

## **Welcome address by Dr Andi Muhammad Syakir, Director General of IAARD on the occasion of the Second Global Consultation on Farmers' Rights.**

Excellency Ambassador *Stig Traavik*

Distinguished participants

Ladies and Gentlement,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you here in Bali, Indonesia, to participate at the Second Global Consultation on Farmer Right. I wish to thank the Norwegian government for co-hosting this event and the Treaty Secretariate for supporting and facilitating this activity. This event will be a great opportunity for us to introduce our country, in particular our effort to conserve and sustainably use genetic resources, and enable us to learn how other countries implement farmers' right.

Indonesia is an archipelago of 17.504 islands, occupied by .254.9.million people that consist of 1128.etrnct groups. Almost 50 % of the population are farmers at various agro-ecosystem and practiced various farming system. Rice is the staple food for indonesian, and therefore get the highest priority in our agriculture. In additon we also give high priority to other source of food, in particular source of protein such as maize, soybean and beef-cattle.

Agriculture development in Indonesia, however, is still faced with many challenges. Most farmers' in Indonesia are small-scale farmers with land-ownership less than 0.5 ha and lives in poverty at rural areas. The production of some basic food sources such as rice, soybean, maize, beef-cattle and sugarcane should keep pace with the population growth, which expected to reach 300 million in 2050, and changes in consumer preference. The climate change will hamper the effort to increase food production and might endanger food security. Food production will also have to compete with production of bio-energy raw materials both in land-uses and the use of food crops as bio-fuel. There is also a need to facilitate the processes of transformation from fossil-based economy to biological based economy as the new paradigm in Indonesia economic development.

In order to face such challenges, the government has launched a program of special effort to increase production of rice, soybean, and maize. This special effort

will inevitably will use modern crop varieties with certified seed and monoculture system in most targeted regions, although we also recognize the use local varieties or locally adapted varieties in some regions. At the same time we have also launched the program to establish one-thousand seed villages which link the formal and informal seed systems and enable famers community in a village to self-reliance on seed for their farming.

### **Ladies and gentlement**

There is seemingly a contradiction between farmers right and the effort to increase production, particularly if farmers right interpreted only as the right to save, exchanges and sell seed, and associated with the use of local varieties; whereas the effort to increase production rely on the use of modern varieties and certified seed. However, both effort might be compromised and complementary if we could develop national seed legislation with proper participation of the stakeholders.

We should also remember that farmers right is not only about seed or seed system, it is also about protection of traditional knowledge, the right to participate in decision making and the sharing of benefit arising from the use of genetic resources. Implementation of this right depend on the culture, the political system and the natural resources of a country, and therefore will vary among countries. However, through this consultation we can share experience in implementing these right and use such experiences, if aplicable, to adjust our national law for implementing such rights.

Finaly, I expect that this global consultation will deepen our understanding of farmers right and come up with common understanding on certain issues, although we might still have some differences on many issues. I also hope you enjoy your stay in Bali, an island that in the past was well known than Indonesia.

Thank you

Dr Andi Muhammad Syakir  
Director General of IAARD