



AMM stresses the importance of Dialogue

Press release – 3 November 2006

Banda Aceh, Indonesia. On Friday 3 November 2006 the Head of the Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM), Mr. Pieter Feith, invited representatives of the wider civil society to participate in a discussion on the role of civil society in a sustainable peace process after AMM's departure on 15 December 2006. The meeting was part of AMM's efforts to make the peace in Aceh self-sustainable. As the complete ownership of the peace process will be taken over by the people of Aceh and the two parties to the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), it is important that mechanisms to ensure a lasting peace are put in place.

“Where relevant, direct consultations and dialogue between the parties, including other elements of the Acehnese society, should be retained after AMM leaves. The civil society has a critical role to play in supporting the continuing peace process” stated Pieter Feith.

In the meeting several aspects of the peace process, achievements reached and future challenges, were discussed. The AMM Head of Mission reiterated that the reintegration process is of utmost importance for the peace process in Aceh and has been a priority for AMM and must continue to be a priority for all stakeholders beyond AMM's departure. In this respect, intensified socialisation efforts would be essential. In the continued reintegration process the Forum Bersama (Forbes) could be an important meeting place for GoI and GAM, major donors and civil society to ensure long term sustainability.

The issue of increased crime in Aceh was also discussed and it was pointed out that the responsibility for law and order is not and has never been a responsibility of the AMM but belongs solely to the police. The increased number of complaints can be seen as a sign of growing confidence in the police force.

Civil society has a significant position in Aceh and it is important to point out problems, but criticism must be constructive and it needs to facilitate improvement.

“The conflict is over and peace is irreversible. AMM has fulfilled its purpose. Now the ownership of the continued process must be taken forward and this is where the civil society should be active, constructive and supportive” said Pieter Feith.

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Note for editors:

- 1. The objective of AMM, which is a civilian mission comprising of monitors from the EU and five ASEAN countries, is to monitor and assist in the implementation of the commitments made by the Government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement in the Memorandum of Understanding, signed in Helsinki on 15 August 2005.*
- 2. The EU and ASEAN fully respect the territorial integrity of Indonesia and see the future of Aceh as being within the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia. The AMM is completely impartial by nature and does not represent or favour any of the parties.*

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