Mr. Chairperson,
Distinguished participants and guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On the happy occasion of the official inauguration of the Asia-Pacific Center of Education for International Understanding, approved at the General Conference of UNESCO (November 1999), it’s indeed a great pleasure and honor of mine to address this Symposium on behalf of the UNESCO Department of Education for a Culture of Peace at HQs and of UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (PROAP) in Bangkok.

In the first place, in the name of Mme Kaisa Savolainen as Director of the Department of Education for a Culture of Peace at HQs, who could not be present for other commitments, as well as my own representing PROAP, I would like to convey warm congratulations from UNESCO to the Government of the Republic of Korea through its National Commission for UNESCO and to the civil society, for the official inauguration and operation of the Asia-Pacific Center of Education for International Understanding, which we have every reason to claim as a landmark event in the promotion of peace and harmony in this region and at an international level as well.
event in the promotion of peace and harmony in this region and at an international level as well.

The inauguration and the commemorative Symposium assume greater significance as it is taking place in the year of 2000, which the General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed the International Year for a Culture of Peace, to be followed by the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World during the period of 2001-2010. With high confidence in your high competence as well as strong commitment, we extend our best wishes to all colleagues at the APCEIU and at the Korean National Commission for UNESCO for successful operation of the Center and for your great contribution to a culture of peace in this region and the world at large.

While adhering to the Charter of the United Nations, UNESCO distinguishes itself from other UN specialized agencies by its distinctive character in the areas of response; ability and its mandate to construct the defense of peace in the minds of men and women, which make UNESCO an intellectual organization and a moral authority. Therefore, rather than engage in ‘peace-keeping’ by military forces, UNESCO strives for ‘peace-building’ through education, sciences, culture and communication; it attaches as much importance to human development as to purely material progress; it fosters intellectual collaboration which serves as an instrument of mutual understanding between nation/states, peoples and individuals, and as an essential tool of action to contribute to peace.

In reflecting UNESCO’s unique role in peace-building, may I first quote from the address by UNESCO Director-General, Mr. Koichiro Matsuura, on the occasion of his installment as DG of the Organization (15 November 1999), when he stressed the relevance of basic education, as an absolute priority of UNESCO, to both development and peace. Here I quote: “Indeed, basic education is the true driving force for sustainable development in the world. ..... Basic education moreover fosters the initial seeds of mutual understanding, through the twin key concepts of ‘tolerance’ and ‘learning to live together’, whereby all and each may be enriched in a harvest of many cultures”. This eloquent statement clearly indicates the catalyst role of UNESCO as a special agency of the UN system in achieving the twinning goal of world peace and development.

Yes, UNESCO has multifaceted tasks in its areas of competence, including education, sciences, culture and communication; but UNESCO has only one central
mission: to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through its various programmes in the areas of its competence, to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for human rights and fundamental freedoms, affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion.

The UNESCO Concept of a ‘Culture of Peace’

The concept of a culture of peace was proposed first by UNESCO at the International Conference on Peace in the Minds of Men at Yamoussoukro in 1989, and subsequently elaborated and refined at UNESCO-IBE-sponsored 44th International Conference on Education (1994).

The mission of UNESCO in the process of peace-culture development is underpinned in its Constitution: ‘... Peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.

The ethical concerns of UNESCO cannot be dissociated from attempts to build peace. Peace has a positive content, demanding as it does justice in relations between societies and all cultures. It is hence more particularly synonymous with respect for fundamental rights and the self-determination of peoples.

A ‘culture of peace’ implies not only a passive state of ‘absence of war’ or the ‘absence of conflict’, but reflects ‘active, positive, participatory process where dialogue is encouraged and conflicts solved in a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation and without violence’.

