

## I-VOTE 2008 Video Transcript

### Malaysia

**Ms. Su-Wern Yeoh**

**Director, Center for Public Diplomacy, Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute (ASLI)**

**Ms. Yeoh (1:04):** “I come from a Muslim country. I come from Malaysia, which is a predominantly Muslim country. But our country is a relatively progressive voice in Islam if I could say that. And when I spoke to many of the people here, I think those who, especially within middle America, were not used to speaking to people from other countries in Malaysia or in the Middle East. Many of my colleagues were from the Middle East. So probably the most important thing would be to show them a face, give them an image of an Islam that is not threatening, of an Islam that is peaceful and tolerant, liberal and modern to a certain extent, and to change the perceptions of Americans. To know that really there is a world out there which is watching America closely and would like to have a closer interaction and relationship with America.”

**Ms. Yeoh (0:34):** “The one thing I would like to bring back is to engage with youth and to engage with the larger civil society of Malaysia. To let them know that this is something that you need to claim for yourselves. Democracy is not a spectator sport. Freedom is not free. Those are some of the key phrases that I think I would like to enlighten my fellow Malaysians about. To encourage them to be participating right down from the local level up. And the fact that that can make an impact.”