



PRESS STATEMENT

On the outcome of the meeting of the Commission on Security Arrangements (COSA) Banda Aceh, 2 December 2006

The 44th and final meeting of the Commission on Security Arrangements (COSA) was held on Saturday 2 December 2006 under the chairmanship of the Head of Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM), Mr. Pieter Feith. The delegation from the Government of Indonesia (GoI) was headed by Minister Sofyan Djalil with Major General Bambang Darmono in attendance. The Free Aceh Movement (GAM) delegation was led by Mr. Malik Mahmud with Zakaria Saman in attendance. The acting Governor of Aceh, Mustafa Abubakar, and officials from the provincial GoI institutions were also present.

In the meeting, Malik Mahmud told the parties that GAM was currently in a state of transition toward a political movement which would be complete by mid 2007. The parties welcomed his reaffirmation that GAM accepted Aceh as an integral part of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia.

The parties also welcomed the agreement between GoI and GAM to continue their discussions on ways and means of improving the Law on the Governing of Aceh (LoGA).

The parties remarked on the excellent cooperation since the signing of the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in August of last year. They agreed that the COSA mechanism has been an important vehicle for driving the peace process forward in a constructive and consensual fashion. The parties to the peace agreement thanked the AMM for having completed its tasks as mandated in the MoU and expressed their appreciation for AMM's support in creating sustainable peace in Aceh. The conflict is over and the peace process is on an irreversible track.

Looking ahead to the period following the AMM's departure on 15 December 2006, the AMM Head of Mission encouraged the parties to continue their face to face dialogue in the ongoing implementation of the MoU. In this regard he welcomed TNI's recent efforts to clarify its role and responsibility for upholding external defence of Aceh, a crucial step towards reconciliation and confidence building. Continued direct communication will further be important in the long term reintegration process with the support of the international community, including the European Commission, and through the Forum Bersama Damai (Forbes) as appropriate.

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All parties welcomed the upcoming Pilkada on 11 December as a milestone in the building of a democratic and peaceful Aceh and expressed confidence that the new democratically elected administration on all levels will continue to support the peace process in the spirit of the Helsinki MoU.

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