started with collective understanding that ASEAN should be a common platform to pursue their common visions and collective agendas for peace, security and prosperity. Thus the Charter was intended by the drafter to provide solid legal basis to

achieve ASEAN Vision and objectives. Therefore, their common stance was to make an ASEAN Charter that meaningfully and effectively serve as the legal foundation to move ASEAN forward as a rules-based organisation and to make it relevant to its people. They also agreed that the Charter should provide solid legal platform for ASEAN to continue to be convener for constructive dialogues and pacific solutions.

The drafting processes also tapped on experiences and lessons learnt by the European Union in their drafting of the constitution. Extensive discussions undertaken in Brussels and other European cities by the EPG and the HLTF gave them significant inputs for their consideration in the drafting process. Some important ideas being considered afterwards, were, first, whether the ASEAN Charter should be very detailed and regulate everything to make it a thick document, like the constitution of the EU, or whether it could be simple and short, which would allow ASEAN to develop individual legal follow-up instruments. Second, whether ASEAN should replicate the EU model in its integration process or remain adhered to ASEAN characteristics and phases. Third, whether ASEAN should also become a Union, or should it develop monetary union and the issue of enforcement instruments and mechanisms.

The Charter's preamble, We, the Peoples of ASEAN.... was inspired by the strong commitment of the drafters to the principles of people-oriented and people-centered ASEAN. The deliberations were extensive and delicate, with frequent and long-hours of meetings, tense, dramatic and characterised by moments of pain and joy, however, they retained the common

spirit of making ASEAN function effectively. The discussions and the debates were open, frank and with strong camaraderie spirit, although arguments, agreements and disagreements were encountered. During the drafting process, I had the pleasure of learning and working very closely with Ambassador Prof. Tommy Koh and Prof. Walter Woon, whom I met and continued having conversations with, during my stay in Singapore.

The ASEAN Charter transformed not only the ASEAN mechanisms, but also the decision making processes and the nature of collaborations. Prominent in the follow up of the implementation of the ASEAN Charter were the establishment of ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and the long awaited ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR) which play important roles in human rights protection and promotion and peaceful dispute settlement. These have complemented other important institutions such as ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Centre (AHA Centre) and Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA).

Other instruments that I was involved directly in the drafting, were the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism (ACCT) and the Cebu Declaration on the Protection and the Promotion of Migrant Workers. On humanitarian issues, I witnessed the process for the first ever ASEAN undertakings to address impacts of natural calamity, for the post cyclone Nargis in Myanmar. These have provided significant experiences for ASEAN to address similar challenges in the future, including, continuing its efforts to finalise the drafting of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea, and addressing the issue of Rohingya refugees.

Of all those processes, I had the experience of chairing the negotiating group on the drafting of the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism (ACCT), which was the fastest drafting process of legal instruments in the ASEAN history. The negotiation concluded over a period of less than a year, which led to the signing by all ASEAN Leaders in Cebu, the Philippines on 13 January 2007 and which came into force on 27 May 2011, with Malaysia being the last of the 10 members to deposit its ratification instrument to ASEAN Secretary-General on 11 January 2013. We also witnessed its entry in the force after it was ratified by the parliaments.

The Convention provided many breakthroughs in regional cooperation to address terrorism in a comprehensive manner, from prevention, repressive and de-radicalization measures. It provided lessons to learn on de-radicalization, mutual assistance in criminal matters, and also led to the establishment of leading institution on counter terrorism at the respective national levels. As the challenges now are even greater to counter terrorism and radicalization, it is crucial to note that ASEAN has been equipped with a solid mechanism and instrument to counter terrorism in a comprehensive manner.

The ASEAN Secretariat is not as big as the European Commission and the roles are not similar, however, ASEAN realises the crucial need to strengthen the secretariat and to enable it to perform in an adequate, efficient and effective manner to help ASEAN to implement its objectives and goals. To support the effective function of the Secretariat, the government of Indonesia provided more space and constructed new twin buildings for the Secretariat to accommodate more meetings, staff and effective functions.

“We have learned lessons from our recent achievements in Indonesia: our steady recovery from the Asian financial crisis, our resilience in the face of the global economic turmoil, and the building of democracy from the remnants of military rule. These achievements have strengthened Indonesia’s willingness and ability to play greater and more diverse roles: norm setter, consensus builder, peacekeeper, bridge builder, and voice of the developing world, both regionally and globally.”

- Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, Former President of Indonesia, ASEAN@50 • Volume 1 | The ASEAN Journey: Reflections of ASEAN Leaders and Officials, 2017

“ASEAN will continue to work towards its long term vision of building the region’s readiness for megatrends like the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and resilience towards challenges such as inequality and climate change. The ultimate aim is to build an ASEAN Community that offers security, prosperity.”

- Dato Lim Jock Hoi, Secretary-General of ASEAN

“Asean has great potential, but fully realising it depends on whether we choose to become more integrated, and work resolutely towards this goal in a world where multilateralism is fraying under political pressures.”

- Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Hsien Loong

The transformed ASEAN has seen significant progress. It is understood that many homework remain to be finalised and new emerging challenges need to be effectively addressed. Previously, ASEAN was always criticised for moving at the phase comfortable to all or accused of sweeping the dirt under the carpet, but at present ASEAN has been proactive and ready to confront issues, regardless of their sensitive nature.

I have myself witnessed the implementation phases of the road map to democratisation designed and implemented by Myanmar, despite

some criticisms on slow phase of progress, nevertheless, Myanmar has become a member of ASEAN and is in the process to continue its path to democracy. Previously, Myanmar was always an interesting topic for media coverage on ASEAN meetings. Issues, such as how ASEAN was contemplating on issues concerning the call to release political prisoners, including Aung San Suu Kyi and how the agreement to be reflected in the Joint Communiqué of the Foreign Ministers Meeting or in the Leaders' Statements and Declarations were always discussed. Thus, the key here was outcomes of the constructive dialogue and an open and transparent discussion within the ASEAN family that helped the democratisation progress in Myanmar.

ASEAN does not live in a vacuum, therefore, it will always be affected by internal and external dynamics. Internal dynamics involve the individual circumstances of the ASEAN members and the external dynamics include issues of power rivalry and trade war. So while ASEAN tries to emphasise on collaboration, dialogue and promoting culture of peace, the challenges in the geopolitics dynamics require effective strategies with ASEAN continuing its strong unity, cohesiveness and centrality.

The concern of keeping the unity when some of the member states are exposed to the game of rivalry is indeed real. Nevertheless, ASEAN can continue playing its role as a unifying organisation and effective convener to promote dialogue, bring people and major powers in a constructive dialogue, and seek peaceful resolutions to solve any disputes. It is indeed not easy, but with a strengthened cohesiveness of ASEAN and its strengthened centrality, ASEAN remains capable to contribute effectively as it is currently doing through ASEAN Indo-Pacific Outlook.

“AOIP reflects the centrality and strength of ASEAN in respecting the principles of maintaining peace, strengthening the culture of dialogue, as well as strengthening cooperation.”

- Joko Widodo, President of Indonesia.

This outlook will not only broaden the scope of geopolitical coverage, but also represent centrality principles because it will put ASEAN in the center (not geographically) to continue soft power diplomacy initiatives for constructive dialogues, collaboration and peaceful solutions of disputes and potential conflicts. Geographically, it will cover initiatives or collaborations over three main areas and include countries in the Pacific and the Indian ocean. As the former Chair of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), every potential in the Indian Ocean Rim should be discussed and deliberated through constructive dialogue and confidence building processes.

If we talk about whether the ASEAN awareness (and community feel) has effectively percolated down from the policy level to the people's level, then we agree that there are still challenges. However, these challenges are not new, as they are also faced by the European Union. Efforts to increase awareness should be enhanced further so as to enable people to benefit from the cooperation and the integration. Interface between youth and civil society organisations in ASEAN's leaders, the effective work of AICHR to promote and protect human rights, people to people connection on various issues, including to promote harmony, sharing and caring community will make the organisation relevant to the people. The flying of ASEAN flag in diplomatic missions of ASEAN members, the ASEAN Anthem, consular assistance to ASEAN citizens in third countries are crucial for this caring and sharing vision.

ASEAN Commitment to Peace and Prosperity

The ASEAN Community, launched in 2015, strives to improve the lives of its people through economic and cultural development, social progress, regional peace and security, collaboration, mutual assistance and promotion of Southeast Asian studies and cooperation. It is also committed to the safety of its citizens from climate change, natural disasters and transnational crimes.

The ASEAN community strives for bigger, more open and rules-based market for business, and it strives for possibilities of better health and education, and sustainable development.

To ensure peace and prosperity, ASEAN integrated harmonious inter-state relations through the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) for ASEAN Member States and more than 20 external parties, the Declaration on the 2002 Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) and the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) that guide ASEAN and China to exercise self-restraint, refrain from the use of force, undertake practical maritime cooperation, and promote peaceful settlement of disputes in the South China Sea.

The region is free of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction through the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) that also protects the region from environmental pollution and the hazards of radioactive and toxic waste materials.

The Defence and military cooperation has been ensured with the establishment of the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) and the ADMM-Plus.

The ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA Centre) handles the regional disaster risk management and climate change and the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), provides an open and integrated market where there are more product choices at competitive costs.

The ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission for Human Rights (AICHR) was established in 2009 as a sub-regional human rights institutions in the Asia-Pacific, and the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (2012) establishes a framework for human rights cooperation in the region.

