

*Minister Mentor
Singapore*

27 January 2008

Dear Tutut

My wife and I share your grief upon hearing that Pak Harto has passed away. As you have lost your father, I have lost an old friend.

I first met Pak Harto in 1970 at a Non-aligned summit in Lusaka. Our two countries had just emerged from *Konfrontasi*, and there were still some lingering suspicions. But over time, we forged a rapport and a firm friendship which endured more than 30 years. Over the decades, he has shown himself to be a man of his word. Whatever he had promised, he would deliver. He was taciturn, but tenacious. He vigorously defended what he believed was in Indonesia's best interests. We found many areas for our two countries to work together. I shall always remember his fortitude on the Indo-China issue, and subsequently in bringing about reconciliation in the region.

Younger people do not know how disastrous was the economic situation in Indonesia before September 1965 when hyper-inflation was drowning Indonesia's economy. Under Pak Harto's leadership, he turned the country around and made Indonesia an economic success story. The regional financial crisis struck in 1997 and a series of mis-steps caused the rupiah to collapse and that brought about his downfall. He was not responsible for the foreign debt problems of many Indonesian companies and banks that triggered the rupiah's fall. I have no doubt history will accord Pak Harto a place of honour in Indonesia's history when his life's work is studied in calm perspective.

My wife and I send our deepest condolences to you and your family on your loss. We will always remember Pak Harto and Ibu Tien.

Yours sincerely



Ibu Siti Hardiyanti Rukmana
Jalan Cendana 8
Jakarta 10350
Indonesia