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By

H E Harmoko
Distinguished participants,
Ladies and Gentleman,

In the first place I wish to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the participants who have taken the time to take part in the Seminar on: The Socio-Economic Impact of Broadcast Satellites in the Asia-Pacific Region”.

As a matter of fact today’s Seminar is the result of excellent cooperation between the Department of Information of the Republic of Indonesia and AMIC, the Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre.

Special thanks should be extended to AMIC and special credit should be given to it for having made it possible to hold the gathering in Jakarta.

Today’s Seminar is of particular importance as in today’s world information and communication through
broadcast satellites and other media have become the core needs of mankind's daily life.

It is with increasing conviction to note that the modern society can not pursue his destiny in a positive manner without information.

For us peoples of the Asia-Pacific Region, information and communication are pertinent issues that have a far greater meaning and impact. They are by far not only necessities, but most of all one of the basic requirements for a better life that have to be accomplished by all of us.

We are therefore very pleased and honoured to be playing host of this important Seminar. I hope that we have succeeded in making us all comfortable, so that all participants will have ample opportunities to stretch their capabilities to prepare substantial decisions for the benefit of the community in Asia-Pacific.

Moreover this meeting provides the forum for cohesion and cooperation between communication experts in Asia and the Pacific. The spirit and aspiration that are embedded in the minds of communication experts must shed their light on the proceedings of the Seminar.

We shall be taking a close look once again at the implication and implementation of communication and
information technology that is making way into the last
decade of the century.

Obviously the use of communication and information
technology in some countries of the Asia-Pacific region
is making tremendous steps forward.
The satellite is the most important tool, the use of
which is of special significance, as it emphasizes the
profound impact on the socio-economic conditions with its
far-reaching and thorough effect.

Some countries in the Asia-Pacific region, among
others: the People's Republic of China, India, Japan,
Australia, Indonesia and others have their own
satellites.

The broadcasts transmitted through those satellites
contain programmes of information and cultural items
which are received speedily and accurately in the various
areas, passing beyond any judicial and social-cultural
boundaries of other countries.

Meanwhile the use of satellite broadcasts for
development purposes in Asia-Pacific countries has
increased rapidly, bringing about far reaching social-
economic implications, at the same time accelerating the
process of social change moving towards modernisation.

However not many attempts have been made
systematically so far to investigate the phenomenon and
to evaluate the technological impact in the context of a broader socio-economic environment of our region.

Indonesia is one of the countries in the Asia-Pacific region that has put the Palapa satellite in operation in the framework of sustaining the development era.

In anticipating the era of information community in Asia and the Pacific, we hold the view with increasing conviction how important the role of technology is for the progress of mankind, in particular in relation to information technology which has direct bearing on the satellite technology, the various electronic media technology, biotechnology and other kinds of advanced technology.

Focussing on the social and economic influence of satellite broadcasts in the Asia-Pacific Region, we cannot elude the impact of information technology in the global communication network.

We are aware that in the midst of establishing the ideal cooperation among the Asia and Pacific countries, as well as with other countries in the world, important changes occur in communication and information technology.

Those changes are clearly affecting all countries of the world as a global Syndrome. Almost none is now exempted from the use of highly developed communication and information technology.
The global trend in the life of mankind towards the end of the century seems to be the coming up of this information century in various countries, including the Asia-Pacific Region.

The existence of information industry products in the form of computerisation, global telephone, fax, videotext, teletext, the utilization of various electronic media products, is growing on a widespread scale.

The progress of technology has elevated the electronic media to a position, where it is directly entrusted with efforts of promoting the spirit of cooperation among nations.

The Domestic Communication Satellite "Palapa" is one of the advanced technological product that has been in operation since 1976. Hence it becomes the most positive sustaining force for the growth and development of communication of neighbouring countries around Indonesia, the Palapa is able to cover the thousands of Islands of Indonesia.

This accomplishment has obviously spurred the countries in Asia and the Pacific to undertake exchange of information and to plan programmes in the light of the information century and to incorporate strategy and communication policy into development plans.
In this regard Indonesia is highly conscious of the information century that sweeps the world. This why it has early joined the ranks of satellite owners countries.