ASEAN Timeline

- 1967 BANGKOK DECLARATION**
“The Founding Fathers of ASEAN” namely Foreign Ministers of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand signed the ASEAN Declaration in Bangkok, August 8, 1967. This marks the establishment of ASEAN as well as the first ASEAN Foreign Ministers’ Meeting (AMM)
- 1976 BALI CONCORD I**
The first ASEAN Summit was convened in Bali, Indonesia in February 1976. This Summit issued the Declaration of ASEAN Concord (Bali Concord), the signing of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia and the establishment of the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta
- 1992 ASEAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT**
The 4th ASEAN summit was convened in Singapore in January 1992. The Summit signed the Singapore Declaration and a framework agreement on enhancing ASEAN economic cooperation
- 1995 SEANWFZ**
During the 5th ASEAN Summit in Bangkok, in December 1995, the ASEAN leaders signed the SEANWFZ Treaty. The parties to the SEANWFZ comprise the current 10 ASEAN members. The notion of a SEANWFZ dates back to 27 November 1971, when the original five members of the ASEAN meeting in Kuala Lumpur signed a Declaration on a [ASEAN] Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality (ZOPFAN)
- 1998 HANOI PLAN OF ACTION**
At the 6th ASEAN Summit held in Hanoi, Vietnam, in Desember 1998, the leaders approved the Hanoi Declaration, the Hanoi Plan of Action to realise the Vision 2020

2002 DOC

ASEAN Member States and China signed the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in November 2002 in Cambodia

2003 Bali Concord II

The 9th ASEAN summit was held in Bali, Indonesia, in October 2003. A milestone document titled *the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II*, also known as Bali Concord II, which envisions the establishment of an ASEAN Community by 2020 was adopted by the Leaders

2005 EMINENT PERSONS GROUP

The 11th ASEAN summit was in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in October 2005. The Summit adopted the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the Establishment of the ASEAN Charter and the Eminent Persons Group was formed

2007 High Level Task Force for Drafting of the ASEAN Charter

The 12th ASEAN summit was held in Cebu, the Philippines, in January 2007. The Summit issued the Cebu Declaration and the set-up of the High Level Task Force (HLTF) for Drafting of the ASEAN Charter.

The HLTF completed work and the completed Charter was submitted to the 13th ASEAN Summit in Singapore, November 2003

2008 ASEAN CHARTER ENTERS INTO FORCE

The ASEAN Charter entered into force on 15 December 2008. With the entry into force of the ASEAN Charter, ASEAN operates under a new legal framework and becomes a legal-based organization.

This also marks the establishment of the ASEAN Political Security Community, the ASEAN Economic Community and the Socio-Cultural Community. The ASEAN Coordinating Council was established along with the Committee of Permanent Representatives

2009 AICHR

The ASEAN Inter-governmental Commission for Human Rights (AICHR) was established as the first sub-regional human rights institution in the Asia-Pacific

2011 BALI CONCORD III

During the 19th ASEAN Summit in Bali, Indonesia in November 2011, the Summit adopted the Bali Declaration on ASEAN Community in a Global Community of Nations, or the Bali Concord III.

2012 ASEAN HUMAN RIGHTS DECLARATION

A framework for human rights cooperation in the region was established in 2012 and AICHR continued to mainstream the issue of human rights in all three pillars of ASEAN

2015 ASEAN COMMUNITY 2015

The 27th ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in November 2015 announced the launched the establishment of an ASEAN Community 2015 and ASEAN's vision beyond 2015. The ASEAN's post-2015 vision charts the path of the ASEAN Community in the next ten years. It articulates ASEAN's goals and aspirations as the regional grouping enters the next phase of consolidation, further integration and stronger cohesiveness as a Community

2016 MASTER PLAN ON ASEAN CONNECTIVITY 2025

During the 29th ASEAN Summit in Vientiane, Lao PDR, November 2016, the Leaders adopted the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 (MPAC 2025) in Vientiane, Lao PDR. The MPAC 2025 succeeds the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2010 and focuses on five strategic areas: sustainable infrastructure, digital innovation, seamless logistics, regulatory excellence and people mobility

2019 ASEAN Outlook on Indo – Pacific

At the 34th ASEAN Summit in Bangkok, June 2019, the Leaders adopted Indonesia's initiative on the "ASEAN Outlook on Indo-pacific.

This concept is aimed to strengthen ASEAN centrality and provides a guide for ASEAN's engagement in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions'

RCEP CONCLUDED TEXT-BASED

During the 3rd RCEP Summit, a Joint Statement by all RCEP Leaders announced that 15 participants (not including India) have concluded the text-based negotiations on all 20 fields of discussion and a tasked legal scrubbing is commenced to prepare for its signing in 2020.

Chapter 3

People-to-People Ties

TRADITIONALLY, DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS are conducted by either the state leaders, officials or diplomats, and through the traditional settings, such as meetings and negotiations. However, in the past decades, people-to-people diplomacy is gaining momentum as it becomes part and parcel of diplomacy and ensures that the engagement involved is also more varied. Riding on the traditional forms of diplomacy, People Diplomacy is frequently utilised to help build deeper relations between nations. It also serves as a powerful tool to make diplomacy relevant and effective to the people in addition to helping in mobilising public support, in raising awareness, and in developing long-lasting bilateral cooperation.

Nowadays, many nations investment in people-to-people diplomacy and this has proven to be one of the more successful elements in diplomacy in general. In this age of communications and technological advancements, particularly in this age of digital and social media revolution, people's active involvement and participation

cannot be emphasised enough. Making collaboration relevant and useful to the people or keeping it people-oriented is the main idea of this new era. The nations that have embraced and encouraged peoples' participation in collaborations have found better avenues of fostering innovation and enhanced partnerships.

These interactions also empower the citizens, cut down on hierarchical constraints and promote better understanding across borders. Thus, people-to-people diplomacy is not just a requisite for better quality of cooperation, but it is also an important requirement for promoting partnership for a peaceful and harmonious world. As the focus increases towards a people-centric approach, it entrusts more people and civil society organisations with greater ownership in international cooperation and partnership.

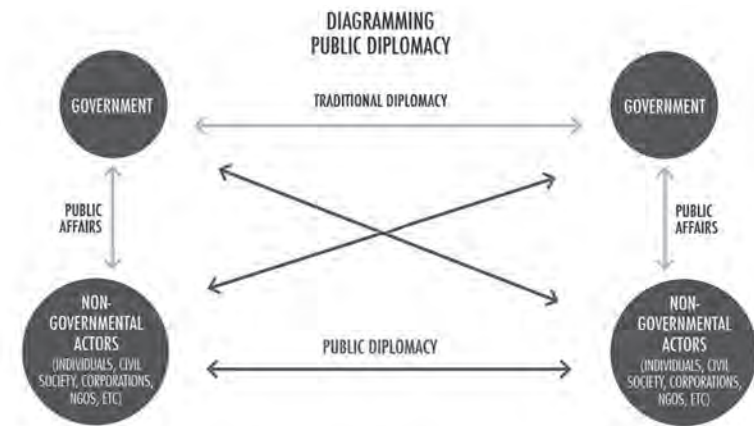
Indonesia's foreign policy too adheres to the interests of the people and the Ministry has set up many strategies to achieve the concept of what is now known as, peoples' oriented diplomacy and down to earth diplomacy, under which, it has placed, for example, citizen protection as the priority. In addition, other forms of activities involving peoples and civil society organisations, like interfaith, youth and cultural exchanges are other priorities in the context of people to people diplomacy. These activities cover wide-ranging sectors and also include initiatives, events and exchanges involving non-state actors, civil society organisations and non-governmental organisations, to promote better understanding, interactions and mutually beneficial partnerships that mutually reinforce interactions at the official levels.

Organisations such as ASEAN also put people to people interaction as a priority so as to ensure that the organisation continues to be

relevant to its people. The ASEAN Charter Preamble also starts with the wording, "We the Peoples of ASEAN," reiterating the importance of making the organisation not only relevant but also meaningful for the people. Interactions between ASEAN Leaders with the youth organisations, civil society organisations, and parliamentarians become part of annual Summit at the beginning of the year. The meeting is utilised for listening to the aspirations and inputs and it is the forum for the leaders to communicate directly to the people. Every ASEAN Chair places 'people-oriented' as one of the Chairmanship priority focus.

In the context of bilateral relations between Indonesia and Singapore, the interactions at the official level have been very intensive in many sectors, and meetings at the Leaders' level also take place annually in both the countries. These interactions have also been reinforced by the people to people interactions on many areas, including the initiatives on cultural exchanges, interfaith exchanges and track two dialogues and women empowerment initiatives. In our 50th commemoration of the bilateral cooperation, the Embassy organised many RISING (Republic of Indonesia – Singapore) commemorative activities involving people. Activities such as Hackathon on digital economy, continuous Indonesia's participation at the Chingay Festival, RISING Fashion, Women Empowerment Award, and interfaith dialogues have proven to be effective in promoting better mutual understanding and in unlocking the potential for mutual benefits.

Those interactions have enriched the existing initiatives and good cooperation at the official level. Other activities such as student exchanges, student trips and outbound, sporting events and many others also take place every year in addition to tourists visits from



Source: Ryan J Suto, "Diagramming Public Diplomacy ver 2.0", 2011

both the countries. Indonesia is the largest foreign tourist contributor to Singapore, while Singaporeans are the second largest. Many young tourists from Singapore have also started exploring other unique destinations in Indonesia where they get acquainted with Indonesia's vast diversity. These have contributed to promoting better understanding among the people, which is essential to help enhance the quality of bilateral relations.

Building on the past experiences, therefore, the diplomacy involving people-to-people interactions will be continued and should be further facilitated by the two governments. Interactions covering multiple sectors will make bilateral cooperation more effective and productive. Thus, in addition to extensive meetings and interactions at the official and leaders' levels, Ambassador Swajaya attaches great importance to the people-to-people interactions in diplomacy in order to improve better understanding and perceptions about each other, which ultimately brings people together and unlock significant potential.

