

## **Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono AC**

Chancellor, I have the honour to present to you Doctor Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono AC, who Council has determined should be awarded the degree of honorary Doctor of Economics *honoris causa*.

Doctor Yudhoyono was born in East Java, Indonesia, and, as a young man, followed in his father's footsteps to embark on a military career, joining the Indonesian Army in 1973. He graduated from the Indonesian Armed Forces Academy as the best graduate of the year and received the prestigious Adhi Makayasa medal from then President Suharto.

Doctor Yudhoyono's proficiency in general knowledge and the English language saw him tasked with giving lessons in these subject to soldiers in his battalion, and resulted in him being sent to the United States for the first time in 1975 to take military courses at Fort Benning in Georgia.

During his years in the army, Doctor Yudhoyono gained valuable international experience, spending time in the United States, Panama, Belgium, West Germany and Malaysia, and becoming Indonesia's Chief Military Observer on the UN Peacekeeping Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1995. He was a military battalion commander from 1986 to 1988, and in 1989 became a lecturer at the Indonesian Army Staff College (Seskoad), where he co-authored a book entitled *The Challenges of Development*. During his time in military service, Dr Yudhoyono extended his already exemplary qualifications

by completing a Masters Degree in Business Administration from Webster University in Missouri USA in 1991.

When Doctor Yudhoyono left active military service in 2000 he had attained the very high rank of Lieutenant General and was made honorary General for his services to the military.

Following his military career, Doctor Yudhoyono entered politics and held high profile cabinet positions in the governments of both Abdurrahman Wahid and Megawati Sukarnoputri from 2000 to 2004. In 2000, Doctor Yudhoyono became the Coordinating Minister for Political and Security Affairs, tasked with separating the Indonesian Army from politics in line with his reformist ideas on the future of the Indonesian military as primarily a defense force, removed from any social-political agenda.

In 2002 Doctor Yudhoyono became the principal founder of the Partai Demokrat, which became the political vehicle for the rest of his career in public service. The Partai Demokrat's success eventually enabled him to challenge for and win the Presidency of Indonesia in 2004, the same year he was also awarded a Ph.D. in economics from Indonesia's Bogor Agricultural University.

While still a Minister under President Megawati, Doctor Yudhoyono oversaw the hunt for and arrest of those responsible for the October 2002 Bali bombing and during this time he gained a reputation both in Indonesia and abroad as being a serious supporter of the "War on Terrorism". His speech at

the one year anniversary of the Bali bombing, in which 202 people, including 88 Australians were killed, was praised by the Australian media and public.

As President, Doctor Yudhoyono was widely seen as possessing the personal traits and professional skills necessary to restore prosperity and stability to Indonesia. He had an ambitious reform agenda, including addressing corruption and terrorism as well as accelerating economic growth and strengthening democracy and human rights.

Early on in his Presidency, Doctor Yudhoyono faced the aftermath of the greatest natural disaster to befall Indonesia in more than a century, when the 'Boxing Day' tsunami struck in 2004 killing around 132,000 Indonesians. Following this disaster, Doctor Yudhoyono managed to bring about significant improvement in Indonesia's economy, despite the global financial crisis in 2008, and his anti-corruption campaign drew international praise. His successes saw him returned to office in the 2009 Presidential elections.

During his two terms as President, Doctor Yudhoyono presided with what has been described as a grave dignity and calm. When he completed his second term he was given a standing ovation following his last state of the nation address to parliament. In his own words, Doctor Yudhoyono said that he left office *“with a sense of satisfaction that I have tried to do my best to serve the nation, and that at the end of my ten years in office Indonesia is a stronger nation, a stronger democracy and a stronger economy”*

In the period 2009 to 2013 his government's policies resulted in Indonesia experiencing high economic growth second only to China, an almost 400 percent increase in annual income and a seventeen percent decline in poverty. The Indonesian state budget and foreign exchange reserves nearly quadrupled during Doctor Yudhoyono's term and the ratio of government debt to gross domestic product more than halved. Under Doctor Yudhoyono's Presidency Indonesia has peacefully reformed to become a more stable and affluent democracy.

One of Doctor Yudhoyono's other great achievements in office was greater and more active international engagement, including with Australia. Doctor Yudhoyono's connection to the Northern Territory is close both geographically and personally. He is regarded here as a great and transformative leader and a great friend of Australia.

Throughout his distinguished career, Doctor Yudhoyono has been awarded numerous medals, stars and honours, both in Indonesia and abroad, which are too numerous mention. However, Doctor Yudhoyono's 2004 award of the Star of the Republic of Indonesia, an award of the highest order given to those who have given extraordinary service to the integrity, viability and greatness of Indonesia, is worth mention here.

Doctor Yudhoyono's Javanese name has Sanskrit roots that roughly translate to '*journey and battle of the well-behaved knight*'. Thus his name provides an

elegant and concise summary of him as a man and is a fitting conclusion to this citation.

Chancellor, in recognition of his services to Indonesia, to democracy and to harmonious international relations with Australia, particularly northern Australia, the Council of Charles Darwin University awards Doctor Yudhoyono the degree of Doctor of Economics, *honoris causa*.