
International Hall of Fame Award

By

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President of the Republic of Indonesia**

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This is indeed a day to remember. I left Fort Leavenworth many years ago, but I swear it feels like it was only yesterday. But before anything else, please accept, on behalf of my government and all Indonesians, our deepest condolences and sympathies to the victims of Hurricane Katrina. It may offer little comfort to those who lost their homes, their livelihoods, their loved ones, to be reminded of a recent instance of nature's wrath.

The people of Aceh suffered gravely when nature unleashed the tsunami on December 26, 2004, just the day after Christmas, and the road to recovery is long and difficult. But if such a catastrophe could bring any good, it is that it brought communities together across Indonesia and indeed the world. We reach out to each other in times of trouble, and in the case of Aceh, that sense of unity has brought a world of good. The government of Indonesia and the secessionist rebels of Aceh have made peace now, after decades of fighting, for the sake of rebuilding the province. Hurricane Katrina may too harbor blessings not yet seen.

In today's world, when the meaning of security is broadened beyond traditional definition, from war and military conflict to terrorism and trans-national crimes to absolutely poverty and deadly communicable diseases to degradation of environment, the roles and task of military organization also varies. The tsunami that hit Aceh and Nias Indonesia that caused the chain of command to manage the implementation of the biggest military operation other than war, including the contribution from U.S. military and volunteers.

I want to talk about this sense of togetherness today, as well as about honor, duty, nationhood, and faith which I was taught from childhood and through the years here, at Fort Leavenworth. I remember vividly walking through halls of this building as if it was yesterday. Nothing much has changed in terms of its physical structure, but I cannot possibly imagine the number of lives that have been changed by this institution. My year here at Fort Leavenworth was valuable not only in terms of the educational experience it gave me, but also in making me a better officer, a better person, and a better leader.

I still remember when we, the students of Command and General Staff College (CGSC), shared the same feeling and kept saying individually "This is the best year in my life." In a year of thought course our daily lives were filled with seminar and group discussions, writing papers, exams, and even field observation aiming to master our knowledge and skill on, among others, operational arts and tactics, leadership, management, combat training and professional ethics. After graduating from the Indonesian Military Academy, and having many military assignments, training and education back home, I had the luxury of being sent to the United States for further training, including here at Fort Leavenworth. I am honored to be the sixth Indonesian to be inducted into the Fort Leavenworth International Hall of Fame.

Judging by the two-hundred some inductees from some sixty nations, all of whom reached great heights of achievements in their countries, Fort Leavenworth obviously provides invaluable training to its students. And as with the other inductees, I would not have been sent here without the friendship of the United States, a mutual friendship that proudly continues today. It is a vital friendship, for these educational exchanges allows us to learn about each other, and from one another as soldiers, as nations, as citizens of the world. I learned from my peers here that honor and duty crosses national boundaries. We learned from each other the value of democracy, of human rights, as well as the importance of sovereignty. We learned from each other how to move forward in this tenuous obstacle course called nation-building. That immeasurable experience was strengthened by the friendships

made during my stay. Friendships, between nations as well as individuals, are what relieve us in times of crisis. We must strengthen these friendships and build on this inter-activeness.

Our togetherness here at Fort Leavenworth, studying and sharing ideas and experiences with military officers from many countries, of many nationalities has helped me. Five years after leaving this institutions I was assigned as United Nations Chief Military Observer in Bosnia, accomplishing peace keeping cooperation in that troubled country.

I studied at Fort Leavenworth in 1990 - 1991, the world was in the midst of fundamental changes. The Berlin Wall had been smashed down, the Soviet Union was on the verge collapsing and the Cold War was seeing its final days. But it was not only the geopolitical environment that was shifting; military doctrines also change. As a student, and as a soldier, I observed and studied these changes, for I knew they would be of importance to Indonesia also. And I was right. Only a few years ago, the Indonesian military found itself in the midst of a sea of change. A newly democratic Indonesia was fast emerging, and the body politics wanted the military to adapt and be part of these historic reforms.

And assigned as Chief of Staff for Territorial Affairs in the Indonesian National Military (TNI) and assisted the drafting of the blueprint of military reforms for the TNI. Much of the military reforms that we see today in Indonesia flow from that blueprint. I am proud of what the military in all its many facets has taught me:

- Duty;
- Honor; and
- Country.

Indonesia still has much to do in terms of nation-building, but it is an education that I relish to share with my countrymen. And a military background can help rather than hinder. At least, I hope all my bedside reading of military history and military strategy and military leadership will help me in my day job!

Based on my experience in becoming a minister in the Indonesian government, and now in leading the nation, the real business of military leaders anticipating and making estimates of the situations, choosing the best possible course of action and taking decision, issuing order and then supervising it, taking calculated risk, and leading people to accomplished the mission, are suitable and can be really applied in leading and managing non military organization, even a nation.

Indeed, trying to govern a country as complex as Indonesia is akin to trying to pull out several rabbits out of a hat at once it requires much juggling of politics, and with any luck, some magic. It is a nation at times with rife with emotion. Hence at those times it needs a leadership that can strike a delicate balance, a leadership that is judicious and temperate. I am proud to say that my military training, both in Indonesia and at Fort Leavenworth, taught me restraint and prudence.

Yet at the heart of it all lays a little if not a lot of idealism. I have my military background to thank for my idealism. Poverty and hardship was an inescapable reality in the Indonesia of my childhood; one was nourished mostly on hope. And the military, with its tenets of order and its promise of public service, was one of the biggest peddlers of this idealism.

That romantic vision grew blurred in recent decades. But I kept my faith. And I am glad. If it were not for my faith in duty, honor, nation-hood, and togetherness, I would not be standing here today, thanking all of you for your friendship with Indonesia, and your faith in us. Just as there is still much to be done in my country, there is still much to be done in this friendship. Let us continue moving forward.

Finally, let me end with this note. Someone asked me: what would I like people to think when they see my photograph on this distinguished wall? A good question. Well, I hope they do not think they can take a few courses at Fort Leavenworth and then run for President. At least, not President of Indonesia. What I really hope is that when they see my photograph, they would see beyond the fancy medals and cool title of President, and see the face of a man from a small village in East Java

who was eager not just to dream, but to believe. And I hope they remember that the real glory lies not in becoming President, but in the amount of selfless service you are willing to give to your country. In that way, those who pass through this hall will remember that each of us is capable of our own glory.

But of course, all of us who graduated from Fort Leavenworth knows this!