My Perspectives

By Ambassador Swajaya

BEFORE I JOINED this profession, my idea of diplomacy was very much about meetings, representing, negotiations, connecting and interacting with a diverse range of officials from different countries. It was not even emphasised during our training as junior recruits of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that one of our priorities will be citizen service and protection, or people-to-people interaction. Diplomacy by non-state actors was indeed on the rise in the past decades as transparency, accountability, democracy and human rights protection became important principles and values in international affairs in addition to the advanced development of information and digital technology.

For me, as a person who was born and brought up in Bali, meetings and interacting with people from different countries and cultural backgrounds was very much part of the daily realities, as Bali is a famous destination for international tourists. It was our daily routine to meet and experience people-to-people interactions and to live in diverse surroundings. This is also true for all Indonesians as they interact on a daily basis with fellow Indonesians from different ethnicities, cultures and religions in their neighborhoods, schools and workplaces.

In line with Indonesia's philosophy of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity), differences do not segregate people, but on the contrary, unite them even more. More than 1,000 ethnic groups, more than 700 languages, and different major religions of the world, were united by the *Sumpah Pemoeda* (Youth Pledge) that have

pledged themselves in one nationhood, motherland and language, INDONESIA during the Indonesian Youth Congress in 1928. In this context, interactions among people with varied backgrounds have been part of our reality and we proudly adopted our national philosophy “*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*” or Unity in Diversity.

Having experiences and interactions with people from different backgrounds is not only common, but these also reinforce further understanding on the essential concept of people-to-people interactions and promote better understanding, cooperation and friendship. This can be replicated in today’s diplomacy to build friendship and cooperation among different countries. As diplomacy evolved towards growing participation by the people, the relevant to serve the interests of the people increased. Having had such experiences before joining the diplomatic circle, we understand the importance of people-to-people interactions in diplomacy.

Activities such as interfaith dialogues to promote better mutual understanding and cooperation among people from different faith and youth and culture exchanges where people from different countries and backgrounds are brought together to interact, is a growing trend in international cooperation. Despite the fact that different countries are pursuing their respective interests and priorities, we are cognizant that when they are working towards pursuing common goals, objectives and visions, differences can always be bridged through interactions and dialogues. In this context, people-to-people diplomacy will help not only in making these relevant, but also effective.

Indonesia and Singapore have developed bilateral cooperation and partnership over the past 50 years and better understanding about each other should continue to be enhanced if the potential is to be unlocked for mutual benefits. The RISING 50 celebration has been utilised as a significant momentum, not only for governments, but also for the people of both the countries to reinvigorate the partnership in order to tap the significant potential for mutually beneficial cooperation for decades to come. People-to-people interactions, therefore, should always be part and parcel of the existing active interactions at the official and leaders level.

Digital economy cooperation, for example, could bring the young talents from both the countries with diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds together. It is indeed becoming a common phenomenon in the people-to-people interactions, including between Indonesia and Singapore. Tourism is another example where people from both the countries get a chance to experience, interact and learn about each other's culture, cuisine and traditions better. Increasing trends of young people from both the countries exploring each other's potential is also beneficial as well as essential in the people-to-people interaction. Such interactions could also unlock the significant potential of cooperation.

Business trips conducted and organised by both the countries, could also benefit business sectors, particularly the small and medium sized companies. Business missions organised by Economic Development Board (EDB), Enterprise Singapore Government (ESG), Singapore Business Federation (SBF) and Singapore Manufacturing Federation (SMF) and other

Chambers of Commerce and Industries to different cities in Indonesia, not only strengthen interactions, but also unlock potential cooperation.

Frequent interactions, therefore, are critical to promote better understanding and cooperation. To understand business potential in Jakarta, it is not just enough to listen to consultants, it is also essential to make frequent trips and interact with the businesses on the ground. Grab founder, Anthony Tan, told me once that when he first came to Jakarta, he barely knew anyone, but seven years later, his company has the biggest operation in Indonesia.

In addition, the role of the media is also essential to make the people-to-people interaction between nations, a success. I cannot emphasise enough the important role of the media, including print media, to reinforce better understanding. In the era of growing influence of social media, the roles of mainstream news media to provide accurate and balanced perspectives is crucial to help promote better understanding.

Wearing Batik or Batik Diplomacy, especially in Indonesia, is also an important strategy to breaking the ice on people-to-people interactions, including in the business circles of Indonesia. In the past four years, batik was commonly used as the dress code for both the leaders and their official entourage in each of the Leaders' Retreats, that were organised alternate years in Indonesia and Singapore. It is also not uncommon these days to see government officials or executives from foreign companies arriving for business meetings in Indonesia wearing



Batik Diplomacy in practice by the Indonesian and Singapore leaders and their spouses after a bilateral leaders' retreat meeting in Semarang, Central Java (Source: Presidential Secretariat/Rusman)

batik. This, I believe, works well as an icebreaker and it also represents an expression of outreach to their counterpart in a friendlier and more relaxing atmosphere. Wearing batik is akin to saying, 'I understand you and I admire your culture'. Even using broken Bahasa phrases like, '*Apa kabar,*' and '*salamat pagi*' (good morning) or '*terimakasih*' (thank you) helps in advancing talks or discussions.

We have also been promoting Arts and Music as a means to unite the younger generations since the last 3 years, and we are heartened by the Singapore government's reciprocation as well. Apart from that, one of the unprecedented events that we had organised as part of people-to-people diplomacy was the Interfaith Dialogue. We are one of the proponents of interfaith dialogue in the world, as part of efforts to promote moderation and tolerance in a diverse society. Though previously, we actively

organised events promoting religious harmony with countries such as Europe, The United States of America and Canada, we tended to take for granted, the interfaith interactions in our region, particularly between Indonesia and Singapore.

Women empowerment is another important initiative that we initiated as part of Indonesia-Singapore bilateral Golden Jubilee celebration. This involved meetings, networking sessions and discussions on women empowerment among successful women from different sectors. Taking by the leadership example of Raden Ajeng Kartini of Indonesia, who promoted women emancipation in Indonesia centuries ago, the initiative has been brought to fruition three times, and will hopefully lead to concrete cooperation, resulting in foundation to empower women, not only in both the countries, but also beyond.

Food is another important aspect of people-to-people diplomacy as it is an effective means of developing friendship. Food gives an insight to the culture of a region based on how it has been prepared, its surrounding beliefs, how it has been served etc. Food is also a means of communication and therefore, Food Festivals are important in diplomacy. Culinary Diplomacy serves as an initial understanding of a new place and food is a great introduction to any new country. While I was in New York, our Mission had organised food festivals for the whole month at the UN headQuarters and brought in chefs from Indonesia to give the opportunity to people to have a taste of food across various regions. People are always interested in trying out different food items, and Culinary Tours are becoming popular not only among the tourists but also among the local travellers of Indonesia. The advantage of diversity is that Indonesia is able to offer varied cultural and culinary experiences

to visitors and locals alike.

“Food is the oldest form of diplomacy.”

- Former secretary of state, Ms. Hillary Clinton

People Diplomacy embraces compatriots as well. So, while the embassy here has been promoting people-to-people interactions between Singapore and Indonesia, it has also been organising events for the Indonesians living here. For example, it provided a smooth and successful process for them to participate in the recent elections. Moreover, multiple events are planned throughout the year, where thousands of people are welcomed with open arms. This feeling of comfort when we see our compatriots is very important to us Indonesians. Our identity as Indonesians unites us all. We treat each other like long-lost brothers and sisters even when we do not know each other. This helps us to improve our citizen service and protection.

“We hope every year to welcome more than a dozen leaders and officials, promising young people from Indonesia - not just Jakarta but also the provinces and other cities - to come and visit us, to make friends, appreciate how we can work further together, what are the things which we can learn from each other.”

- Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr. Lee Hsien Loong.

Photo Gallery

Some highlights and milestones of my diplomatic journey



As special assistant to Prof. DR. Emil Salim in serving his role as the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee of the World Summit on Sustainable Development/WSSD (Rio Plus 10 Review Summit)



ASEAN : Chairing the Committee of Permanent representative (CPR) to ASEAN



Prof. DR. Emil Salim (Chairman of the Preparatory Committee of WSSD) and DR. Nitin Desai (Under-Secretary General of the UN) at the 4th Prepcom Meeting at the Ministerial Level in Bali



Chairing ASEAN CPR Meeting



Presenting Letter of Credence from President of Republic of Indonesia to the King of Cambodia, H.M. Norodom Sihamony in Phnom Penh, Cambodia





Presidential Lecture at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta



After dinner exercise



Interactions with Ambassadors of Dialogue Partners to ASEAN



With Ambassador David L Carden, US Ambassador to ASEAN, Ambassador Dato Hasnuddin, Malaysian PR to ASEAN and Ambassador Vu Dang Dzung of VietNam during CPR visit to the US

RISING 50 Mania....



Fly Pass by 10 Fighter Aircrafts of Republic of Singapore Air Force and 10 fighter aircrafts of Republic of Indonesia Air Force over Marina Cruise Centre, Singapore witnessed by President of Indonesia and PM of Singapore to mark 50th Anniversary of RI-Singapore (RI SING50).



