

ACHEH/SUMATRA
NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT
P.O. BOX 130, S-145 01 NORSBORG, SWEDEN
TEL/FAX: +46 8 531 91275

PRESS RELEASE

Geneva, 09.12.2002

Speech by Dr. Zaini Abdullah
Chief-Negotiator
Acheh-Sumatra National Liberation

Mr. Martin Griffiths,
Excellencies Ambassadors,
Excellency Minister and Delegation,
Honourable Guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Praise be to Allah for giving us patience and strength and for showing us the way to be where we are today in pursuit of peace and justice.

We feel privileged and fortunate to be part of this historic gathering in this beautiful city, the traditional place for peace making.

In this endeavor, we are most grateful to the Henry Dunant Centre under the Chairmanship of Mr. Martin Griffiths, his staff in Geneva and Acheh, as well the Centre's International Advisory Group, for their unwary efforts, patience and dedication during these last three years as our faithful partner on this road to peace.

We would also like to express our gratitude to the international community who has contributed so much for the realization of this Agreement – a historic new beginning of a long-standing and challenging process that began in 1873.

The document that we are signing today is the first step towards peace, with the cessation of hostilities that is absolutely necessary, as no just solution will be possible with the escalation of violence taking place everyday now in our homeland.

It is the aspiration of our people to live in peace and to take their rightful place among the civilized community of the world. It is our duty to assure that their legitimate and basic rights are protected in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The achievement made today is the direct result of the struggle and sacrifices of our people. It is our pledge and commitment to accept whatever the democratic decision they take. We hope that this peace process will lead to the opportunity for them to express their wish in a peaceful and safe manner.

In the name of our gallant and loyal people in Aceh, we would also like to express our profound gratitude to all friends in the NGOs, mass media, humanitarian workers and human rights activists who have been and are still risking their lives in the effort to unveil the human tragedy being inflicted for so long and still on-going at this very moment in Aceh. Their noble sacrifice will never be forgotten.

The realization of peace in Aceh will give the Acehnese the opportunity to rebuild their future without fear and to contribute to the regional economic, political and security stability especially in South East Asia, and indeed in the world. It is well-known that Aceh is endowed with rich natural resources and an industrious people. It is thus our challenge to rise to the occasion in order to take our rightful place among the civilized community of the world.

Thank you.

Thank you,

Dr. Zaini Abdullah
Chief-Negotiator
Aceh-Sumatra National Liberation Front
Geneva, 10 December 2002