

Welcoming Remarks by Tan Sri Dr Michael Yeoh, CEO of ASLI

Tan Sri Michael expressed his gratitude to have the Deputy-Secretary General of ASEAN for the ASEAN Social Cultural Community, the High Excellency Madame Alicia dela Rosa Bala to officiate the forum. He remarked that the aim of the education forum is to provide opportunities to dialogue on how to enhance education space between ASEAN member countries to strengthen higher education. Being appointed as a Malaysian representative to the ASEAN High Level Task Force, Tan Sri Michael went on to encourage ASEAN member countries to constantly exchange ideas on how to move forward to strengthen collaboration in the education sector. The ASEAN focus on education has to move beyond the ASEAN university network. According to him, efforts in enhancing partnership have to be embedded within the ASEAN connectivity of 4Cs; namely, the ASEAN Charter, ASEAN Community, ASEAN Connectivity and ASEAN Centrality.

Opening Key Note Address by H.E. Alicia Dela Rosa Bala, Deputy Secretary General ASEAN for the ASEAN Social Cultural Community

On behalf of the Secretary General of the ASEAN Secretariat, H.E. Le Luong Minh, H.E Ms Bala expressed appreciation to ASLI for organising the 4th ASEAN Education High Level Forum. She went on to note that dialogues are needed to explore how education as a tool can be further improved to narrow the gaps of development; to enhance competitiveness and to promote sustainable development. Within such a context, there has been in the past years, strategic plans to transform educational practices and researches to complement the ASEAN Social Cultural Community (ASCC) Blue Print. This transformational shift sought to provide the means whereby adequate resources, appropriate strategies and enhanced partnerships should be made available to transform economic and inclusive growth; with a vision that everyone in the ASEAN region has an equal opportunity to grow. The comprehensive ideal, therefore, is to enable young people in the ASEAN region the opportunity to access to resources that help build their fullest potential, corresponding to the Post- 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

H.E Bala noted that as to date, 6.5 million of young people in ASEAN are accounted as literate; therefore, it is imperative to strengthen initiatives to promote youth literacy among member states to 100 percent. One of the gaps that must be addressed is to promote the improvement of English competency among young people. She went on to conclude that education plays a key role to build capacities of communities to mitigate the impact of climate change and environmental de-gradation.

Session 1: High Level Panel on Enhancing People Connectivity through Education and Creating a Common Space for Education in ASEAN

H.E David L. Carden, Ambassador, U.S Mission to ASEAN

High Excellency Carden remarked that this forum is as an important event. He emphasised the need to enhance the relationship of young people to knowledge, with a particular focus on the importance of transforming education-reflecting a shift over what should be taught and how it should be taught, and reflecting, too, a greater control over the values must be explored. He went on to inquire how stakeholders facilitate to develop a closer relationship with knowledge and community. As an educator and thinkers, H.E Carden encouraged education stakeholders to think of ways to get young people to be more connected to knowledge, in enabling them to better employ information to make wise decisions. He went on to suggest that young people need to be involved in collecting data and to be guided on how to use data in advocating for issues that are of concerned to them. H.E Carden pointed out that educators have a role to discourage young people from focusing on a drift of facts. He went on to emphasise that there has to be a combination of the existing education system and technology to place young people in the flow of information.

H.E Carden noted that education is not about obtaining degrees but to provide opportunities to grow. Thus, he views the importance of actively engaging young people to address the issues faced in the education sector. An integrated approach is needed to address educational issues. For instance, he mentioned that it is impossible to resolve educational issues without having to deal with environmental

issues. They are all inter-connected. Culture is identified as a tool to sustain development. To further enhance the benefits of education, H.E Carden views that educators need to distinguish culture that promotes development as opposed to culture that hinder development.

H.E. Olof Skoog, Ambassador of European Union to Indonesia

H.E Skoog began by explaining how ASEAN's Vision 2020 could serve as a foundation to promote regional consciousness and identity. He enquired the meaning of a regional identity and pointed out that the European Union (EU) is an economic and political union with a strong European identity. To forge a common ASEAN identity, it should move beyond the ASEAN Vision 2020 Statement. The ASEAN regional identity, according to H.E Skoog, has to be further embedded in the public opinions of all ASEAN state members.