RISING FASHION @ Singapore inaugurated by H.E. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Retno Marsudi



RISING FASHION Event



RISING event @ Paragon Mall, Singapore



RISING 50 Forum in Singapore



First of its kind showcase of excellence: Visit by Trade Minister H.E. Enggartiarso Lukita to the Indonesian Embassy Trade Showcase in Singapore in May 2017 and the launch the E-Commerce Platform for Indonesia's Export Products at the Indonesian Embassy in 2019



Interfaith dialogue delegation from Indonesia paid a courtesy call to Minister Grace Foo in Singapore



Inauguration of Nongsa Digital Park in Nongsa Batam by Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, H.E. Retno Marsudi and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Singapore, H.E. Dr. Vivian Balakhrisan. Inauguration of Nongsa Digital Park in Nongsa Batam by Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, H.E. Retno Marsudi and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Singapore, H.E. Dr. Vivian Balakhrisan



Inaugural event of annual Indonesia Investment Day in 2018 in Singapore



Probably the first foreign diplomatic couple to ride and participate in Chingay, Singapore's premier street festival



(Left): President Jokowi presented 10 New Bali picture book to PM Lee on the occasion of the Leaders' Retreat in Bali, October 2018

(Above): Bilateral Meeting with Vice President Mike Pence at the ASEAN Summit in Singapore, 2018



President Jokowi having lunch and dialogues with Indonesians having lunch at the Indonesian restaurant @Lucky Plaza, Singapore



Wefie with President Jokowi and Mdm Iriana Widodo and more than 3.800 Indonesians at the Embassy, 2017

Accompanying President Jokowi visiting Indonesian Restaurant @ Lucky Plaza, Singapore, 2018



President Halimah and Mr. Mohammad Alhabsi with Indonesian former ministers during President's State visit to Indonesia



Friendly chat with President Halimah Yacob at Istana Diplomatic Reception



Sharing light moment with PM Lee at Istana Reception



Celebrating Indonesia's Independence Day with Guest of Honour, Minister S. Iswaran



With DPM Heng Swee Keat, Minister Vivian Balakrishnan and Governors, Mayors from Indonesia for RISING Fellowship Program at MFA Singapore

Chapter 4

Digital Diplomacy

INTERNET AND DIGITAL technology have become one of the most transformative innovations of recent times, bringing in changes to social interactions and connectivity and also disruptions. This in turn, has necessitated changes and adaptations in the way information is acquired, processed, managed, and shared, even in diplomatic practices. Now, it is not only about information in real time, but also about economic and industrial disruptions and about how things are being done and facilitated. Indonesian Foreign Minister, Retno LP Marsudi had articulated it aptly, when she said that innovation and digital diplomacy had become a necessity because the traditional practices of diplomacy had been applied through “controlled communication of (and between) international agencies and institutions, embassies and governments,” but thanks to the “improved access to the internet and digital technologies, diplomacy has adjusted itself to the current trends.”

Digital diplomacy stands for diplomacy that is conducted and carried out with the aid of technology, especially the internet and other ICT based innovations. It includes in its sphere, public diplomacy, negotiations, policy processes, and crisis management related to various diplomatic activities. Internet, and especially, social media has brought about changes in the practices of diplomacy and many sovereign states, including Indonesia, have aligned themselves to this change. In fact, the active social media accounts of the Foreign Minister and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are testaments to the changed stance, and various platforms are used to assist the Ministry in sharing important information and implementing various policies.

Digital diplomacy does not only mean better and real-time communications and interactions, but it has already covered bigger

spectrum, if not all aspects of our livelihood. It could be about our daily livelihood, economy, politics, socio-cultures and most importantly for Indonesian Embassy in Singapore, it is about how to serve people better, to improve good governance, including promoting its potentials for foreign direct investments, trade and tourism under the Indonesia's economic diplomacy strategies and citizen service diplomacy. On information delivery and means of communication, more and more politicians, civil servants, governments and embassies are now relying on various social media platforms to communicate their stand on policies, and they are sharing news and updates in real-time.

Internet World statistics puts Indonesia as being fifth from the top (as of March 2019), in terms of its Internet users. It therefore comes as no surprise that this 'highly networked' status influences the diplomatic activities as well, and many online dialogues and interactive feedbacks take place during policy-making processes. In addition, many diplomats and state leaders rely on social media to stay in touch with the people.

This applies to President Joko Widodo as well, who has several social media accounts and updates his posts regularly. So does Ambassador Ngurah Swajaya, and rightly so. In this globalised world, technology has served as an enabler, and enabled changes in the ways in which diplomacy is conducted as well. They do not have to be present physically at each place, and yet they can reach people with the appropriate information. Thus, Digital Diplomacy has created possibilities and expanded the scope of diplomacy. It has also ensured ways to conduct diplomacy faster and with greater efficacy.

With the strong rise of Indonesia in the digital space, not only the importance and scope of Digital Economy has increased, but the need

for optimisation has increased as well. In addition, the country is rising in the technology space steadily. It has 4 unicorns, (start-ups valued at US\$1 billion or more) and these include, Go-Jek, Traveloka, Bukalapak and Tokopedia. As writers and lecturers, Triwibowo and Martha point out in the Jakarta Post (2017), Indonesia will now have to “optimize its digital platforms to achieve its foreign policy goals.” As far as Indonesian embassy in Singapore is concerned, it’s right at the top of its game.

Singapore and Indonesia have started to connect the start-ups ecosystems of both countries as well, and some of these successful collaborations are under the Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB)’s Global Innovation Alliance. Some of these are : SG Innovate and Indonesian co-working space chain, Cocowork coming together to set up 36 Indonesian start-ups, National University of Singapore’s (NUS) entrepreneurial arm, NUS Enterprise, partnering with Indonesia’s Salim Group to set up three incubator Block 71 in Jakarta, Bandung and Yogyakarta, and Singaporean Oswald Yeo, founder of the human resource placement and technology services start-ups, Glints, placing more than 80 Indonesian tech talents in Nongsa Digital Park, in Batam. The digital door thus is opening new possibilities of cooperation for both the countries for mutual benefits to tap each potential.

Google and Temasek issued their report on digital economy potentials in Indonesia and ASEAN by projecting the triple increase of ASEAN digital economy values to reach US\$ 240 billion by 2025. It breaks down further into three main sectors, e-commerce, on-line media and ride-hailing. Indonesia alone was projected to increase to US\$ 100 billion, although the Indonesian Minister of Information and communication gave his more convincing projection of more than US\$ 100 billion in the next two years (2020).

President Joko Widodo and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, in their retreat meeting to commemorate the 50 year anniversary of diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Singapore endorsed the digital economic cooperation as a priority cooperation. The inauguration of the Nongsa Digital Park in Nongsa, Batam, only 30 minutes by ferry from Singapore will provide good opportunity to make it as a digital bridge between Singapore and many digital hubs in Indonesia. It could be potentially developed as co-working space, talents upgrading incubators to tap the growing potentials of digital economy.

In line with the increasing use of digital technology, the Indonesian Embassy in Singapore launched its #SmartEmbassy initiatives by improving the use of technology to citizen service and economic diplomacy at the Embassy. To improve its effort to protect its migrant workers and Indonesia's seafarers and to promote their welfare, the Embassy developed a comprehensive database and digital application (Aps) to allow seamless and easier access to information and communication between migrant workers and seafarers with the Embassy. On economic diplomacy, the Embassy opened showcase for Indonesian export products, both physically and virtually. It has covered a database of more than 3000 producers and exporters from Indonesia. To make it easier to access international market, an e-commerce platform developed by Indonesia's start-ups was launched during Indonesia Investment Day in 2018.

With all of those positive development of information and digital technologies, there are also some negative impacts that require serious undertakings to address them in close collaboration with other countries. These include issues such as cyber crimes, spreading hoax and fake news, radicalism and other misuse of such technologies. Collaboration on information and digital technologies have also covered these challenges.

My Perspectives

By Ambassador Swajaya

AT THE BEGINNING of my assignment here, I had heard about Digital Economy, disruptions etc. but had not realised that there were already young people in our country, taking advantage of the advancements in information and communication technology and trying to innovatively monetise it. I did not realise that they were already collaborating, however, President Jokowi fully realised this, and took it to the next level by launching his digital economic vision of developing 1000 techno-entrepreneurs (technopreneurs) by the year 2020.

At the beginning, many people were unaware of the term, technopreneurs, and did not know what it meant, but slowly things started falling into place. Different Ministries started making preparations to realise the vision. People were surprised to know that Indonesians were among the top 5 Facebook users of the world and Indonesia had the most number of tech-unicorns in Southeast Asia. They knew how to use social media, but were not familiar with how powerful it could be and how the technology will disrupt the way they do things, and how they could make it useful in a positive manner. Initially, social media was about status, but over time, its business potentials have been tapped on. Now people, especially the younger generations, are the familiar users of popular Apps like Go-jek, Traveloka, Bukalapak and also users of terms such as you-tubers, unicorns etc.

We take great pride that Indonesia has the most unicorns, start-up companies valued at over US\$1billion, in Southeast Asia. They

have been developed by young entrepreneurs driven by creativity and innovations in digital technology applications. Now, wider application of technology covers more sophisticated areas such as artificial intelligence, internet of things, virtual reality, clouds, augmentation, financial technology, block chain, etc. Industry 4.0 is now high in the government priorities to be supported by good infrastructure and better human resources development strategies.

The digital world has huge potential and therefore, cooperation between the Governments of Indonesia and Singapore on digital economy is timely. Indonesia with its huge pool of talents, big market, greater innovative and creative ideas is in a good position to collaborate with Singapore with its limited human resources and space, but well-developed networks and established hub status. As follow up to the Hackathon, organised in Batam in 2017, in close collaboration between EDB Singapore, Indonesian Embassy in Singapore and many relevant institutions, and participated by 518 young Indonesian talents, A Nongsa Digital Park in Batam was inaugurated by Foreign Ministers of Indonesia and Singapore on March 2018. For now, Batam is already in the map of digital economy and ready to serve as a “digital bridge” between Singapore and Indonesia.

“In ASEAN, we have seven unicorns and, out of seven, four are coming from Indonesia.”

- Rudiantara, Minister of Communication and Information

Currently, we have vibrant digital economic collaborations between the two countries. Applications of digital economy collaboration expanded to cover various activities from training and education, joint promotions, pitching, incubation to Industry 4.0 to tap bilateral market potentials and ASEAN with 640 million people.

