

**Speech by AMM Head of Mission, Pieter Feith
on the occasion of the last TNI departure ceremony**

29 December 2005

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would first like to take this opportunity to thank General Supiadin, the KODAM Commander, for inviting me to speak on this important occasion.

Since the 15th of September I have witnessed many departure ceremonies. These have all been conducted in accordance with the clear timelines and objectives of the Helsinki MOU. The TNI units that have left Aceh have done so with honour and with dignity. Through their dedication to duty and professional conduct, the TNI have supported the Unitary Republic of Indonesia. By relocating non-organic troops out of Aceh before the end of the year the TNI have fully complied with the MOU.

On the 15th of August, when the MOU was signed, a long and devastating conflict was brought to an end. The implementation of this agreement was a unique partnership between AMM and the TNI, working together in accordance with the wishes and directions of the President and the Commander-in-Chief, General Sutarto. The record of the past months shows few serious incidents involving TNI units. Low level incidents continue but these do not pose a serious threat to the peace process. When incidents have occurred, they have been managed by thorough and impartial investigation by the AMM District Offices and by consultation with the parties in the COSA.

GAM has decommissioned its arms and demobilised. They have confirmed in writing that all their weapons have been handed in. By doing so they have both complied with the MOU and demonstrated their commitment to it. As a result of this, stability and confidence levels have strengthened significantly.

Looking forward to the future, I expect that the responsibility for law and order will now be exercised by the police. The remaining organic forces will be responsible for upholding the external defence of Aceh, in accordance with the Helsinki agreement.

Peace implementation and the rebuilding of Aceh after the devastation caused by Tsunami are two mutually supportive processes. Without peace and stability, it would be difficult to take the reconstruction forward. Conversely, after AMM leaves Aceh, the re-integration and reconstruction processes will have to be embedded in longer term programmes benefiting all affected citizens of Aceh.

If there is a clear need, it is possible that engineers could be brought into Aceh to help support the reconstruction process after the Tsunami. Any such external support must be transparent. It would have to be for a limited time only and involve AMM so as not to undermine public trust and confidence in the peace process.

Many challenges remain on the road toward a full implementation of Helsinki but the peace process has now become irreversible. If invited by the Government of Indonesia, AMM is ready to continue its work, for a limited period, in order to strengthen confidence. We look forward to working with KODAM Iskander Muda.

Finally, I would like offer my very best wishes to the troops who are departing today to new assignments. Thanks to their contributions, peace has come to Aceh. There can be no doubt that a stable and secure environment is the best basis for rebuilding Aceh after the destruction caused by the Tsunami.

Thank you.