In view of the proliferation of violence and conflict in various parts of the world as well as in this region, we are increasingly challenged to re-think and re-tackle the deep roots of war and conflict not only in the political systems, economic structures and social fabrics, but also ‘in the minds of men and women’. From this point of view, a culture of peace can best be defined according to the UN Declaration on a Culture of Peace as ‘a set of values, attitudes, traditions and modes of behavior and ways of life’ based on:

- respect for life;
- respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of states, and non-intervention of domestic jurisdiction;
- respect and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedom;
- commitment to peaceful settlement of conflicts;
- respect and promotion of the right to development;
- respect and promotion of gender equity;
- respect for freedom of expression; and
- adherence to the principles of democracy, solidarity, cooperation, pluralism, cultural diversity, dialogue and understanding at all levels of society and among nations.

A culture of peace is intertwined with and integrated in sustainable socio-economic development and democracy; it reflects a state of cultural diversity within unity; it respects differences to seek commonality and solidarity.

A culture of peace is "part of the heritage we must enrich with our own experiences and transmit to the new generations". A culture of peace could be cultivated through education; it should be 'taught and learned'.

**A UNESCO Philosophy of Education for a Culture of Peace**

Education, both formal and non-formal, and at all levels, is one of the principal means to build a culture of peace; it constitutes a major foundation and a core component of a culture of peace. The UN Declaration on a Culture of Peace also confirms this. It also states that human rights education is of particular importance.

As education has been UNESCO's major area of competence and comparative advantage, it has been a 'keystone' of UNESCO programme in the development of a culture of peace.

In the work on education for a culture of peace, the following objectives have been highlighted:

-- to contribute to the development of education policies which place the objective of education for a culture of peace at the very heart of the educational process;
-- to disseminate and adapt textbooks/teaching materials already produced, develop training courses/modules for teachers and professionals; mobilize the UNESCO Chairs network; encourage educational innovations for more effective prevention of violence; and promote gender equality;

-- to expend and improve the Associated Schools Project network by increased recognition of its pilot role in educational innovation, by enhanced impacts on national systems, and by reinforced communication/co-operation between its members; and

-- to promote linguistic diversity and multilingual education at all levels of education.

National plans and programmes should be made in light of UNESCO’s long-term objective for a complete system of education/training for peace, which aims at all population groups and encompass all levels of education, both formal and non-formal. The UNESCO strategies pursued in this regard are four-fold:

-- monitoring implementation in Member States of standard-setting instruments and plans of action;

-- supporting Member States for the framing of national/sub-regional educational strategies and programmes, to “weave the values, skills and practices of education for a culture of peace into the fabric of both formal teaching and non-formal education”;

-- strengthening partnership with national institutions, IGOs and NGOs with relevant experiences, to develop an integrated and holistic vision of the diverse approaches currently used in such curricula areas as global education, peace education, civics education, and international/intercultural education; and

-- encouraging the overhaul of national policies on physical education and sport to promote moral and ethical values inherent in sports.

To improve the content and methods of education and training for a culture of peace, strategies followed have had three components:
-- translation into the greatest possible number of national languages and wide dissemination of main UNESCO teaching materials, with a view to making optimal use of new ICT technologies and of the existing networks of ASP and UNESCO Chairs, with adaptation made to suit national and local conditions;

-- development of training modules based on these materials for initial and in-service training of teachers at secondary and primary levels, and the framing of strategies for the training of professionals with special responsibilities in this regard; and

-- support to educational innovation efforts, in both formal and non-formal context, with stress on three priority themes: gender-sensitive socialization and training; combating violence at school, and sport practices based on fair-play and solidarity.

As an integral part of education for a culture of peace, the ASPnet has objectives in line with the five-year ASP Strategy and Plan of Action (1999-2003):

-- to increase recognition, by national authorities, of the ASPnet potential;

-- to enhance the impact of its 'flagship projects' on the national systems of education; and

-- to facilitate communication and co-operation between members of the network through setting up an integrated information system and the design of ASPnet sub-regional plans of action.

Activities include also the support to Member States in formulating and implementing relevant language policies to promote linguistic diversity and multilingual education at all levels of education.

