Special Speech

Emil Salim (President's Council of Advisors, Indonesia)

Special Speech, November 16, 2009

RASHOMON IN CLIMATE CHANGE

His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince,
Your Excellency Former Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu,
Chairman of Global Environmental Action, Juro Saito,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear Friends.

Post-war Japan's film-industry was famous for its artistic and moral prone movies that astonished the world. One of the famous films that got the 1953 Academy Award was *Rashomon* created by Director *Akira Kurosawa*. The film unfolds the views of four characters of witnessing the murder of a woman's husband. Each of the four characters, a bandit, the murdered samurai, the samurai's wife and a woodcutter has different viewpoint, perception, judgment and personal interest on why the husband was murdered.

And we, the movie audience, could not easily come to a verdict on who is the real murderer. The film demonstrated that truth has many faces.

The global environment today is "murdered" by the disease of "global warming and climate change". For thousands of year's global environment has given life to diverse genes, species and ecosystems with fresh air, fertile soil, clean water and comfortable climate. In such global environment, human beings came into existence to live and multiply.

Unlike flora and fauna, human beings have brains and the capacity to create. Man discovers the power of energy in fossil fuel. Steam engines soon emerge. Human beings became able to create "man-made environments", empowered by fossil fuel based energy that ignited industrial revolution.

Nature creates genes, species and ecosystems. Human beings however, cannot create but are only able to transform elements of nature, such as trees into wooden houses and fossil fuel into energy. But by transforming nature, man creates pollution that is not absorbed by and remained in nature.

Before the industrial revolution 1780 total polluted concentration of CO_2 emissions was 280 ppm. Since industrialization and subsequent economic growth, concentration of CO_2 emissions grew to 315 ppm (1930), 330 ppm (1970), 360 ppm (1990), 380 ppm (2008) and if world development continue the "business as usual" model, by 2050 will reach 500 ppm.

The *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* warned us that the world needs to stabilize concentration of CO_2 emissions by 2050 at the threshold level of 450-550 ppm with global temperature to rise to 2.0-2.8 degrees Celsius above the average global temperature of pre-industrialization level of the year 1780.

A global temperature higher than this threshold of 2.0-2.8 degrees Celsius will change climate, melt ice and snow in North Pole and Antarctic, water molecules will expand and sea level will rise. Heat waves will increase storms and hurricanes. Rain season will be unpredictable, shorter and more intense, while dry season will be longer and dryer. Fresh water will be scarce. Desertification will increase. Erosion of genes, species and ecosystems will take place at massive scale. New diseases will erupt. Global environment will be hotter and change climate that leads towards massive destructions of genes, species and ecosystems. The rising sea level will cause islands to submerge. This is not just a theory. In Indonesia, we know these threats well. We already lost at least 29 uninhabited islands. And we will loose hundreds more by the year 2050.

Like in *Rashomon*, we ask, who is the villain in this mass destruction of the global environment? Man has the ingenuity in creating man-made environment with science and technology. Man has been able to create man-made energy from fossil fuel. Man must now also be responsible to create alternative to destructive fossil fuel through science and technology.

While the global environment is one, the contemporary world however is not one. It is splintered into developed and developing countries, rich and poor countries, high technology advanced nations and the low technology underdeveloped nations.

And because of these differences in stages of development, the cause and the consequences of "killing" the global environment is different.

During 1994-2004 CO_2 emissions in 8 countries are as follow:

CO_2 EMISSIONS 2004
(Million metric tons)

Country	Ranking	Emission 2004	CO2 emission 1994-2004
United States	1	5,912	13%
China	2	4,707	**68%**
Russia	3	1,685	0%
Japan	4	1,262	16%
India	5	1,113	**53%**
UK	8	580	2%
Brazil	19	337	**26%**
Indonesia	20	308	**48%**

Source: Bacon and Bhattacharya, *Growth and CO_2 emissions*, Environment Department, World Bank, 2007

Because of dismantling inefficient polluting industries, Russian CO_2 emissions level has been low. Important is to note that developing countries show **high** CO_2 emissions growth rate, while developed countries have **low** emissions growth rate. It is projected therefore that in due course of development, the CO_2 emissions level of China will soon surpass US, India will surpass Japan and Brazil-Indonesia will surpass UK in the next decades.

Because developing countries' CO_2 emissions are rising fast, the developed countries demand that developing countries too must put a cap on their CO_2 emissions as requirement in the new protocol to be negotiated in Copenhagen, December 2009.

If we look to the issue of CO_2 emission from the per capita point of view we obtain the following picture:

EMISSIONS AND GDP PER CAPITA 2004

Country	Emission ton per capita	GDP $ PPP per capita
US	20.01	36,234
UK	9.75	29,406
Japan	9.87	27,080
Russia	11.71	9,018
Brazil	1.83	7,406
China	**3.60**	**5,441**
Indonesia	**1.40**	**3,245**
India	**1.02**	**2,831**

Source: World Bank, 2007

On per capita basis **all** developing countries have **low** income and **low** emission ton level. While developed countries have **high** income and **high** emission ton per capita level.

