



Speech of Deputy Speaker of the Croatian Parliament Željko Reinter at a reception in commemoration of the 73rd anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of Indonesia

Honourable Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia,
Honourable Members of the Parliament and Government,
Distinguished ambassadors,
Dear guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is truly an honour to be here with you tonight. Allow me to warmly greet you on behalf of the Croatian Parliament, and myself personally.

I am very pleased that frequent and friendly communication between our countries confirms the common interest of deepening and strengthening the existing friendly cooperation. It is important that we have the support of all the highest political structures so that we can continue to expand cooperation in all areas.

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I cannot emphasise enough the importance of high level bilateral visits. I am very proud that parliamentary cooperation between our countries is excellent. I personally had the honour to meet with Vice Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia Mr. Taufik Kurniawan last year in the Croatian Parliament. In our conversation I stressed the importance of potential economic cooperation between our countries, especially in sectors of infrastructure, shipbuilding, pharmacy, IT sector, textile industry and defense industry.

Therefore, we hope that the Free Trade Agreement between Indonesia and the EU will enable greater access to the Indonesian market by removing technical barriers and through a transparent public procurement system.



Croatian government is working hard on the improvement of investment climate in Croatia and we hope that Indonesian investors will recognize these efforts. This approach is based on strategic position of Croatia in regard to ASEAN countries with advantages in geographic position as well as being a relatively new member of the EU. Therefore Croatia can play a role of natural gates for placement of Indonesian goods to the Central and Southeast European markets, but also to the EU. In this regard the main point might be Ports of Rijeka, Zadar and Ploče as a starting place of very important EU transportation corridors.

Another great potential of cooperation is in the food industry. Croatian companies that produce halal products are interested in placing their goods on Indonesian market and there are solid foundations for development of halal friendly tourism.

In this regard, it is important to remind that Croatia represents a highly successful model of inclusion of members of the Islamic community in the society. This model of coexistence can serve as an example. The Croatian Parliament has officially recognized Islam as an equal religion to Christianity in the Republic of Croatia in 1916, therefore making Croatia a second state in the non-Islamic world that has done so.

Tourism is another branch of economy that both our countries pay a lot of attention to. In 2017 almost 9 thousand Indonesian tourists visited Croatia, which is an increase of almost 35 percent compared to 2016. The establishment of direct airlines between the two countries as well as the signing of a Memorandum of Co-operation in the field of tourism would certainly affect a far larger number of tourists in both directions.

We especially support the cooperation between the Croatian and Indonesian Universities, aimed at deepening and expanding cooperation between the two academic communities, as well as encouraging student mobility, research in the field of education but also in related fields and development of joint research projects.



The establishment of friendly relations at the local level contributes to the building connections between the two countries. This kind of co-operation, as we noticed and welcomed, is intensifying recently. We welcome the recent establishment of the cooperation between Zagreb and Semarang, as well as Split and Surabaya.

We were all shaken by a devastating earthquake on islands Bali and Lombok in August this year. Therefore, we must pray for the nature to remain calm. We must set out our list of priorities and put protection of human lives as well as protection of environment and respect for nature's powers first.

At the end, honourable Ambassador, allow me to extend my sincere congratulations to you and all the people of Indonesia on national holiday – the 73rd anniversary of the Independence Day. I am sending my best wishes for prosperity, happiness and unity of your country and its people.

Thank you.