He also went on to describe how the European Union (EU) has assisted the ASEAN member states to further integrate economically, socially and culturally. He cited the assessment of state of education in ASEAN as a key project funded by the EU to assess its educational landscape, support member states in preparing students for success in schools and the workplace, and assist the integration process through a "people-to-people connectivity".

Furthermore, the EU has been supporting ASEAN member states to connect institutions of higher learning, similar to the Bologna process that is being implemented in the EU member states. Scholarships are being offered by the EU to ASEAN students as well, to ensure that support rendered geared towards enhancing regional identity. To build upon this, H.E Skoog stressed on the need to ensure that school curriculums are designed to enhance commonality as opposed to differences that separates the member states. He opined that there is a strong need to improve young people's command of the English language.

Dato Sri Vijay Eswaran, Qi Group of Companies

Dato Eswaran pointed out that ASEAN integration is a primary issue that has been addressed by all ASEAN

member states. He went on to say that ASEAN identity has yet to be realised and is critical to the integration process. He views that ASEAN identity can be more of a reality in the United States of America as opposed in the ASEAN region.

For now, it is observed that there is no strong political will to achieve ASEAN integration. In his view, the institutions of higher in the ASEAN member countries reflect more of the European education system as opposed to the ASEAN. He cited an example that universities in Singapore to a significant extent, replicates the western universities. This might likely results in crisis identity.

It is imperative for ASEAN member states to recognise that we are neighbours. Thus, to build an ASEAN Community by 2015, efforts to progress as an ASEAN's integrative towards 'One Vision, One Identity, One Community' should be made a reality. Hence, a common language should be adopted to ensure that all ASEAN member countries are able to communicate with one another.

Dr Tanri Abeng, Rector, Universitas of Tanri Abeng

Dr Abeng provides an overview of the Indonesian history of development under the leadership of the former president of Indonesia, the late Suharto. He shared that under the late president Suharto, economic issues faced by Indonesia were tackled mostly by Indonesian economists who were educated at the American Ivy league universities. Consequently, the economic system in Indonesia is very much influenced by America.

Dr Abeng stressed that education plays a key role to shape an ASEAN Economic Connectivity. To achieve the ASEAN Socio-Cultural community, education contributes to the development of human capital that would enable cross-border movement of skilled labour. He recognises a need for a unified approach to education in the region. Also, it is important for educators to identify the needs of market to ensure graduates' employability. To enhance competitiveness, educators need to strengthen their collaborations with business sectors and government agencies. He went on to say the economic growth in ASEAN region is booming for the next 50 years and therefore,

stakeholders should learn to retain the best graduates in the region.

The education industry in Indonesia is growing in a fast pace. However, it is difficult for foreign universities to operate in Indonesia. There is an urgent need to mobilise ASEAN educators to improve the education system. He went on to suggest that there a university as a coordinator, to be appointed to connect all universities around the ASEAN region to improve the system. Whenever it is possible, Dr Abeng remarked that the role of government in education should be limited to reduce bureaucracy.

Session 2: Vice Chancellors/ Presidents' Roundtable

Professor Graeme Wilkison, Vice-Chancellor, Sunway University, Malaysia

Prof Wilkison began by asking what we envision for the higher education in ASEAN. Education contributes to the development growth of the ASEAN economies. Universities are institutions that support the development of human capital. However, he views that these institutions do not possess the niche to create businesses. To enhance competitiveness in the region, Prof Wilkison urged universities to aim at developing graduates with social-enterprise skills who are socially responsible.

Professor Dr Christine Ennew, Pro Vice Chancellor and Provost, University of Nottingham, Malaysia

Prof Ennew started by comparing Ghana to Korea. Both countries, in 1960s, had similar GDP. She went on to note that Korea invested more sources in higher education while the latter didn't. The concern for the ability of higher education to deliver arises within the context of greater autonomy; good relationships with government; and learning that promote diversity. Prof Ennew stated that there is a role for regulators and a society, the key is not to over-regulate. The universities that meet diversity should be mattered in its own right and should learn to be more open to the experiences of others. She highlighted four key critical areas that demand the attention of educators, namely, entrepreneurship; world class universities; policy challenges and employer- ability.