In our small way, we have also relied upon digitalisation in our embassy (#SmartEmbassy), which resulted in adding elements to our cooperation and extending technological scope to promoting tourism, investment and trade potential. Currently, we are upgrading and improving the use so as to enable us to serve better and promote better governance.

“60% of ASEAN population is under 35 years old. They are comfortable with new technology, and the digital economy in ASEAN is projected to grow and reach US\$200 billion by 2025.”

- Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister, Singapore.

In ASEAN context too, the regional Digital Economic Forum is a regular feature, organised yearly. The main topic there is digital economy and investors from all over the world come to attend it. This year, I went with the Singapore delegations and we had organised additional events to talk about Fintech and Blockchain as well. Since the world is going digital, it is essential to stay informed on the potentials ahead. The reports by Google and Temasek indicate that the Digital Economy in ASEAN, would be a whopping US\$ 240 billion by 2025. Out of that, Indonesia is already valued at US\$ 100 billion.

I myself attended many interesting pitching sessions where start-ups from Indonesia pitched their projects and got their partners to move forward. It is amazing to see these young technopreneurs impacting Indonesia both economically and socially. There are many more examples like these, in many more industries. One big industry touched by the ‘app culture’ is that of food and services.

Preparing for a Digital World

While President is developing a generation of technopreneurs, the Ministry of Information and Communication is developing telecom connectivity for the entire country through satellite and optic cables. The government is also working with 20 universities to train the students to code. I have myself attended such events at Jakarta, at a place that can be termed as a Silicon Valley of Jakarta.

In fact, Apple Academy has produced apps creators and it will be expanded to other provinces to tap local talents as well. These are the first branch outside the US and their 1st batch graduates in 2019. Additionally, we are also witnessing the launch of many other coding schools, that provide students with learning opportunities in a flexible environment so that they can even code from home. Talent shortage should be addressed by expanding the training and education. Educational institutions and incubators, therefore, are busy preparing for a new world of digitalisation, and this in itself provides many avenues of collaborations.

“We know that the future will change and we know that the digital revolution has arrived. The first question that a citizen will therefore ask is “Where are the jobs?”. This is the reason why the Nongsa Digital Park (NDP) is important. The NDP can help create jobs for the future – jobs that are good and jobs that can provide broad opportunities. However, to achieve this, the first step is to raise the level of skills through education and training. If the citizens possess the requisite skills, then the job opportunities will come.”

- Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Foreign Affairs at the launch of the Nongsa Digital Park, Batam

I have gone to the incubator by National University of Singapore (NUS) in Jakarta. They have 3 in Indonesia, the most, if compared to only 1 incubator in San Francisco and 2 in Singapore. These in-

cubators provide the best platforms for talent exchanges, good projects and the best solutions. During the Leaders' Retreat in 2017, President Joko Widodo and PM Lee agreed on a bilateral priority on digital economy, which led to the establishment of the digital park in Bandung with more possibilities of hubs in Bali, Surabaya etc. Digital Economy fosters collaborations. It pushes for teamwork using technology.

Technology and Embassy

We launched #SmartEmbassy using technology, a process that took 5-7 months. It has been operational and continues to be upgraded. One of the priority tasks of the smart embassy was citizen protection. In order to achieve that, we needed to make a better database of the Indonesians living in Singapore. We began developing solid database and the numbers reached 120,000 in early 2019 compared to the around 50,000 in 2016. Later, we also included the seafarers database.

Smart Embassy platform provide better data base, real-time in the presentation and interactive in nature. Migrant workers can interact directly with us now by using our Aps, and we in turn, can use this channel to share information to improve their skills and awareness on the do's and don'ts.

Every transformation has impacts, whether good or bad. What we need to do is to harness them properly so as to reduce the negative impacts and increase the positive. Shunning technology, assuming that it will reduce employment is not the ideal way ahead. Instead, we have to find ways around it, and find solutions. Digitalisation is here to stay, however, digital economy will not

work if it is heavily regularised. So, the government's role now is both of facilitation as well as acceleration. Initially people thought that Disruption Economy equates to disruptive people doing business, but they realise now that disruption is the only way for innovations to happen.

There is great potential for digital collaboration between Singapore and Indonesia because it is mutually beneficial and not territorial. When we talk of Digital Economy, we are not constrained by space. Indonesia has a large space and talent pool to offer and Singapore offers a hub and a well-connected training ground, so we can tap on each other's potential for mutual benefit. This additional channel of collaboration is reflected in the policies as well and the new CEP (Comprehensive Economic Partnership) agreement covers Digital Economy.

Now, it is crucial to tap this potential and to reorient roles of the economic divisions of some of our Diplomatic Missions overseas to focus on Digital Economy. For example, at our Consul General in San Francisco, if one person focuses on trade, investment, development and tourism, then the other can focus only on digital economy, particularly in the bay area, including in the Silicon Valley. This can also be done in Mumbai, China and Nordic countries. This is important because we are talking about more than US\$ 130 billion worth of economic potential, which far exceeds the traditional economy.

Chapter 5

Smart Embassy @Rising 50

2017 WAS A landmark year for both Indonesia and Singapore as they celebrated the golden anniversary of their bilateral relations. The celebratory year also coincided with the 72nd anniversary of Indonesia's independence and the 52nd anniversary of Singapore's. Five decades of relationship between the two neighbours, very different in size, legal system, population and history, could be traced back to 1967 when S. Rajaratnam, Singapore's first Foreign Minister, announced the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries. Incidentally, it was also just a month after the signing of the Bangkok Declaration that had marked the founding of ASEAN.

The bilateral relations had gained momentum after the then Singapore Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew's four-eyes (*empat mata*) meeting with the Indonesian President Soeharto in 1973. Though initially PM Lee had raised the issue of whether or not to trust "each other's long term intentions," that meeting nevertheless, changed the direction of the future course of the relationship between the two nations.

There were many challenges before and at the initial stages of the bilateral relations, for example, issues pertaining to distrust, *konfrontasi*, and later on with issues relating to maritime delimitation,

sand trading and haze episodes. However, despite them all, the years stand testament to two nations that rode through the challenges and connected on shared values and common grounds on many issues. As Prof Dr. Makarim Wibisono, Vice Chairman of the Indonesian Council of World Affairs points out, Singapore's "down to earth attitude towards diplomacy" and the current Indonesian concern of charting, "down to earth tangible accomplishment" make the two, "excellent partners for cooperation and partnership".

The 50th anniversary celebration of the establishment of diplomatic relations was coined as RISING50, and it stands for Republic of Indonesia and Singapore. The term not only signifies the strong five-decades-long partnership, but it also shows strong commitment of the leaders to make the two neighbours' partnership flourish in the decades to come. It also represents optimism in charting their relationship to encompass not only a strong vision on economic cooperation, but also in maintaining peoples-to-people interactions, including their common goal of maintaining regional security and stability.

To mark the milestone, a number of activities, events and festivals were organised from the beginning to the end of 2017 bearing the theme of "Trusted Partners, RISING Together". The culmination of the year-long celebration was the Leaders' Retreat on September 7th, 2017, exactly 50 years after the beginning of the bilateral relations. President Joko Widodo, First Lady Iriana Joko Widodo, accompanied by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and First Lady, Madame Ho Ching, witnessed the first ever Joint Fly-pass using 20 jet fighters of the two countries' air forces with the two chiefs flying in their respective planes over the east coast and Marina centre in Singapore.

The preceding events were “RISING Tree” planting by both leaders at Singapore Botanic Garden, bilateral meeting and signing of a number of bilateral cooperation, including the unveiling of a joint stamp, and the launching of a RISING 50 commemorative book at the Istana. The planting of the “RISING Tree” symbolises the ever growing bilateral partnership and the RISING 50 Commemorative Book launched during the event, documented events and experiences by officials from both countries over 5 decades of interactions, when the two countries worked to strengthen the bilateral cooperation.

Thus, both the tree planting and the book launching are the living testament of the dynamic cooperation between the two countries and their peoples. Included in the book was also President Joko Widodo’s celebratory note that reiterated the close relationship the two nations currently share. The President mentioned in his note, the increase of investment from Singapore to Indonesia and lauded the interaction between government officials in various sectors that has “enabled two countries in effectively addressing the common challenges, particularly in transnational security issues.”

After the retreat, President Joko Widodo and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong attended Indonesia-Singapore (RISING) business conference, elaborating potential cooperation for businesses for the two countries to participate in 10 New Bali as new tourists and investment destinations for Singapore was launched by President Joko Widodo. Both leaders also agreed to work together to promote the potential of digital economy and named Batam (Nongsa) as the potential digital bridge between Singapore to many digital hubs in Indonesia. Interesting point raised by President Joko Widodo in his speech was his emphasis on the importance of Singaporeans to be “less Kiasu” while Indonesians

to be “less ndeso” if businesses from both countries were to bring their cooperation to a higher plane.

Prior to the commemorative bilateral retreat, President Joko Widodo and First Lady Madame Iriana Joko Widodo were enthusiastically greeted by more than 2,500 members of the Indonesian community and diaspora in Singapore at the community gathering organised at the Indonesian Embassy in Singapore. The full 3 hours event was utilised by the President to inform the state of infrastructural development in Indonesia and to conduct a dialogue with the Indonesian community in Singapore. President Joko Widodo underlined the importance for Indonesians living in Singapore to understand more about Indonesia and to be proud Indonesians in helping to promote Indonesia overseas.

