

STATEMENT BY CAMERON HUME
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SUBMITTED TO THE U.S. SENATE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
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Thank you, Madame Chairman, and Members of the Committee.

It is a great honor to come before this committee today as nominee for Ambassador to Indonesia. I would like to express my appreciation to President Bush and to Secretary Rice for the trust they have placed in me by making this nomination. If confirmed by the Senate, I promise to represent this country to the best of my abilities.

My qualifications for this position are those of a career Foreign Service Officer. Immediately upon completion of university studies I joined the Peace Corps as a volunteer and taught in Libya, my first experience in a developing country with a Muslim population. Shortly after departing Libya I joined the Department of State. Early assignments gave me the opportunity to learn several languages and to serve in interesting posts, including Italy, Syria, Tunisia, Lebanon, and the Holy See. For several

years I worked at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, first with responsibility for human rights and then for work in the Security Council.

Since 1997 I have been fortunate to represent the United States as chief of mission three times. Algeria was a country suffering from a tragic conflict in which the victims were ordinary civilians rather than the protagonists in the Islamist dissident forces or in the Algerian military. In part because the United States promoted reconciliation, democracy, and respect for the rule of law, the situation gradually improved. Service in South Africa brought new challenges, in particular finding ways the United States could encourage South Africa to confront the scourge of HIV/AIDS. I would like to pay tribute to many colleagues in USAID, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health, and the Department of Defense for the ground-breaking work they did to put in place programs that helped South Africa to confront this challenge.

For the past two years I have served as Charge d'Affaires in Sudan. Again I had the chance to witness and a unique opportunity to participate in the programs of the United States Government that aim to consolidate the peace in southern Sudan, to end the killing and to bind the wounds of the people of Darfur, and to support the emergence of a New Sudan. I cannot and would not claim more than partial success in any of these efforts, but I

know that resources and efforts from the United States are having a significant, positive impact.

With these experiences in mind, I approach the challenge of representing the United States in Indonesia with a sense of humility. Indonesia is the fourth most populous nation and the third largest democracy. It has the world's largest Muslim population. It is a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement and of ASEAN, and it is currently a member of the UN Security Council. It is a vast country sitting astride strategic sea routes. By any standard, the relations between the United States and Indonesia are of vital importance.

Since independence, Indonesia has enjoyed years of encouraging growth and suffered years of tumult. The political and economic indicators are all rising, particularly since the election of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in 2004, and Indonesia is becoming a real success story. Problems and challenges remain, and, if confirmed, I would give them my priority attention. But it is worthwhile to recall some of the positive indicators:

--economic growth has been gradually rising toward the level of 6 percent annually, a substantial improvement since the Asian financial crisis of the

last decade but not enough to create the jobs needed by an expanding work force.

--following the 2004 national election and subsequent elections at the regional and municipal levels, and substantial gains for civil society and the media, Freedom House has moved Indonesia into the category of Free.

--government and military reform have moved forward, including such steps as the separation of the Indonesian National Police from the armed forces, the adoption of anti-corruption measures, and the devolution of power to regional and local governments.

Today bilateral relations are improving. Indonesia is playing a more assertive role on the world stage, and is working as a force for international peace and stability; its commitment of troops to the UNIFIL deployment in Lebanon and vote for Security Council Resolution 1747 on Iran are notable recent examples. If confirmed, I'll work to enhance Indonesia's support for our key foreign policy priorities, including ensuring Iran does not develop nuclear weapons, advancing the Middle East peace process, and promoting a democratic transition in Burma. Indonesia's leadership is committed to the fight against terror within its borders, as the arrests and prosecutions of hundreds of terrorists in the past few years demonstrates. There have been no major terrorist incidents in Indonesia since October 2005, a huge

achievement for a country that had been devastated by attacks every year since the Bali bombing in 2002. Working with the United States, Indonesia is vastly improving its ability to protect vital sea lanes from terrorists and piracy.

Perhaps most remarkable this past year was the election of a former rebel leader as governor in Aceh, a province that had been wracked by armed separatist conflict for decades. Today we are helping the Acehnese ensure a lasting peace and to recover fully from the deadly tsunami that struck its shores in December 2004.

While we still have serious concerns with human rights in Indonesia, I would be remiss without acknowledging the dramatic and broad progress the country has made here too. Notably, in November of last year, a court sentenced the ringleader of the deadly attack that killed two Americans and one Indonesian in 2002 in Timika, Papua, to life in prison. In this case Indonesia's criminal justice system worked closely with our own law enforcement in building and prosecuting the case, and the sentence was just. Despite encouraging developments in Indonesia's efforts to build a strong criminal case in the murder of human rights activist Munir, this crime has not been fully resolved. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to continue to

press the government for a fair accounting of past human rights abuses committed by security forces in East Timor and elsewhere.

U.S. partnership and friendship can help this critically important country in the medium and long term. The assistance funds Congress provides address some of Indonesia's greatest needs, such as education, so tomorrow's generation will have the critical thinking skills that democratic citizens need. Our dollars go to economic and justice sector reform because Indonesia still needs to attract more investment, provide more jobs, and build the institutions and respect for rule of law that we hope will provide its democracy with a rock-solid foundation. They improve health care, critically by reducing the spread of infectious diseases. The new Millennium Challenge Corporation program launched this year aims to strengthen the anti-corruption efforts Indonesia has underway and to provide immunizations. And we are providing security assistance that aids in the fight against terror and contributes to the creation of a professional, civilian-run force.

In less than ten years Indonesia has travelled an astonishing distance: from the ruin of the Asian financial crisis and fall of a dictatorship to a vibrant democracy with solid economic growth. In many ways, though, these gains are fragile. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the

Congress and the full array of U.S. government agencies to promote the success of our policies and of Indonesia's democracy.

I would welcome the opportunity to answer questions.