The considerations are not only based on the strategic interest of our policy, since Indonesia is an Archipelago that consists of thousands of islands that have to be connected with each other through the Domestic Satellite Communication System. The system not only strengthens the spirit of unity and oneness, but serves also as the most effective means to disseminate information, to raise the welfare of the community.

Geographical conditions are part of the determining factors that influence the range of coverage, dissemination and circulation of mass media products. The print media for instance are for the time being still concentrated in urban areas, but radio and television programmes through the domestic communication satellite are now able to reach far away corners of Indonesia. This substantially shortens the duration for receiving information by all layers of the Indonesian community.

Those facts are partial solutions towards the use of electronic media and advanced communications system, that can now be observed in joint programmes with our neighbouring country.
The broadcast of Television news items "ASIAVISION" in the region of Asia and the Pacific is now possible thanks to the support given by PALAPA and INTELSAT.

The electronic media are able to exert rapprochement, bringing closer together in cordial relations the communities in the Asia-Pacific Region. Through the services of satellites, as communication experts put it: the world becomes "a global village". In this regard our region constitutes as matter of fact "a regional community".

We in Indonesia as a developing country have the Palapa at our disposal, the Domestic Communication Satellite since July 1976 and we now are in the stage of drawing up the policy for an Integrated National Communication system.

The rapid advance in communication technology whose development is intensely monitored by all members of ITU-International Telecommunication Union, concerns the integration of telecommunication technique and computer. The use of fibre optic technique and satellite in telecommunication is considered to be one of the giant move forward, enabling high speed transmission with intensified capacity.

The globalisation trend of the growth of communication and information technology, marks also the period of change of dialogue and interaction among the Asia-Pacific
countries that is more dynamic in character, the frequency and intensity of which is increasing. Dynamic interaction and dialogue do not relate only to communication and information that are currently carried out, but also involve the economic and cultural fields. As such the national communication systems in the Asia-Pacific countries gradually contribute to the formation of a global communication network.

Factors that encourage the dynamic development of global communication in the Asia-Pacific Region, put the creation of cooperation as the main goal in order to prevent conflicts among the countries in this region.

Forms of cooperation among Asia-Pacific countries in one way or another have been firmly established, among others through various organisations such as: CAJ, OANA, ANEX, ASEAN-COCI, ABU - Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union and other forms of organizations.

One of the aims of such regional organisations is to overcome the spill-over of information flow between developed and developing countries in Asia-Pacific and the discrepancies in the flow of information among the Asia-Pacific countries themselves. However the exchange of news within the Asia-Pacific Region itself has not yet attained the ideal goal set by the New International Information and Communication Order.
The latest data indicate that the flow of news for the bigger part still originates from the principal news-agencies, such as: AFP, UPI, AP, Reuter as well as TV Film News agencies: VISNEWS, WTN, ABC, EVN, CNN and radio and television organisations from advanced countries.

The progress of the information and communication technology in advanced countries has increasingly strengthened their principle of putting emphasis on the understanding of: Free Flow of Information.

Whereas most of the developing countries put stress on the connotation of: "Free and Balanced Flow of Information".

The subject once again has been extensively dealt with during the UNESCO General Assembly in Paris late last year. The relevant topic at that time was among others: "Communication in the Service of Humanity".

This indicates that utilization of information technology within the global communication network exerts a great deal of influence concerning socio-cultural and economic life in advanced as well as in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific Region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The use of broadcast satellite technology has enhanced the comfort and enjoyment in life.

There is however the inherent implication that may create new problems and may give rise to the cropping up of
social conflicts and the change of value system, as receivers of the new technology may uphold different set of cultural values.

Moreover the steady flow of cultural values, brought about by broadcast satellites, hence utilized by the mass media for further dissemination to the community with different cultural backgrounds, may cause change in cultural pattern and behaviour in the form of adaptation in the positive sense of the word.

In fact contact among cultures is not a new appearance in history. Cultural exchanges occurred in many ways peacefully among nations since mankind's life on earth. Those interactions in the cultural field are the elements that accelerate the growth of civilization.