New developments

When we have started a new millennium, UNESCO and our new Director- General is undertaking a major reform in the organization including the restructuring of all sectors including the education sector. Educational activities related to a culture of peace and human rights are, in the new structure, becoming a part of the Division for
the Promotion of Quality Education together with environment and population, science and technology, as well as promoting education respecting linguistic diversity.

Indeed, issues related to peace and human rights, as well as to sustainable development, are more and more important challenges in education everywhere and there is a need to integrate them as important elements of the overall quality of education.

The vision of education confirmed in Dakar World Forum on Education for All last April is referring to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. That vision includes learning to know, to do, to live together and to be, as well an education geared to tapping each person’s talents and potential, and developing learner’s personalities, so that they can improve their lives and transform their societies.

Every country is interested to develop quality education, which in our globalize world should be able to respond at the same time both to global and local challenges and take into account the full development of human personality. It has to be relevant at global, local and personal levels. Therefore, it should include human, social, cultural and economic dimensions as well as that of the nature and to promote a culture of peace and sustainable development.

Education for a culture of peace requires a holistic approach so that interrelated, interdisciplinary elements/subjects and themes are formulated in educational policies, curricula, contents, methods and materials in such a way that they are producing necessary educational outputs, knowledge, skills, behaviours, values and ethics.

**Regional Perspectives on Education for International Understanding**

Education for international understanding plays a role of primary importance in the development of a culture of peace. Mankind has developed in-depth understanding of the macro universe as well as the micro nucleus, as evidenced by the rapid advances of sciences and such technological wonders as spaceships and computer networks. Yet human beings have not been able to understand others and themselves as social beings in their multiple dimensions. How to educate for inter-national, inter-cultural,
inter-personal understanding remains a fundamental task to accomplish and a challenge to meet for both individuals and societies.

In view of the daunting challenges of poverty and social exclusion on the one hand, and increasing incidences of conflicts on the other, it is becoming all the more important for us to think globally of EIU in light of UNESCO’s twinning goals of peace and development but to act regionally, nationally and locally, with new strategies taking account of what is distinctive in Asia-Pacific and by calling into full play the initiatives of all institutions, groups, and individuals that will make joint endeavors to develop a genuine culture of peace partly by means of EIU, for which the newly established APCEIU Center could play leading roles.

Our horizon is not only that of a region, no matter how vast, but of the global village, as we have strongly felt the increasing interdependence between peoples, nation/states and regions and have observed many of contemporary problems becoming worldwide in nature, whose solution requires joint efforts at international level.

As APCEIU embarks on its course to implement education for international understanding, it is most appropriate and necessary that we base EIU programme actions on serious reflection on the regional contexts, principles, content, and effective approaches of education for international understanding in order to make it truly relevant and highly effective.

**Contexts**

*A region with peace-loving traditions favorable for mutual understanding and peace.* Asia-Pacific has long-standing tradition of peoples living in harmony, based on common values of human compassion, tolerance, benevolence, mutual understanding, social collectivism, and solidarity. In modern times it was also the birthplace of ‘five principles of peaceful co-existence’ . The strong traditions imply rich educational resources, which could be fully tapped for education for international understanding. Let me quote again from Mr. Matsura’s inaugural address, in which he emphasized a guiding principle in Asian civilization, that of *harmony*: the Japanese ethics of ‘*wa*’, and the Chinese concept of ‘*he*’, according to which ‘tensions should be solved, not by conflict, but through harmony – and not only amongst one another, but in attunement and sensitivity to the very flow of the natural order around us’. 
A region of great diversity within unity. Asia-Pacific is also a region of great diversity in linguistic, religious, ethical and cultural terms. Therefore education for international understanding should be aimed at teaching/learning about the diversity of the human race and awareness of the similarities between, and the interdependence of, all humans. Young learners should thereby be enabled to appreciate diversity as a cultural asset and to discover others with full respect for their differences.

A region with incidences of newly arising conflicts. Most unfortunately we have observed series of incidences of conflicts, violences, and local wars in parts of this region in recent years, on grounds of ethnic, religious, or land disputes. Experiences are abundant to prove that these conflicts can not be solved through military intervention from outside; solutions could only be found from within by means of peaceful dialogues, mediation and negotiation, which will have to be based on mutual understanding. As stated in UNESCO Constitution, “ignorance of each other’s ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between peoples of the world through which their differences have too often broken into war”. Meanwhile we need EIU to plant seeds of peace in the minds of the young to prevent these areas from new conflicts and violences. Immediate actions for EIU in post-conflict areas should warrant out urgent attention.

A region of socio-economic, technological and information divide. The adverse effects of the financial/economic crisis heavily hitting South-east/East Asia and the impacts of readjustment policies in transition economies in Central Asia have implied a great need to make education for international understanding an integral part of development efforts for poverty alleviation, social exclusion, health services, and environmental protection.

Development challenges for EIU

EIU is not for its own sake; it should always be linked to ‘peace for development’ and ‘development for peace’ as two indivisible twinning goals of UNESCO. Before we design EIU programmes we have to rethink and reflect on the broad regional contexts of development, which is both a prerequisite and an essential aim of peace and international understanding.
While we have every reason to be proud of our glorious old civilizations based on values favouring peaceful living-together, we remain frustrated with a sense of guilty by the facts that:

- Three quarters of the one billion people in developing the world, two-thirds of the living in absolute poverty are in Asia-Pacific;

- Millions of children, youth and adults in this region have had no access to basic health service and other social welfares, and continue to be excluded in benefiting from development achievements;

- Three-fourths of the world’s 800-odd million illiterates are in our region;

- Over 50% of the world’s total of 130-odd million school-aged children not enrolled in primary school are in this region;

- At least one third of those dropping out of school before completion of a primary education are in this region.

Poverty is a cause and symptom of violence. Deprivation of the fundamental right to education and health services is also violence. For all these huge disadvantaged population groups, what does EIU mean in substance? How can EIU be pursued in their interest? For those victims of war and violence, what is ‘tolerance’ truly aimed at? For those who are deprived of the fundamental right to basic learning and of other benefits from development, how can social justice be promoted through EIU? how could human rights education, as part of EIU, be made meaningful and useful to disadvantaged groups? These will remain fundamental challenges confronting EIU programmes at ASCEIU.

**Principles**

In light of the UNESCO recommendations on education for international understanding, EIU in our region should observe the following principles, among others:

- EIU should be made an integral part of education at all levels, both formal and non-formal;
- EIU should create greater awareness of the increasing interdependence of all nations and peoples and engender attitudes which enable the young to view other cultures, races and ways of life in a spirit of mutual appreciation and respect for differences while bringing about common values and aspirations;

- EIU should encourage respect for human rights and their observance in daily life, and inculcate a spirit of justice and equal respect for all human beings;

- EIU should develop international solidarity and promote international cooperation in dealing with world problems and seeking peaceful resolution of conflicts and disputes.

**Content and curriculum**

EIU should aim not only at the imparting of knowledge about other nations and peoples but also the development of attitudes, behaviors and action favorable to living together in social cohesion and harmony.

Most of the school subjects or courses of study included in curriculum for primary and secondary education provide opportunities for teaching for international understanding. Each subject/course could contribute to international understanding and peace culture, with some offering directly relevant framework for EIU and others allowing indirect provision of EIU. The task for educators is to fully tap the resources of each in creative ways appropriate to the age, aptitudes and interests of individual learners, and to develop integrated, co-ordinated, continuous and cumulative EIU programmes.

Curriculum of education for international understanding could be designed either as integral elements in all curricular and extra-curricular activities or as separate special teaching/learning courses and project activities.

