

SPEECH BY MISS EDIOLA PASHOLLARI

ACTING SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE WORLD ASSEMBLY OF YOUTH

AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE

10TH MELAKA INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DIALOGUE

“YOUTH LEADERSHIP POWER AND ITS INFLUENCE TO THE SOCIETY”

THURSDAY 24TH JUNE 2010 AT 1400 HRS

MELAKA

Good afternoon and Welcome everyone to the 10th Melaka International Youth Dialogue.

Before I go any further I would like to sincerely welcome:

- Rt. Hon Datuk Seri Mohd Ali bin Mohd Rustam, Chief Minister of Melaka and the President of the World Assembly of Youth
- Datuk Datuk and Datin Datin
- WAY Executive Committee Members,
- Representatives of WAY member organisations,
- Foreign Dignitaries,
- Invited Guests,
- Melaka International Youth Dialogue participants,
- Ladies and Gentlemen:

The famous Spanish painter...Pablo Picasso...once observed that “youth has no age.” It is essential that if we are going to address the concerns and aspirations of young people, we should think as them, for this is what I think Picasso was getting at, and that youth is largely a state of mind.

Our biological age marches on relentlessly...and that we can't change, but we are still young in our mind and heart and it is in this event that we could put it well into practice.....

But all of us have the power...indeed, an obligation...to remain young in spirit and help to lead the youths of our generation.

This year's theme “Youth Leadership Power and its Influence to the Society” has been selected in realization of the need to educate, increase awareness and to promote leadership among youth. All countries are affected by the consequences of leadership power and its influence to the society.

It is, with this great consideration that the theme has brought all of you here in this place today. All of us desire to see actions taking place in the lives of young people, youth leaders, and government and organization officers.

I believe that in order to harness and release Youth Leadership Power we must act as the ground breakers of new ideas, we must ensure that the following steps are involve in the process: Assess the problem and look at it honestly; Tackle the problem and find solutions either from within or without;

Forging partnership with other NGOs; community leaders, educators, local companies to run projects or events; focusing on special needs that are before us; sending the right message to the youth and young leaders in our community and countries; and building experience within all that are involved.

I want to stress, though, that we must work together in unity of vision and mind to create an environment where the desired objective can be achieved. It is a critical element to the success of our program.

Let me give you a few reasons to the importance of Youth Leadership Power. It is about making the place where you are better. It is about sticking up for those who cannot stick up for themselves. It is about envisioning the way things ought to be and instead of just talking about it, being willing to do something about it.

Let the voice of the youth be heard. Instead of having them standing on the sidelines, help them to stand up for what they believe by volunteering for a favorite cause, expressing their opinions and leadership skills.

Be a positive influence. We all have role models—people we admire, emulate and learn from. Many leaders are considered great not only because of what they themselves achieved, but because of their abilities to bring out the greatness in others.

As one of the American scholar and poet William Arthur Ward said, “When we seek to discover the best in others, we somehow bring out the best in ourselves.”

Never underestimate the impact you can have on another person. With one gesture or comment, you can change someone's day or even his or her life, for better or worse.

Do the right thing, even when no one is looking. Doing the right thing is more than simply not doing the wrong thing; it is making a conscious choice in favor of something that upholds your ethical beliefs, values and standards.

Sometimes it is harder than taking the easy way out, but a strong leader does the right thing when it is not convenient, when no one is looking and when everyone around them is doing something else.

It is imperative that we as youth leaders, organizers, president or whatever position we hold to:

Do more than belong, participate.

Do more than care, help.

Do more than believe, practice.

Do more than be fair, be kind.

Do more than forgive, forget.

Do more than dream, work.

If we can show the example to our youth by making little things count. Be conscious of the way your actions impact the world and other people. When you do something positive, look for ways to expand it. If you do something that has a negative effect, even unintentionally, find a solution for the future.

Remember: the Power of One is the power to make a difference, one small action at a time. Make it a habit that counts.

I am sure you will be challenge by the different messages that you will hear from our keynote speakers. Take time to discuss further what you will hear from them. You will glean many great and innovative ideas that you can take back with you and implement it among your youth.

As I had mentioned earlier this is our 10th year not only organizing the conference but also in challenging all of us to do better than the year before. Here are the previous nine topics of MIYD:

2001 - Youth and Globalization

2002 – Youth Employment

2003 – Youth and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for Development

2004 – Youth Participation in Decision-Making Processes

2005 – Strengthening National Youth Councils for Global Development

2006 – Human Capital Development

2007 – Youth and Tourism

2008 - Towards a Drug Free Generation

2009 - Youth and Gender Equality

Many of you have attended this conference from its inception and now 10 years later, I am sure you have seen the growth that has taken place not only in our

youth leaders but in the youth organizations in your own countries and around the world.

It is hard to attend and hear the speeches and drawing up all the different declaration without it taking and making an impact in our lives. What an awesome experience all of these conferences has given us this last decade.

Delegates, I hope every one of you will expose yourselves to as much of the program that has been made available for you this weekend. Get involved in the different activities as it will give you both a cultural experience as well as challenge for a better youth leadership that has been empowered to influence the society in every aspect that is possible.

Herbert Asquith...a former Prime Minister of Britain...once humorously observed...and I quote...“Youth would be an ideal state if it came a little later in life.”

Well, youth has come to you now...and I hope you make the very most of it. This conference has brought together some of the most entertaining, plugged-in and energetic speakers available. And...together...you'll be tackling a whole range of topics...all with the aim of bringing about a tremendous empowerment and change for the good.

I hope this week proves to be not just fun and rewarding and stimulating. But that it puts you on a path to leadership. That it changes your life.

And that it stimulates you to change the lives of others.

Without further ado... it is my great pleasure to officially welcome you to the city of Melaka and this MIYD 2010.

Thank you.