To us in Indonesia, the problems we have to face concretely in relation to the impact of Broadcast Satellite are:

1. The fact that the Indonesian community is a heterogenous one, consisting of various ethnic groups with different cultural, religious, beliefs and historical background. This complex community is undergoing change in value system as consequence of development which in fact is a process of renewals in all sectors of life.
2. The steady flow of information and communication carried by modern mass media through satellites substantiates the acceleration of development communication, in particular in the field of socio-economic and trade.

3. The use of communication satellite services have prompted the necessity to re-inforce the National Resilience, covering various aspects of life of the community, ideologically, politically, economically, socio-culturally as well as in the field of National Defence and Security.

4. The ever increasing cooperation among countries in the Asia-Pacific region will be enhanced by various factors and conditions regarding national resilience that prevails in each country, strengthening at the end of the Regional Resilience in Asia and the Pacific.

In this relation the Indonesian community is endeavouring to nurture and develop value systems that are in accordance with development requirements. The augmentation of the value system which does fit into the requirements of progress, must be founded on the values, embodied in our State Philosophy, the Pancasila, so that the modernisation process in Indonesia is in fact an actualization process of the Indonesian people,
fulfilling the requirements of time, taking into account the importance of national identity.

The challenge that lies ahead of us is how to scheme the mode of the shifting values of time, so that the Indonesian People will hold the universal characteristic of a modern nation, but still retain its own specific identity and cultural background, based on the Pancasila principles in strengthening the National Resilience and the unity of the Archipelago.

In the process of utilizing the communication satellite technology, what is of paramount importance is that we should conduct a deep and comprehensive research, aiming at the correct choice of alternatives, which in turn should produce the right and most useful, effective product for the betterment of the community at large.

In the context of the Asia-Pacific Region, I believe what we really need at the moment is to design a concrete, realistic joint programme which we are able to implement.

No matter how small our contribution is, it provides something to realize our goal we have in mind. We have still a long way to go.

I feel it is necessary to be forward-looking in contemplating our next efforts, which always commence with the first step and further continue with increasing vigor.
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The most developed aspect in the use of communication and information technology in Indonesia is the nation's economic progress.

The involvement of information in the economic field has its three components:

1. Information worker;
2. Information goods (communication and information hardware);
3. Information Service.

Any information/communication activity always involves a certain number of workers, who are to transmit messages or to process incoming data. The preparation of messages or the data processing requires hardware, supported by the services of experts, such as consultants, lawyers and communication experts.

Seen from the point of view of the information utilization and information supply the following has to be taken into account:

1) The main activity of the information industry is to produce information ready for use, such as radio and television broadcast industry or the industry that produces information hardware, commonly called: primary information industry.
2) Production industry that makes use of information as supporting element, commonly called the secondary information industry.

Both the government and the private sector can manage the primary and secondary information industry.

The information industry is furthermore classified into various sectors, among others: production, dataprocessing, distribution/circulation, information equipments, information services and consumer services.

The establishment and the management of communication/information satellites involve two aspects; the primary information industry, as the satellite functions as disseminator and processor of information, and the second aspect is as supporting tools.

By understanding the relationship between economy and information it is therefore clear to understand the opportunities that are available in the field of economy in relation to information, among others:

1. The stepping up of the work spirit and the encouragement of the people's participation in development.

2. As source of income for the state and the community.

3. The increase of work opportunities.
4. As a mode of skill, knowledge, technology and management improvement for both the information consumer and the information worker.

Eventhough the positive impact on the progress and growth of the economic development is quite strong, we have to admit too that the negative impact is still there, directly and indirectly.

The negative impact on the social-economic sector may emerge on the surface through the social-political aspect which in turn may have its bearing on to social economic field.

The social-political impact will not be dealt with as the purpose of this Seminar indicates, but it should be kept in mind that it is quite impossible to merely speak about the social-economic factor, in case we wish to complete our way of thinking adequately.

Generally speaking the operation of any intricate equipment and infrastructure hardware as product of advanced technology is not confined to boundaries, sovereignty of countries, ethics and judicial regulations among countries.