In view of the largely centralized/standardized and already over-loaded national curriculum in most developing countries of Asia and the Pacific, and based on research findings for effective teaching, curricula components related to education for international understanding may be integrated into the ‘content-specific knowledge, skills and values in individual school subjects/courses and
extra-curricular activities. For examples:

--- Languages, both native and foreign, as a medium of communication and as a core compulsory school subject, could be taught to cultivate understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity and peaceful inter-personal dialogues.

--- Literature could be taught with a view to giving insights into the nature of man, humanity's shared ideals and aspirations, man's sufferings and struggles, and the qualitative features of national cultures and their distinctive contributions to peace.

--- Foreign languages can provide access to and understanding of other cultures and other ways of living and thinking; they are particularly useful to the international/inter-cultural understanding of other peoples and nation/states.

--- History enables a better understanding of human civilizations and of the social, economic, cultural and technological aspects of human development in national and world contexts.

--- Geography contributes to the understanding of nation/states, continents and the world at large, of the inter-relation of man and his physical environment, and of possible approaches to natural resources development in the interest of mankind.

--- Citizenship/civics education has great potential to be a passport to peace. It enables students to understand the nature of government and to be prepared for active and responsible role in building a democratic society and a global community.

--- Moral/values education provides chances for explicit teaching for international understanding, which could inculcate a sense of moral responsibility and a strong commitment to the public good, and which will enable an ethical foundation for human solidarity and peace. As called for by the Kuala Lumpur Declaration (adopted by MINEDAP VI in 1993), national policies and regional strategies need be developed to incorporate K-12 instructional content of values education into the core curriculum, and to assist curriculum developers by providing with suitable indicators and descriptors indispensable for the teaching and assessment of values education.

--- Biology can teach about the transmission of human characteristics and about the relation of heredity and cultural factors, which might undermine prejudices based on distinction of race, color, nationality or cultural differences. Its teaching can also
shed light on the solution of worldwide problems of AIDS/HIV and other diseases threatening human lives.

-- *Music, dance and other forms of arts, and games*, which go beyond national boundaries, are particularly useful to mutual understanding of peoples and cultures and could have both affective and intellectual impacts on the understanding of one’s own identity as well as those of other peoples.

**Teachers and teacher training for EIU**

As values and international understanding have to be inculcated and facilitated through both curricular and extracurricular teaching-learning activities, the roles of teachers and hence of teacher training is most crucial. In delivering education for international understanding, teachers need special knowledge, skills and attitudes and other competencies. If the teachers of peace and international understanding is to be effective, teachers themselves need to be free of prejudice and intolerance. As Dr. Lourdes Quisumbing, President of APNIEVE, very well put it at the Regional Workshop on EIU in Asia-Pacific 1999, ‘Teacher Education must take into serious consideration both the personal and professional development of the teacher. The person of the teacher is even more important than the curriculum’.

It is therefore important to work with teachers and the teacher educators who train them. Efforts for effective EIU should focus on the adequate preparation and training of teachers who will be real facilitators and exemplary role models of a culture of peace. The newly established APCEIU could contribute to teacher education programmes for EIU by way of:

-- enhancing the knowledge, values and skills of teacher educators/trainers in EIU programmes;

-- preparing teachers who can help learners to understand the root causes of violences and to seek their peaceful resolution;

-- integration of Asian-Pacific core values into curriculum and assessment for pre-service and in-service teacher education;
-- involving parents and community in preparing teacher education curriculum for EIU;

-- reorienting educational policy-makers towards EIU to create more favorable policy environment and curricula support for implementation of EIU at all levels; and

-- promoting cross-national exchanges of EIU teachers and their innovative experiences in implementing EIU.

