

SPEECH OF MOHAMMAD NUH
THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE,
REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA,

At the 36th of UNESCO General Conference, Paris, 29 October 2011

Madame Katalin Bogyay, President of the General Conference,

Madame Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO,

Madame Eleonora Mitrofanova, Chairperson of the UNESCO Executive Board,

Excellency Ministers,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamualaikum Warrahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

First of all, on behalf of Government of Republic of Indonesia, it is my honor to address this highly regarded gathering of the 36th UNESCO General Conference. Customary to the previous speakers, I would like to congratulate Madame Katalin Bogyay on being appointed as the President and Chairperson of the 36th UNESCO General Conference. Secondly, Government of Republic of Indonesia would also like to extend our appreciation to Madame Irina Bokova for all the hard work in two years of serving her function as the Director General of UNESCO.

Madame President,

Human kind has always been blessed with logical, aesthetical, and ethical capabilities. Such capabilities compel us to always be in search of creating neverending better living standards through the development of our daily necessities. This development should grow geometrically, and even

exponentially, considering that there are higher demands for the quantity involved and the quality expected.

We have learned from the past that development based only on our logical capabilities does not necessarily create a better life. Living standard that measures the happiness of individuals must be multidimensional, comprises of at least economical, social, and environmental dimensions. Development designed in these multidimensional space using our logical, ethical, and aesthetical capabilities, will serve our need in the neverending quest of improving our living standards. Development that is peaceful and sustainable, since when it is based on ethic and aesthetic, will never sacrifice social and environmental values. Indonesia, alone and in cooperation with other countries and/or UN institutions such as UNESCO, is committed to always implement only peaceful and sustainable development.

Madame President,

As reflected in its national policy, the Government of Republic of Indonesia believes that education and culture is very important in securing any development to be peaceful and sustainable. Through education and culture, and with the help of communication technology, we can spread the essential logical, ethical, and aesthetical thinking and doing to the nation.

As mentioned in our intervention yesterday, we need to instill tolerance and honesty due to their critical roles in the establishment of the culture of peace with other people and nature. This is being accomplished in Indonesia by implementing character education as a part of our national curricula. It is embedded in each course and administration at all levels of education, especially at the early stages. We believe that such values must be taught extensively to the young generation as early as possible so that character education could serve as the nation character building.

Madame President,

In order to be peaceful and sustainable, development must be inclusive in the country, even the world, since development that is not at the same speed at all regions will cause an imbalance. Imbalance in development, similar to connected machines that are not operating at the same speed, can incite chaos. For the development to be inclusive, education must also be inclusive too as formulated in Education For All Program of UNESCO. The significance of education inclusivity is reflected in our policy to reach the unreachable by any feasible means since education has been a part of human right and hence must be accessible by all citizens as mandated by the constitution. In that respect, the government is taking the necessary actions to eliminate all barriers to education, let it be geographical, economical, or social barrier.

The geographical barrier is being overcome by building boarding schools and universities at many isolated regions, especially near the borders. This is imperative since it will not be feasible for them to commute to get education for time and cost reasons. In 2011, we are building hundreds of new schools and several universities/polytechnics. In addition, we have been consistent in developing multimedia based content to be broadcasted using television channel and internet to serve the country. Our education television channel has a region coverage of around 95% and population coverage of more than 99%. In 2010, telecommunication development has reached all counties in the country which could pave a way to deliver educational and cultural content through the internet, including contents of character education. Our objective in improving the equity of access and quality of education can be achieved through the use of information and communication technology.

Realizing the importance of teachers in the education process and in honoring their noble duties in serving the remote areas, the government also provides special

incentives for teachers serving the remote areas with financial reward by doubling their salaries, aside from yearly recognition rewards.

To eliminate the economic barrier, financial supports are being provided for poor families to make education becomes affordable. For 2012, the government plans to provide financial aid for about 60% of all students that come from poor family to participate in 9 years compulsory basic education and 30 thousands students to attend universities. In addition, government also provide additional nutritious feeding in kindergarden and primary schools. While for eliminating the social barrier, especially for children with special needs, the government provides special purpose schools such as schools for children with autism syndrome.

Madame President,

While UNESCO promotes diversity, Indonesia continuously lives and sleeps at the heart of diversity. Indonesia is the largest archipelago country in the world with more than 17,000 islands, a home to more than 240 million inhabitants originating from more than 500 ethnic groups and more than 700 local spoken languages as well as social and religious plurality. Indonesia has also been destined by our mother nature to endow the world's greatest geo-diversity, biodiversity and ethno-diversity. Indeed, we are a massive and living laboratory of diversity. Hence it is only logical to use diversity in unity as the foundation of our nation. We would like to preserve the diversity since as discussed recently in the study on management of tolerance, diversity is being regarded as the strength of any business and organization to cope with turbulence world dynamics as long as it is being managed with tolerance.

Madame President,

Indonesia utterly appreciates UNESCO's efforts to protect cultural heritage and adopted the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2003 which stressed the equal dignity of cultures. UNESCO has recognized three World Cultural Heritage sites, Four World Natural Heritage sites, and three Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in Indonesia including the latest one, *Angklung* (bamboo percussion instrument). At this moment, Indonesia is proposing that the Raja Ampat marine park to be included among the World Natural Heritage sites as our commitment to sustainable development. We do hope that we can present more of our heritages to enrich the World tangible and intangible Heritages.

In conjunction to this effort, Indonesia has been actively participating as a member to the Intergovernmental Committee for Intangible Cultural Heritage and will be hosting the 6th Conference of the Committee next month, on November 2011, in Bali. In 2012, we are planning to organize the First World Cultural Forum as a media to deliberate cultures of the world in all its dimension. We would like to take this opportunity to invite all participants of this general conference to be present in this event.

Madame President,

Let me assure you that government of Republic of Indonesia reiterates its strong commitment, as a part of global communities led by UNESCO, to enhance the role of education, science, culture, and communication towards promoting culture of peace and sustainable development.

Thank you very much.

Wassalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuhu.