

Indonesia

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On a dynamic balance between human differences and similarities

Considering the situations of our world, especially of Indonesia in the last four years, I now conclude, that a big challenge in education is finding and valuing a dynamic balance between human differences and similarities. Unavoidably, both characteristics – differences and similarities – will always be in human lives, therefore through education we should seriously inculcate in the young acceptance of this fact and willingness to live with it in a balanced way. Hence, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, or Unity in Diversity!

A relevant supporting fact is a simple experience of every person favoring similarity of all humans, and that is, “because nobody is entitled to choose his/her parent, then we are all the same, indeed”. Nevertheless, notwithstanding this fact, we should always be respectful to our parents. Everybody should think it through and thorough enabling her/him to transfer this attitude to the young, thereby facilitating his/her capacity and will to live together in peace and harmony with fellow humans. **If a strong feeling of being similar is in our hearts, then the needed respect for differences will not be a problem, and a dynamic balance can easily be found. We should build our collaborative efforts on similarities, but simultaneously respect differences fully.**

In the last three years, we have tried to boost the UNESCO Associated Schools Project in Indonesia through various activities related to “education for peace, human rights, democracy, international [including national] understanding and tolerance”. We are convinced that if education is to be effective, merely learning to know is not adequate, it has to be done together with other pillars of education, i.e. learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together [Jacques Delors’ Commission]. The present ICE’s theme is, indeed, very timely and highly relevant contextually. *Œ*