The Use of New Technologies in EIU

As we enter the 21st century the issue of international and intercultural understanding has to be understood in a very much different technological context. The Internet has broken down national boundaries and barriers of space and time in many ways of human communication and interaction. Information networks have been able to make anybody part of a community. People can 'live together' with others who are actually far apart, with an awareness of inter-connectedness and deep sense of being interdependent in a shared global community. A new generation is 'growing digital', who have developed new ways of understanding the world, of discovering others, and of communicating with one another. In promoting EIU, we should fully tap the resources of the information society while making efforts in narrowing the 'digital divide' between information haves and information have-nots, both among and within countries and population groups.

On the one hand, EIU can take advantage of the educational potential of new information technologies, especially the Internet, as major educational resources as well as powerful means of communication, to provide new learning environments, to create new learning opportunities, and to facilitate learning and living together in the 'cyberspace'. While summer camps and youth forums can be most useful in facilitating international understanding, 'virtual learning groups' and 'inter-cultural projects through the Net' could be equally meaningful. A 'virtual reality of living together could be created through learning and education on the Net and Web.

On the other hand, however, we need be also aware of the pitfalls and possible risk of the technologies alienating human relationships and further increasing the information/knowledge gap between the rich and the poor. Educators engaged in EIU should take caution that man-computer interactions do not replace, but enhance,
teacher-pupil human relations. In a world of rapidly advancing technologies, mankind not only need high IQs but high EQs; we need guide the young to live with other people while living with wonders of technologies.

Methods and approaches

In view of the great diversity within and among the nations of our region, the approaches and methods to education for international understanding should be varied and flexible to cater for diversified situations, learning needs and interests of individual learners.

--- a holistic approach to over-all policy formulation, curricula development, and teacher professional development to make EIU really happen and to yield tangible as well as intangible outcomes in term of attitudinal and behavioral changes;

-- application of the principle of 'learning by doing' in education for international understanding, through projects and experience of shared purposes throughout life, involving children working towards common objectives (e.g. summer camps, youth forums, and other learner-centered project activities);

-- joint innovations relevant to national or local contexts and sharing of effective learning methods among varied programme activities.

-- multi-dimensional approaches to and broad range of learning experiences for both cognitive, effective through both individual and collective activities in both formal and non-formal settings; and

-- partnership and networking with national governments, IGOs and NGOs, civil societies, as well as UNESCO networks including ASP and APNIEVE.

The establishment of the Asia-Pacific Center of education for International Understanding constitutes a significant step toward the common lofty goal of world peace which UNESCO set for itself in its Constitution, as well as an important achievement which Member States of this region jointly made in realizing the noble goal. The way leading us to its establishment has been long, with far-sighted visions and persistent efforts of government and civil society of the Republic of Korea and
with support from other countries and UNESCO as well; however, the way lying ahead of us is much longer:

-- we need develop far-sighted broadened visions of education in international understanding as a crucial part of a culture of peace;

-- we need reformulate effective strategies and develop plans of action; we need jointly design programmes and projects to translate education for international understanding into innovative practices;

-- we need further strengthen partnerships and networking to join forces with Member States, IGOs and NGOs civic societies, and the international community to promote education for international understanding.

The challenges of a culture of conflicts confronting us are daunting; but the opportunities brought about by development and democracy and new technologies for a culture of peace are enormous. In this region of ours, the concept of ‘harmony’, the value of ‘universal brotherhood’, ‘a coherent human society’, and the ideal of ‘one peaceful world’ have always been cherished and pursued for ages. Statesmen have had outstanding political wisdoms. Educational communities have accumulated rich experiences and developed resources to deliver varied programmes of education for international understanding. We are proud of our glorious traditions as much as confident of our capacity of achieving the lofty goal which UNESCO set for itself and its Member States.

UNESCO-PROAP, in close cooperation with HQs and Member States, is strongly committed to our joint efforts in EIU and will provide all its support to the effective functioning of the Asia-Pacific Center for Education for International Understanding in all its programme activities.

With an optimistic note we wish the full success of this commemorative international symposium and the promising contribution of the Asia-Pacific Center of Education for International Understanding to the development of a culture of peace in the region and of the world at large.

Thank you.