Indonesian Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore, His Excellency Ngurah Swajaya, spearheaded the celebratory events for the 50th anniversary of Singapore and Indonesia’s bilateral relations. Events such as the interfaith dialogue, Fly-Pass, RISING fashion, and the commemorative book, were just a few of the many efforts that had been put into concrete activities to promote a better mutual understanding between the two nations and their peoples. A RISING Jubilee fun run at the Fort Canning on December 10, 2017, participated by more than 500 Indonesians and Singaporeans, and the musical concert attended by more than 2,000, ended the RISING 50 celebrations officially. The efforts to promote better understanding and developing better perceptions of each other is an ongoing process that could unlock significant potentials for both countries and peoples to tap for long-term mutual benefits. Subsequently, RISING events continue to be organised by both the Embassy and the government of Singapore.

As the Embassy continues doing usual business and its daily routine, including handling issues, serving the people of both the countries, we organized the RISING 50 as celebratory events supported by many stakeholders, to develop a shared vision to bring the bilateral partnerships to the next level for mutual benefits. It was the herculean efforts put forward by all the embassies' staff and stakeholders supporting the activities. These initiatives not only brought about better mutual understanding and perception, but also harmony and significant momentum for bilateral cooperation that are essential for the people of both countries.

The Golden Jubilee celebratory RISING 50 events also served to start a new chapter and paradigm of long-term mutually beneficial partnership between Singapore and Indonesia, in a continuously changing geopolitical and economic dynamics in the region. Key indicator in this effort was an improved mutual public perception between the people of the two countries, better understanding on the significant potentials and effective partnerships to attain their common goals. New dynamic included here were the efforts of both governments to collaborate in harnessing the potentials of technologies and young talents to tap the emerging benefits and addressing the challenges of digital economy and disruptive technologies. One of the concrete initiatives was the inauguration of the Nongsa Digital Park in Batam and collaborations to tap the growing potential of Digital Economy.

Despite the persistent global challenges and a continuously weak global economic recovery, the two countries recorded a continuing increase of foreign direct investment flows, especially from Singapore to Indonesia. In the past five years, Singapore has always ranked amongst the top foreign investors to Indonesia. At the last retreat in Bali,

the two leaders also announced a US\$10 billion (S\$13.8 billion) local currency swap and US dollar repurchase agreement between Singapore and Indonesia. This gave both countries access to each other's currency and to US dollars and the agreement came amidst an otherwise volatile financial market, and provided further indication on the direction of the bilateral relationship between the two nations.

Furthermore, the Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) signed at the 2018 Singapore-Indonesia Leaders' Retreat in Bali, promised protection for Singaporean companies operating in Indonesia and vice versa, ensuring that the companies of both nations also had access to international arbitration in the event of investment disputes. In February 2020, Finance Minister of Indonesia and Second Finance Minister of Singapore signed a new revised Agreement on the Avoidance of Double Taxation, witnessed by President Joko Widodo and President Halimah Yacob in Bogor Indonesia, during the occasion of the State Visit of President Halimah Yacob to Indonesia. Thus, these will set again another important impetus for continued effective partnership for the two countries.

The two nations now look towards the next generation, the younger Singaporeans and the Indonesians to take this friendship forward. The sentiment was aptly articulated by Senior Minister of State for Defence and Foreign Affairs (Singapore), Dr Mohamad Maliki Osman when he urged the younger generations of Singaporeans and Indonesians to “understand previous history” and then to “create their own history” so as to take the relationship between Singapore and Indonesia “to greater heights”.

From “whether we trust each other's long term intentions,” to being described as “deep reservoir of strategic trust,” this friendship has indeed come a long way.

10 New Bali

As President Jokowi accelerated the infrastructure development and tapping significant potentials of tourism in Indonesia, a new project - 10 New Bali - was launched on the occasion of the Leaders' Retreat to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of bilateral relation on September 9, 2017 in Singapore. It presented the potentials in 10 new tourism destinations across the archipelago with the objective of making them as popular as Bali and attract tourism but also investment on tourism supporting sectors. The destinations are very unique in its respective persona, such as Lake Toba in North Sumatra, Belitung Island in the province of Bangka-Belitung, Tanjung Lesung in West Java, Thousands Islands off the coast of Jakarta, Borobudur/Prambanan in Central Java, Bromo Mountain in East Java, Mandalika in Lombok, Labuan Bajo in East Nusa Tenggara, Wakatobi in Central Sulawesi and Morotai Islands in Maluku.

To help presenting the natural beauties and the color and faces of those destinations, the Embassy of Indonesia in Singapore working closely with Indonesian and Singaporean professional photographers created a coffee table book containing breathtaking pictures that everyone cannot resist to not visit all of them.

The 10 New Bali book has been handed over to many dignitaries and business leaders with the hope that it will not only attract people to visit but also businesses to invest. The feedback we have had was indeed encouraging. New investment projects to support tourism industries in those destinations have either been completed or on going. The Embassy is grateful to all photographers in contributing such beautiful and dedicated works and the book is another evident of the strong RISING spirit that could be strengthened further for the benefits of humanity and nature.

My Perspectives

By Ambassador Swajaya

DURING MY TERM as Ambassador, Singapore and Indonesia celebrated 50 glorious years of bilateral relations, and I was very fortunate to have been a part of not only this event, but also in actively developing and conducting the activities. Although, we celebrated RISING 50 in 2017, it is worth noting that RISING, that reflects strong impetus to continue bringing the bilateral partnerships to a new height, continues to be utilised as the preferred tagline for bilateral activities in the succeeding years.

As to the idea of coming up with RISING 50 phrase, I have to acknowledge the work of our Embassy team and also of those at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Singapore, especially the younger generations. This term evolved from simple ideas of how to continue bringing the growing bilateral partnerships to flourish even more by utilising the momentum of Golden Jubilee for long-term mutual benefits of the people.

When I first arrived in Singapore, I have to admit that things were a bit different to what they are now. Even though, the two countries had a lot of potential and could do many more in a mutually beneficial manner, it was still hindered by misperceptions about each other. From the outset, we needed to make sure that both people develop better understanding and perception of each other so as to enable them to unlock the significant potential that could be fully utilised for mutual benefits. Thus, the RISING 50 and all the events provided a significant milestone, directly led by both countries' leadership, to chart the journey for the nations

for decades to come, by developing a more effective partnership for mutual benefits.

The Interfaith Dialogue

The Interfaith Dialogue took place on July 11, 2017, and it was officially inaugurated by H.E Mr. Lukman Hakim Saefudin, Minister of Religious Affairs of Indonesia and H.E Mr. Tan Chuan Jin, Minister for Social and Family Development of Singapore at the Ministry of National Development Hall. While Indonesia has the second largest Muslim population in the world, 33 per cent of Singapore's population is Buddhist and 18.7 per cent is Christian. Present at this dialogue were the representatives from the 10 official religions of the IRO - Islam, Hinduism, Taoism, Buddhism, Jainism, Judaism, Sikhism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, and the Baha'i faith. Also present were Catholics, representing the various parishes and religious communities in the diocese. The first ever interfaith dialogue have enabled all religious leaders participating to learn from each other, particularly on how to nurture harmony and tolerance in a multicultural, multi ethnic, multi religions societies like Indonesia and Singapore. The dialogue identify challenges that are common in both countries and lessons that could be learnt by each other.

Consequently, over the past four years, we have not only seen a continued increase of foreign direct investment from Singapore to Indonesia, but also a rise in collaborations on many sectors, including trade, tourism and digital economy.

Additionally, over the past three years, we did not experience any trans-boundary haze problem, despite the fact that forest fires continued to occur. This achievement was made possible thanks to the effective policies, strategies and efforts undertaken by President Joko Widodo and his team at the central, regional and local levels, including the active participation of the people on the field. This however, does not mean that we are already free from forest fire since it is not only a complex issue, but also one that has been affected by both global natural phenomenon and man made ones. However, continuous and long-term actions and synergies among all relevant stakeholders spared us from the haze.

The momentum generated during the 50th anniversary celebration also helped in developing a new paradigm on the importance of a mutually beneficial nature of the bilateral partnership. The celebratory commemoration generated events that had never been conducted before, such as the interfaith dialogue, track-two dialogue, Fly-Pass and collaboration on digital economy. Post 50th anniversary was Singapore Chairmanship in ASEAN where the two countries again worked together on many common issues to attain the goals of the ASEAN Community.

Key highlight in the commemorative activities was engaging more interactions among the people on issues of common concern. Programmes promoting awareness, especially among students in both the countries were conducted in Singapore and in different provinces of Indonesia. The awareness programmes particularly helped in building better mutual perception, and

were on the status of bilateral relations after 50 years, including on how the partnerships could be further enhanced in the decades to come. All the ideas developed and activities conducted were examined and boosted by the leaders' retreat conducted alternately in both countries annually.

The first event organised at the beginning of 2017 was the business dialogue on how to promote enhanced economic collaboration for mutual benefits between the two countries. The event, conducted in January 2017, was well attended by the business community from both the countries and graced by the then Minister of Trade and Industry (Singapore), Mr. Lim Hng Kiang and Indonesian Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Abdurrahman Mohammad Fachir. The dialogue was not only meant to provide information on business and investment opportunities, but also for updating on the latest economic reform packages and enhanced ease of doing business in Indonesia.

Many other events followed thereafter, and culminated in September during the Leader's Retreat. Improving people to people relations remained the core purpose, and the event at the closing, RISING Fun Run at Fort Canning in December 2017, brought the peoples of the two countries together in a fun running event in order to help improve better understanding and synergies to chart the long-term partnerships for their mutual benefits. Our mission to bring people together came to fruition and we were indeed fortunate to have the attendance of around one thousand, six hundred people. This included the younger generations, the businessmen, the students, and most importantly it was participated by both Singaporeans and Indonesians.

