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MELAKA**

**AT THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE
10TH MELAKA INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DIALOGUE**

“YOUTH LEADERSHIP POWER AND ITS INFLUENCE TO THE SOCIETY”

SATURDAY 26TH JUNE 2010 AT 2000 HRS

MELAKA

Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you to the WAY organizers, National Youth Organization, Youth leaders, all of the other sponsors and especially you, the participants, in being here for 10th MIYD. It has been a terrific opportunity for WAY to be a part of these events over the past ten years. These dialogue sessions have been such a success in the last ninth years. This year's MIYD is special as it the tenth years.

Let me be proactive by asking you a question. Where are you? It seems like a simple question. Where are you? Where are you in your youth program? Where are you in your community? And where are you in the future life of the youths in your country?

Indeed, on your way home tomorrow, ask yourself, what do I want to be able to do five years from now and what actions do I need to take to get there? And then at the end of every month, revisit those questions to assess your progress.

What lies ahead of you is a great opportunity for positive change. Already you are making positive changes through your declaration that was developed. All of you had participated in wanting to see that more youths be empowered and place in the leadership so that the process of influence in the society can flow.

These practical actions will impact your community, your generation and your country. They are proof that you can engage in positive change, which others should not fear. The positive future is not a return to its past; it is the creation of positive competitive future.

I am not talking about change merely for the sake of change. That is thoughtless change. I am instead talking about "thoughtful change." Giving the rights back to the youth and giving them the courage, the support and encouragement they need to take their place in society. The last few days we have again start a course of action to create a future to reach youth potential as individuals and as a nation.

Through this thoughtful change, you can help create a youthful generation that is truly competitive in the global community and society, and make a positive contribution to their society and the world at large.

There are over 3 billion people under the age of 24 in the world today, comprising 47% of the world's population. We are now at a threshold of change with a new generation of leaders.

I believe that YOU are the change generation!

The decisions you are making at every dialogue, the work you are doing here at the conference and beyond, can forever change your country for the better through the eyes of the youth.

What you see around you are people with the same voice and determination you have to get involved. Each one of you is taking the steps to do something about the frustration you have had in making positive changes. We all have those feelings. At one time or another, we have all said to ourselves, "How do I fit in? Do my voice and my opinion really matter? What can I as a youth or a youth leader make a difference in the community and my country?"

We have had the opportunity to observe a clear desire that the young people of the 21st century should, themselves, be players in a process that concerns them so deeply and be able to promote and integrate their legitimate hopes and ideals in the fields we have talked of so much here, like the environment, education, employment, health, the fight against substance abuse, human rights, etc. Let them take the leadership and we do our part to guide and support them in every possible way.

I know that here in this dialogue, you have organization. You have common goals and common threads that bind you together. Your voices are being heard because you have spread the word around your communities and organizational leaders that this conference is helping you make the changes you want.

And the best part is that these are your ideas. These are your desires. These are your changes you are about to embark on for the rest of the year. What is most impressive is that you are taking ownership of your ideas and your projects. This tells me that you are taking responsibility and acting, not waiting for others to act for you.

Over the past few days, each one of you has spent your time working with each other creating a plan that is not limited to one particular community or town or city. Your plans announced a few minutes ago are designed as a nationwide strategy to reinforce your involvement in positive changes.

It's exciting, isn't it? And what is great about this is that you are working together with your friends and neighbors here at this conference in a joint effort for the world around you.

It is necessary for all of us - leaders, agencies, youth organizations - to work together to put into practice the wealth of commitments that we have just conceived.

This is when our work begins. If all the ideas have been set out, if our strategy has now been clarified and approved, the important thing now is to implement it.

As you head on home remember that you have just become part of a history in WAY and in the way youth can apply their leadership skills and power to influence societies in the way they look at the youth movement as a whole.

The youth, they are our extension to the younger generation. They speak a different rule of acceptance and a willingness to embrace and cause changes to take place.

Once again thank you ladies and gentleman for being here, for your ideas, encouragement and challenge to us all. It has indeed been an eye opener.

Thank you,