1. The Indonesia Youth Employment Network (I-YEN) was launched today by the Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs, Dr. Dorodjatun Kuntjoro-Jakti, before an audience which included members of the I-YEN, representatives of UNDP, World Bank and ILO, members of the Indonesian Youth Parliament, representatives from business, unions, community and youth organizations, and many students from high schools in Jakarta.

2. The Coordinating Minister departed from a prepared speech to talk about the important contribution of youth to Indonesian society. He referred to the Independence struggle which was led by youthful leaders and the need for youth to now take a leadership role in the development of Indonesia’s resources and potential. He said Indonesia is the fourth most populous country in the world and one which is still recovering from economic crisis. He stressed the importance of education and training, the need to encourage entrepreneurship by young people, the changing role and aspirations of women (under new electoral laws, 30% of party candidates for Parliament must be women) and the shift in macro policy towards addressing the problems of poverty and employment.

3. The Coordinating Minister welcomed the establishment of the Youth Employment Network and the support provided by the ILO. He made various suggestions as to how Indonesia might move forward with the Network and the involvement of young people.

4. The Chairman of the I-YEN (Mr. Widjanarko, Secretary to the Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs) and the Vice Chairman (Mr. Tjepy Aloewie, Secretary General of the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration) explained the background to the establishment of the I-YEN and the work of the Network. Mr. Tjepy referred to the technical support to be provided by the Ministry team and by the ILO. Director of ILO Office in Indonesia (Mr. Alan Boulton) made remarks (attached) on behalf of the ILO, the UNDP and the World Bank. This included references to the Media Release by the UN Secretary General on International Youth Day 2003. The Chairman of the Indonesian Youth Parliament, Reza Azhar, also made a short speech.

5. The launching included the unveiling of the logo of the I-YEN (see above), the introduction of the members of the I-YEN, the distribution of pamphlets and posters and pins, and excellent cultural and musical performances from 2 high schools in Jakarta.

6. All in all, it was an enthusiastic and happy start to the work of the I-YEN in addressing the challenge of youth employment in Indonesia.