After the final events of the 2017 Golden Jubilee celebration, we were back at the drawing board, laying plans for more activities that could be designed in the coming years. One of them was the RISING Business Investment Forum, the RISING Fashion, the RISING Creative Connections, the RISING Merdeka and many others. All these activities are not only to bring the younger generations to collaborate, but also to promote the creative minds of both the countries to interact and exchange ideas so as to enable them to trigger more collaborative projects and bring out the potential of both the nations for their mutual benefits.

Our next plan was to continue organising an interfaith dialogue. One amazing outcome of the interfaith dialogue was that the religious leaders from both countries understood things about each other that had previously eluded them. They realised that underneath the different surfaces, their situations and challenges are almost the same. The interfaith dialogue could bridge a better understanding and there were lessons to learn in addressing common challenges and mitigating the information technologies and social media so as to eradicate hatred and the spread of extreme views. Both leaderships also exchanged views and experiences of nurturing harmony and moderation in multi-ethnic and religious community. Thus, our goal of promoting better understanding among people was met yet again.

“Religions or cultures don’t enter into dialogue – people do. Governments can support dialogue, morally and financially, but in the end it’s up to individuals to engage each other.”

- Minister of Social and Family Development (Singapore) Mr. Tan Chuan Jin at the Inter-faith Dialogue

We also initiated the Track 2 dialogue and invited civil society organisations, think tanks, representatives of the younger generations, and noted public figures from Indonesia to come to Singapore for a discussion. At that time, I remember discussing about the potentials of the digital economy, and smart city initiatives, something that we all are going to face and pursue collectively. In terms of the digital economy, we also organised a Hackathon in Batam to explore the possibility of a potential cooperation to upgrade tech talents from Indonesia to be ready for digital economic potentials. Five hundred eighteen young people were selected out of eight hundred that registered for the event.

It was also a matter of pride to know that sixty per cent of them were from Batam and the surrounding islands. It was exciting to just imagine how the numbers would swell up if we were to consider the possibilities of places such as Bandung, Jakarta, Yogyakarta, and Surabaya. Apart from these events, we also had other ongoing festivals, such as screening for Indonesian movies and events that revolved around books, writers, and children's content, among many others.

Another very significant event was the fly-pass by 10 fighter planes from both air forces respectively. People thought it was something uncommon and amazing. The idea behind it had originated while we were exploring ways to find activities and events that not only had substance but could also serve as a showcase and were memorable for both peoples. It was around this time that we learnt of Singapore's air show and thought that it would make a good collaboration between the two. We initially considered the Navy since both the countries are maritime hubs, however, there were logistic constraints as Navy events would be difficult to see. That's when we thought of fly-pass as something that had substance, was a showcase, and was very visible as well.

I spoke to our then Air Chief Marshal (ACM) Hadi Tjahjanto, who is now the Commander in Chief of the Indonesian Armed Forces, during his meeting with Minister of Defense of Singapore, Minister Ng Eng Hen, accompanied by Singapore Air Force Chief. When the idea was put on the table, Minister Ng Eng Hen welcomed it, and immediately, the two chiefs of air force, established a committee, and started designing the fly pass that eventually culminated to the RISING 50 Fly pass on 7th September 2018, spectated by President Joko Widodo and First Lady Madame Iriana Joko Widodo and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and First Lady Madame Ho Ching. The event also included marching bands from both the countries, which provided a great platform for the young personnel to engage with each other and perform together in synergised actions and harmony.

“The fly-pass was really a historical first for both air forces, the Republic of Singapore Air Force as well as the TNI-AU. It’s the first time that both our air forces have come together to do a fly-pass of that kind of complexity (and) scale. I think the fly-pass really is a testament of the skill as well as the professionalism and collaborative synergy of the pilots of both our air forces. But more important than that, is that it underscores the trust and mutual understanding between the personnel of both our air forces.”

- Chief of Air Force (Singapore) Major-General (MG) Mervyn Tan

While such significant events were bringing the two nations together, it seemed apt that I was penning my thoughts in a book commemorating the anniversary of our bilateral relations at the time. The book saw eminent persons from different backgrounds, from both Indonesia and Singapore coming together to share their views of engaging with each other. This book was launched at the Leaders’ Retreat in Singapore, 2017. Subsequently, the Embassy also launched the picture book of the *10 New Bali* which was also presented by President Joko Widodo to Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at the sideline of RISING Leaders’ Retreat, in Bali on 11 October, 2018.

The leaders met thrice in 2018 — twice in Singapore for ASEAN Summits in April and November and once in the Leaders' Retreat and ASEAN Leaders' gathering during the IMF and World Bank meeting in Bali, in December 2018. Similarly, both leaders met thrice in 2019 - twice in Singapore for National Day Parade in August 2019, Leaders' Retreat in Singapore 8 - 9 October 2019 and in Jakarta when Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong attended President Joko Widodo inauguration 20 October, 2019. So the leaders met for different events and had regular retreats. Additionally, the retreats involved dialogues even at the ministerial and senior official levels. As the ambassador present, I feel the regular retreats are very beneficial and produce concrete and mutually beneficial cooperation. I always witness the two leaders meeting, embracing a warm and optimistic spirit to push bilateral partnerships for the fruition of the peoples from both countries. The leaders retreat provides effective platform to evaluate the current status, and expedite what was lacking in implementation and to chart new partnerships.

On a side note, it was also heartening to see the Batik Diplomacy. Each retreat, President Jokowi and the cabinet ministers wore batik and so did Prime Minister Lee and his cabinet members, and I feel proud to see this close camaraderie and warm relations between the two countries. As Batik is not only a symbol of Indonesia but is also an elegant and comfortable outfit, the meeting always brings the celebratory spirit in style. As far as wearing one to an event like this, it acts as an immediate icebreaker. I even suggested the idea to my business colleagues in Singapore and told them to wear batik for their trips and meetings in Indonesia. I am glad to hear their happy feedback that it really worked. Their counterparts appreciated it and immediately felt a common connect, making conversations better.

The spirit and the activities of RISING are still very much alive. I am told in fact that it keeps on rising, and in that sense, the word and the concept has become symbolic of both our relationship, and of our future. RISING symbolises the strong spirit from both parties, as we find means to enable us to collaborate. The new paradigm is simple. It urges people to collaborate for mutual benefits and people have begun to appreciate these sentiments. However, just a noble intent is not good enough, and the true success of any work is eventually measured through its results. It has therefore given us a great sense of accomplishment as well as gratitude to see these initiatives yield tangible results.

Singapore	S\$9.2 Billion
Japan	S\$4.9 Billion
China	S\$2.4 Billion
Hong Kong	S\$2.0 Billion
Malaysia	S\$1.8 Billion

Singapore's
**MERCHANDISE TRADE
 PERFORMANCE 2018**
 with Indonesia stands at S\$65 Billion

Areas of Cooperation



Presidential Election and General Election

Singapore, 14 April 2019

One of the big events organized by the Embassy in 2019 was the Presidential election and Simultaneous General Election, especially during voting day took place at the Embassy ground on April 14, 2019. It was one of the biggest overseas election turnout in term of registered voters that came to vote at 59 polling stations. More than 48 thousand people casted their ballots at the embassy that involved more than 400 volunteers to help in making the smooth process started since 8.00 am until 18.00 pm. It was gigantic task in making the thousands of the people could line up and casting their vote in an orderly manner.

Many turned up, old and young Indonesians, including those who has been transported by ambulance from the hospital only to perform his democratic rights. The former President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono casted his vote at the embassy's polling station and the late Madame Ani Yudhoyono casted her votes at the hospital ward.

The Impact of #RISING 50

The impacts are visible in the tangible results. The investment has been on the increase, and I am very proud to say that Singapore's investment in Indonesia has seen a record high in the last five years. Singapore's investment into Indonesia in 2018 was 9.2 billion US dollars, an increase of 10 percent as compared to 2017 and Singapore remains the biggest investor in the past five years. Interestingly, the investment has increased despite the downward trend of global investment, and despite the fact that we entered into the political year of elections in Indonesia. This shows that people still have confidence in the Indonesian democracy and stability. And that's

the most important thing. The government is working very hard in order to continue the efforts of making Indonesia an ideal place of doing business. This has ensured that the ease of business indicator has improved significantly in Indonesia, resulting in an increase in general investment. Different sectors are thriving and the destination Indonesia is not just one destination, but it involves multiple destinations.

I would also like to draw attention to the security collaborations during my term. Incidentally, one of the most important collaborations that we have had has been on addressing the transnational crimes and enhancing mutual confidence between the two armed forces. Whether it has been the issue of drug trafficking, terrorism, or armed robbery at sea, we have worked with multiple collaborations with the administration of Singapore and with military to military engagement to address these. Each of the branches of the military has initiated their own dialogue process and even joint exercises are conducted regularly between the two countries. It was very crucial that the military branches understand each other to tap the potential of the RISING collaboration of partnership.

Another issue between the nations that needed collaboration was the follow up of Indonesia's tax amnesty program, namely the signing and implementation of agreement on Automatic Information Exchange on tax matters. Every citizen has an obligation to pay tax and every country has the right to collect taxes. As the Tax Amnesty programme was being implemented during my tenure as the Ambassador in Singapore, I had an obligation to raise awareness on the issue. Tax amnesty is one of the schemes commonly implemented

by every country. The law on the tax amnesty was enacted when I was here, and I have utilised the opportunity to increase people's awareness about what tax amnesty was all about and facilitated for the success of the implementation of the Tax Amnesty programme.

Singapore was the biggest contributor in terms of tax reporting and repatriation of the fund. However, even more important was the increase in the tax base in Indonesia. The tax ratio and tax base in Indonesia has improved significantly after the Tax Amnesty programme and the effective implementation of the Automatic Information Exchange Agreement could also contribute to this end.

The automatic exchange of information allowed the tax authorities to understand the taxpayers in each other's countries, and this needed addressing to quell the misconceptions about each other. The explanation of collaborative efforts ensured that Indonesians pay their tax obligations, and this also has contributed to the wellbeing of both the countries.