Although we are quite aware, that hardware equipment does not know boundaries and state sovereignty, but it is clear that the individuals who do the planning, who select and install and operate the equipment, are
highly conscious of the existence of boundaries and state sovereignty which should not be violated in any manner. We should therefore pay enough attention to those aspects and problems. Negative aspect yields negative consequence and will at last exert negative social-economic impact.

From the analysis of the information industry; the production, data processing, distribution, information equipments, information services and information consumers sectors, we will be able to pinpoint the challenging factors from information on the social-economic field. These are:

1. The world communication hardware and software at the moment, are mostly dominated by advanced countries, felt by the developing countries as being less just. The transfer of technology to the developing countries, in particular to Asia and the Pacific proceeds very slow. A situation like this is less in conformity with the development and requirements of time.

2. The advancement of technology, in particular in the field of information and communication infrastructure they have been used is not only improves the standard of living, but also producing side-effects in the economic field in developing countries in Asia and the Pacific, that is: part of the community pursues a
consumptive way of life and less develops a productive attitude.

3. The problem of obstacles in the marketing of information service products, is closely related to the problem of freedom of information and flow of information, where there prevails different concept and outlook between advanced and developing countries, especially in the Asia-Pacific countries.

In the domain of information production, the developing countries are in a disadvantageous position, as they act more as users, so much so that information commodity for developing countries does not provide any profitable income.

4. The problem of spillover.

5. The problem of protection of copyrights for radio and television products.

To overcome those challenging factors, it is highly necessary to establish a more close cooperation among the Asia-Pacific Countries in various fields.

Collaboration in the field of information and communication among the countries in the Asia-Pacific Region has to be resolved as best as possible. The reason for this is, that the conditions in each country are different, both in the social cultural field and at the social-economic level.
In the framework of cooperation, utilizing the advanced technology, it is necessary to establish a mechanism and procedure that are able to maintain a balance between the countries in receiving and disseminating information.

The use of broadcast satellites should be geared towards reinforcing the economic resilience of the countries in the Asia-Pacific region. Economic resilience is to strengthen the ability to raise the community's welfare, so that the preservation and self-sustainance of the nation can be upheld.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In finalising my presentation on the subject, "The Social-Economic Impact of Broadcast Satellites in the Asia-Pacific Region", I would like to draw some conclusions:

1. In the Asia-Pacific Region, information and communication have a highly important and strategic role to play. Those elements are not only necessities in man's life, but they are one of the important sources for the pursuit of a better life for which we have to strive.

2. The use of broadcast satellite for development in the Asia-Pacific Region has grown considerably and has a
widespread coverage, far-reaching social-economic implication. It accelerates the process in social change towards modernisation.

3. Substantial changes have occurred in the field of information and communication, where almost no country in the world is exempted in the use of the various intricate communication and information products. The globalisation trend in the sector of human's life in approaching the end of the century, marks obviously the establishment of the beginning of an information century in various countries, including the Asia-Pacific Region.

4. The globalization trend in the increasing growth of communication and information technology, has its impact too in the national communication systems in the Asia-Pacific countries, which will in stages establish the global communication network.

5. The use of broadcast satellite technology in the Asia-Pacific Region besides providing comfort and enjoyment in life, gives rise to implication that provokes new problems, in particular in the social-cultural sector, as the receiver of the new technology possesses a different set of background.

Starting from those main concepts, it is of paramount importance in the process of utilizing satellite technology that we have to prepare ourselves as best as we can, so that the use of the technology can
improve the welfare of the people, especially in the Asia-Pacific Region.

6. The use of communication satellites services have prompted the necessity to strengthen the National Resilience.

7. The ever-increasing cooperation among the countries of the Asia-Pacific Region will be determined by factors and conditions of the National Resilience in each country which at the end will strengthen the Regional Resilience in the Asia-Pacific Region.

Ladies and Gentleman,

Those were the main points to which I have to draw your attention in this Seminar.

I now have the pleasure with your approval—Ladies and Gentlemen—to officially open the Seminar on the "Social-Economic Impact of Broadcast Satellites in the Asia-Pacific Region".

Thank you.

Jakarta, July 25, 1990

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

HARMOKO