



EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC INDONESIA

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Press Release

Tlačová správa

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“Islam, Gender and Democratization in Indonesia”

1 On the 26th of May 2011, the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Bratislava in Slovakia collaboration with the Slovak Foreign Policy Association (SFPA) hosted the seminar with the title “Islam, Gender and Democratization in Indonesia”. The seminar took place at the Slovak Foreign Policy Association Library situated in Bratislava at the Hviezdoslavovo Square 14, 2nd floor.

2 There were two themes that were approached by the speakers of the seminar. One was “The role of Moslem women in Indonesian Democratization Process” and on the other hand the “Democratization in Indonesia: Changes in foreign policy agenda”. The seminar was held in English language, without simultaneous translation.

3 The thematic of the seminar had the potential to be of high interest to the Slovak people especially because it offered the opportunity to get information that would be not so facile to obtain otherwise. Slovakia is a country where the majority of population is of Christian religion so this seminar also created the chance for people to become more familiar with the Indonesian way of thinking regarding the themes approached in the seminar. Those who attended the seminar could get acknowledged with some facts such as the Democracy and the election process in Indonesia. For example the country with a population of 240 million organizes every five years:

- At least 1 president election that can be yielded to 2 elections
- 1 parliamentary election
- 33 provinces elections
- 349 regency elections
- 91 municipal elections

This means a total of 475 elections and this is why Indonesia is now recognized as “the capital of elections of the world!”

Another important fact is that Indonesia has the largest moderate Muslim population which is “a living proof that Democracy, Islam and Modernity can go hand-in-hand harmoniously”.

In Indonesia there are 6 acknowledged religions:

- Islam (85%)
- Protestant (9%)
- Catholic (3%)
- Hindu (2%)
- Buddha (0.7%)
- Khonghucu (Confucianism) (0.3%)

Every religion has the same rights to have Religious Holidays instead of percentage appearances. ($\Sigma = 18$ days).

Another interesting fact that the people found out at the seminar is that some people believe that Islam has no room for women participation in public space, including the participation in political institutions. But Indonesian experience is different. The woman activists became one of the main actors criticized Soeharto with authoritarianism during New Order Era. In Indonesia, the Moslem women campaigned for 30% woman quota in decision making institutions. Their long struggle followed by their success in 2008 Election Law that insisted political parties seriously gave 30% space for woman candidates in their candidates list. The 2009 election then resulted in the increasing number of women in national parliament and local parliament.

Bratislava, 26 May 2011