Associate Professor Peter Pang, National University of Singapore

Professor Pang noted that it is impossible to make sense about improving the relevance of tertiary education these days, without reference to globalisation, knowledge based economy and technology revolution. It is within this parameter that educationists confidently articulate about the need of universities to shape young people with greater critical and analytical abilities; to inculcate entrepreneurial spirits and enabling young people to acquire global mindsets. He also briefly described three major institutional transformation experienced by the National University of Singapore.

Professor Pang went on to remark that English is a lingua franca in Singapore for practical reasons. However, Singaporeans are gradually losing their interest in Chinese cultural roots. He also noted that the aim of partnership between Yale-NUS is to re-think of the whole idea of liberal arts in the 21st century. Diplomacy requires us to adapt to problems that are not systemic. He reiterated that the concept of culture is flexible from a political stance of view.

Professor Dato Dr Hashim Yaacob, Vice Chancellor, Quest International University, Malaysia

Professor Yaacob began his session by enquiring a world class university. He views the overall aim of World Class University is to fulfil nations 'needs. Pragmatic leadership is required to achieve this. He went on to outline the strategies for building world class universities. This includes quality of staff; international recognition; quality research; quality learning; quality infrastructure; quality property resources; and the ability to influence societies at large through community services.

Session 3: Technology, Innovation and Knowledge Revolution

Dato Peter T.S. Ng, UCSI Group, Malaysia

Dato Ng noted that with an introduction of technology, learning will never be the same again. Technology is a persuasive and pervasive equaliser. He emphasised on the importance of collaborative

learning and the usage of technology in teaching. It is the role of teachers to motivate students to accommodate multiple learning styles. Dato Ng went on to remark that institutions of higher learning need to embrace technology and innovation to foster a culture that promotes meaningful usage of technology.

Collaboration among students can be further enhanced by utilising social media. He suggests that this approach can be introduced in rural areas in Indonesia. Data is critical to enable accurate analyses of information. Big data in education, according to Dato Ng, is an exponential growth and the availability of data in structured and unstructured terms. He views that in ASEAN, “Big Data” has not been much emphasised. To implement big data, the cyber security system needs to be strengthened.

Mr Ken Panko, Yale-National University of Singapore (NUS) College

Mr Panko began by pointing out that prior to an investment in technology; it requires us to think about the life-span of the different technologies. It is important to ask the worth of technology as they are considered as depreciating investment. Thus, investment on people is preferred over the investment of technology. To produce a generation of specialised graduates with different expertise, institutions of higher learning need to think about the type of graduates that are needed by the work force. Through this understanding, universities can then think of ways to train young people to address the need of the workforce. In this process, young people need to be challenged to think critically and analytically. Mr Panko went on to enquire how education can be commoditised by stakeholders.

Mr Phan Quoc Nguyen, University of Engineering and Technology, Vietnam National University, Hanoi

Mr Phan provides an overview of how technology can be used for education. He explained that the discussion of technology goes beyond the technical characteristics but on the technology of education. There is a strong need for the development of education policies that aim at radical innovation. He gave a detailed description of Vietnam National

University (VNU) in Hanoi that includes the vision and mission; its professional education and research cooperation links; its activities and projects undertaken by VNU. He went to share that “Big data” is still very new in Vietnam. It is estimated that the Government of Vietnam would have to invest \$ US 40 million for the application of big data.

Mr Asrul Daniel Ahmad, Global Movement of Moderates Foundation (GMMF)

Mr Daniel explained how a global change is made possible by the introduction of Information, Communication and Technology (ICT). He went on to describe how these changes will have an increasingly important role in ICT. Besides, he also spoke about convergence in ubiquity, with a particular focus on the future of wireless security. Concerns of how Information Technology (IT) has in many ways can cause neuro-phobia, was further described by Mr Daniel. He spoke about expanding the range of different devices into one device. According to Mr Daniel, there are 6.8 billion of mobile phones available in the market. They are increasingly affordable and accessible by the under-privileged societies. Educators have responsibilities to ensure how big data can be applied in daily lives. For instance, in addressing the issue of H1N1 disease, big data can be harnessed to help public health officials to prevent and to mitigate the intensity of the break out of the outbreak. The downside of high connectivity, according to Mr Daniel concerns the shrinking space of privacy for the users of technology. To conclude, he strongly emphasised that education should play a part of assisting the rural areas to benefit from ICT as digital citizens.