If developing countries must reduce their CO_2 emission ton level, the question is how far can they go down **without** jeopardizing their responsibility to raise people's per capita income which is only 10-15% of the developed countries income per capita level?

Developing countries can pursue a different growth path, which leads toward a low carbon society, mitigating CO_2 emission and adaptation to a new model of development with renewable energy, clean technology, desalination of sea water, heat-proof resistance rice seeds, hybrid automotives, low carbon mass transportation, green building architecture, compact urban development – all new features of development that is based on a different and low carbon development technology.

But these technologies are available to the developing countries from developed countries only at a price in a free market that ensures the protection of intellectual property rights.

Developing countries meanwhile, have to cope with survival first in this turbulent global world. They initially need to rely on foreign developed countries' economy to pull them out of the poverty hole. But recent global financial crisis have demonstrated that the financial and banking architecture of developed countries have serious internal weaknesses that has been able to plunge the global economy into a big crisis trap while taking along the developing economies as well.

Indonesia is an example of a country that has followed diligently the rules of the market economy in a political democratic setting. But experiences have shown that external factors are always hampering the steady efforts of Indonesia to cope with poverty, political stability and environmental sustainability.

External factors, such as the recent international financial crisis, have raised the Indonesian unemployment rate. The need for free, open and direct election has substantiated our political democracy, but at a high financial burden. And Indonesia is situated on the verge of the "ring of fire" that provides fertile soil but also eruption of earthquakes that raise the sufferings of the poor.

In the latest West Sumatra earthquake, September 2009, several villages have been completely disappeared from earth due to landslide. More than a thousand people perished and more than thousands houses and school building completely destroyed. And this happened just when we commemorated 5 years of the Aceh Tsunami in 2004 which killed more than 200,000 people. This West Sumatra earthquake is one of the many worst natural disasters that Indonesia has to endure.

May I express herewith my appreciation and gratitude for the assistance provided by the Japanese Government and people to reduce the sufferings of the Indonesian people, victims of the West Sumatra earthquake.

But in spite of all this we, Indonesia, must move on.

Under these circumstances it is understandable that every dollar earned by the country must be devoted to poverty alleviation. It also means that every dollar earned and channeled for other purposes, such as buying technology for achieving low carbon society in accordance to the rule of Intellectual Property Rights has a high cost of sacrificing money to be used for poverty eradication.

Based on these experiences, it is understandable that developing countries, including Indonesia, develop and adhere to the following principles of global development:

First, the recognition and implementation of the developing countries position on "common but differentiated responsibilities";

Second, the acceptance of developing countries fair right of utilizing atmosphere for development, especially to serve the poor. The rights have been used thus far by developed

nations for their own development. It is now our turn as developing country to utilize atmosphere for our development;

Third, that the overriding trust of the people in a developing country is that their government strive for poverty alleviation to reach for a humane standard of life through global development;

Fourth, that sustainable development with low carbon and low poverty level requires transfer of technology and financial funding from the developed to the developing economies that indicates global solidarity to save the only one livable planet;

It is within these principles that we must promote technologies and policies toward a Low Carbon Society and save the globe from its extinction.

I therefore applaud Japan's initiative that has always been in the forefront of the developed nations' effort, including the landmark Kyoto Protocol, to make this world a better place for all humankind.

Prime Minister Hatoyama's initiative to pledge in reducing greenhouse emission and ideas to bolster low carbon technology transfer is an important step toward achieving the goals.

Other Japan's civil society's initiatives, including the one taken by Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), and Asia Pacific Forum for Environment and Development (APFED), to name a few, in empowering stakeholders in developing countries to undertake research activities and effectively take concrete measures in the fields are highly appreciated.

In closing, almost similar like the movie story of *Rashomon*, each nation has its reasons based on his viewpoint, perception, judgment and personal interests in confronting the issue of "how to settle the issue of killing life in the global environment."

Unlike the movie viewers of the film *Rashomon*, where the truth has many faces, we, the humanity knows only one undeniable face of truth, that the unsustainable polluting industrialization of the 20th century is the villain that has the ability to "kill" the global environment. This unsustainable polluting industrial model must be changed into a low carbon clean technology industrial development towards a low carbon society.

But to be viable it must be with no strings attached in a world with interdependency living in harmony with nature and in a society without inequity and poverty.

Tokyo, 16 October 2009
Emil Salim – Jakarta, Indonesia

Rashomon in Climate Change

2009 GEA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

BY EMIL SALIM
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TOKYO, JAPAN

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Thank you