“Singapore’s economy is inextricably linked with Indonesia’s and cooperation between the two countries is deep, multi-faceted and reinforced by frequent high-level exchanges. Both countries also share common defence and security challenges, and agencies on both sides work together in defence exercises, as well as share intelligence to counter terrorism. In 2018, Singapore was Indonesia’s top foreign investor. Its investments include the Kendal Industrial Park in Semarang and the Nongsa Digital Park in Batam. Last year, Bank Indonesia and the Monetary Authority of Singapore established a US\$10 billion (S\$13.5 billion) bilateral financial arrangement. This enables the two central banks to access foreign currency liquidity from each other if needed, to preserve monetary and financial stability.”

- Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan speaking in Parliament during the debate on his ministry's budget on March 1, 2019

Looking Forward with Optimism

Just before I came to Singapore, the media narrative (especially between 2014-2016) was not helping to unlock the significant potential of bilateral partnerships. Bringing balanced and objective narrative to promote better understanding and developing optimism is more importance than only highlighting issues that only deter Singaporeans to unlock the potentials. Promoting better understanding resulted in fruitful and mutually beneficial cooperation for everyone. Information that is unbalanced, biased or factually insinuated leads to pessimism and does not benefit anyone.

For example, to my surprise, many in Singapore do not understand how big Indonesia is. They don't realise that it needs more than 8 hours of continuous flight time to connect the western-most part of Indonesia to its eastern-most part and that Indonesia is a country with 17,000 islands and 260 million people. Also, it was surprising to know that some of the people in Singapore cancelled their trip to Bali because they heard demonstration is taking place in Jakarta. Understanding Indonesia better, creates better appreciation of the complexity to govern and helps to understand how sustained stability and security of the country has not only resulted in a flourishing democracy but also in a positive economic growth, that included prosperity and well-being of the people. Thus, insinuating information that only leads to pessimism and misperceptions will not benefit the people to unlock the significant potential for collaboration.

For example, the approach towards digital economy cannot be that of competition or rivalry, it has to be an exploration of

collaborating together to create bigger value. Indonesia has not only big markets, but also a lot of talent in this area as they are very creative and innovative, but in order to monetize the talent, we have to evolve this in to entrepreneurship, which Indonesia lacks. On the other hand, Singapore's entrepreneurial talents and hub of finance are crucial in promoting and capitalising the digital economy potentials for both the countries. Collaboration between the two is ideal. Thus, bilateral collaboration on this issue and also on industry 4.0 Transformation is crucial for ASEAN Economic Community with the large market size and growing middle- income people. It could also help in making ASEAN as a successful single market and production base that in turn will also promote growth and prosperity of its people.

In addition, the problem of haze has not been there for the past three years (2016-2018). We are even trying to suppress the number of forest fires, by implementing on-the-fields structures, law enforcements and instruments so as to involve the central government, the regional government, as well as the people, to reduce the number of forest fires. And we keep on working very hard to reduce this again and again and again. But we also want to draw attention to the fact that though we are trying our best to suppress it, the issue of forest fire is not really new. The painting by famous Indonesian artist displayed in the Asian Civilization Museum in Singapore, Mr. Raden Saleh, depicted the forest fires in Indonesia that existed in 1885. Forest fire also continues to erupt and cause havoc annually in countries like Australia, in the US state of California, and even Europe. It is an ongoing battle for everyone and it requires trans-boundary collaboration.

I think RISING 50 will continue to rise and soar in the next five decades. Hopefully, it will contribute not only to the people of Singapore and Indonesia, but it will also contribute in some ways to the larger region in ASEAN and beyond ASEAN. It's a shared responsibility that we are trying to work on together. RISING has been successful not only in terms of a celebratory event and initiative, but also as a term. Many ambassadors have expressed their struggle to match up to a term that not only means an aspirational philosophy, but also one that incorporates the names of the two countries. The term RISING 50 has inspired many new innovative acronyms. Thus, RISING spirit has not only been successful as a celebratory message, but also has been successful as a means of reaching out, collaborations, and innovation. When we embarked into the year 2020, it was started with the good news where President Joko Widodo was named by the *Straits Times* as the Man of the Year in Asia in 2019 and we have the first State Visit of President Halimah Yacob to Indonesia to continue the partnership to rise in the RISING spirit.



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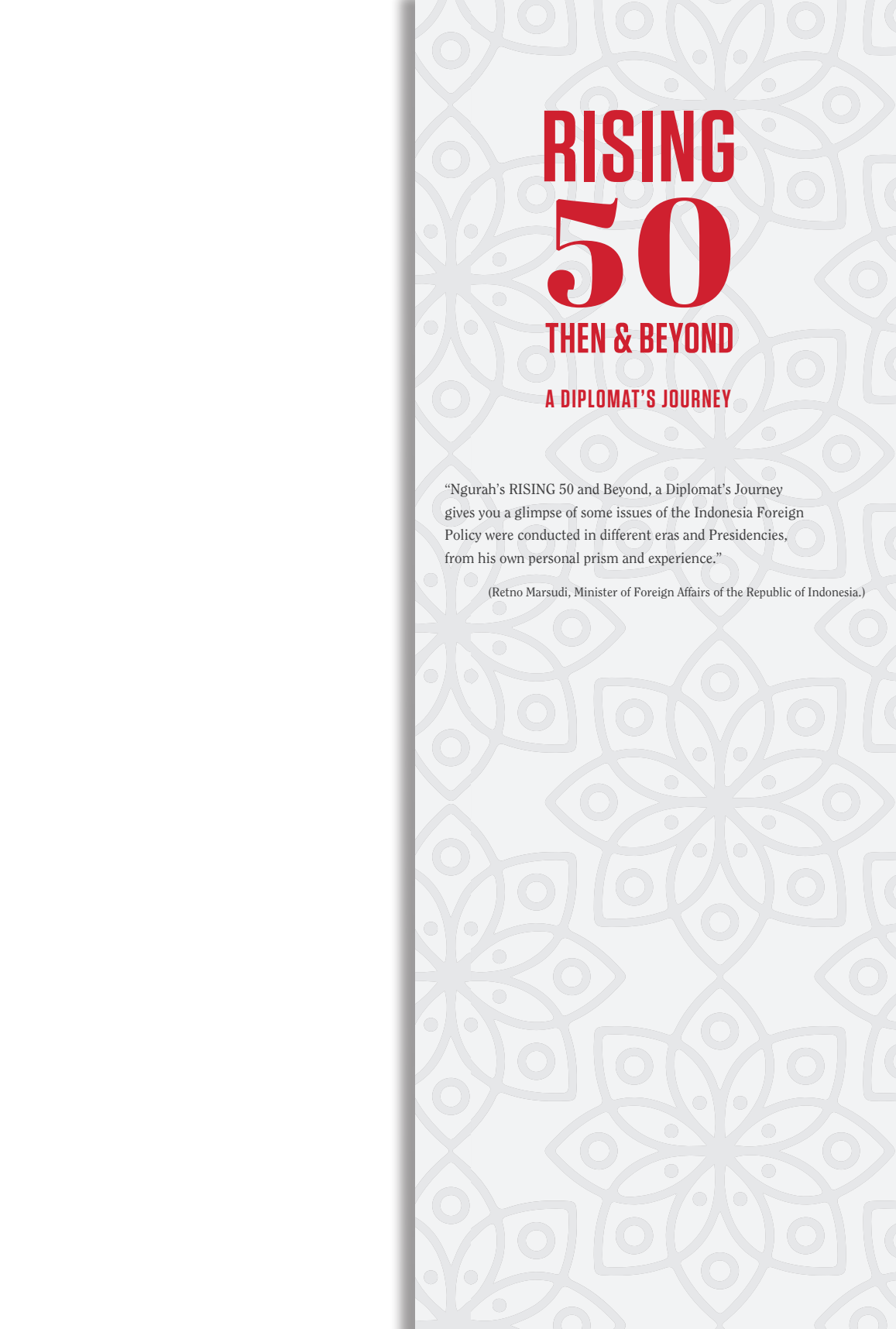
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RISING 50

THEN & BEYOND

A DIPLOMAT'S JOURNEY

“Ngurah’s RISING 50 and Beyond, a Diplomat’s Journey gives you a glimpse of some issues of the Indonesia Foreign Policy were conducted in different eras and Presidencies, from his own personal prism and experience.”

(Retno Marsudi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia.)

RISING 50 THEN & BEYOND

A DIPLOMAT'S JOURNEY

RISING 50 Then and Beyond, a Diplomat's Journey takes readers on Ambassador Swajaya Ngurah's journey as a diplomat. From his journey, he shares personal insights, anecdotes and lesser known facts spanning three decades of his career, right from the time Indonesia began growing international stature, to the difficult period when Indonesians faced post financial and multi-dimensional crisis, to the current democratic Indonesia embracing international norms. Touching upon the Transformation of ASEAN, rise in people-to-people diplomacy, the need for digital diplomacy and the 50 glorious years of bilateral relations between Singapore and Indonesia, he not only provides glimpses of the changing diplomatic scene in the region but also highlights technology and people as the game changers of the future.

“His writings and observations will be valuable in understanding the transformative mindset needed by every diplomat in performing his or her duties in the constantly changing environment. I therefore commend Ngurah's willingness to share his priceless experiences in this book.”

H.E. Retno L.P. Marsudi Minister for Foreign Affairs, Republic of Indonesia

“Ambassador Swajaya is one of the good Indonesian diplomats who has passed through proper education, and has had various levels of experience in diplomacy, and therefore I am confident that he is now in a position to achieve what Indonesia would like its diplomats to achieve.”

Prof. DR. Hasjim Djalal, M.A.