Sixth Regional Conference
of Ministers of Education
and those Responsible
for Economic Planning in Asia
and the Pacific

Organized by UNESCO
with the co-operation of ESCAP

Kuala Lumpur, 21-24 June 1993

Final Report
UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

Sixth Regional Conference of Ministers of Education
and those Responsible for Economic Planning
in Asia and the Pacific

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INTRODUCTION

Organization and Scope of the Conference

1. The Sixth Regional Conference of Ministers of Education and Those Responsible for Economic Planning in Asia and the Pacific (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Conference’) was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 21 to 24 June 1993, with the Government of Malaysia acting as the generous host. It was organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) with the co-operation of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and in accordance with Resolution 1.1 adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-sixth session.

2. The purposes of the Conference included forming an overview of sectoral achievements, obstacles and challenges in the region; reinvigorating regional and national commitments to the goals of Jomtien and to meeting changing demands on education; and exploring potential avenues of regional and international co-operation.

3. In accordance with the decision of the Executive Board, the Governments of 33 Member States of UNESCO in Asia and the Pacific were invited to participate in the Conference. Of this number, 31 sent delegations, 21 of which were led by Ministers or Vice-Ministers. Observers from other Member States and non-Member States as well as representatives of the United Nations System and observers from intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and institutions/foundations also attended the Conference. In all, 141 delegates and 27 observers and representatives took part in the Conference. A list of the participants is attached as Annex V.

Preparation of the Conference

4. The present Conference was the sixth in a series dating back to 1962 when the first was convened in Tokyo. The second was held in Bangkok, in 1965; the third in Singapore, in 1971; the fourth in Colombo, in 1978; and the fifth Conference again in Bangkok in 1985. The evolution of UNESCO’s involvement in education in the region can be traced through each successive Conference: commencement of participation in the Karachi Plan; the introduction of the Asian Model of Educational Development; the launching of Asia and the Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID); the creation of the UNESCO Office for the Pacific States in Apia, Western Samoa; the creation of the Advisory Committee; and, the launching of Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for all (APPEAL).

5. Preparation for the present Conference began with the Sixth Session of the Advisory Committee on Regional Co-operation in Education in Asia and the Pacific (Chiang Rai, May 1991) which proposed a provisional agenda and suggested the general structure of the working documents for the Conference.

6. The Conference was immediately preceded by the Seventh Session of the Advisory Committee held in Kuala Lumpur, from 14 to 17 June 1993. The
Committee’s mandate was to facilitate the work of the Conference by reviewing the achievements and problems of education of the region since the last Ministers’ Conference and to make recommendations on both the orientation and modalities of co-operative programmes at the national, regional and international levels. The Director-General transmitted the Committee’s Report and Recommendations to the Conference as an information document.

Opening

7. The Conference was inaugurated at 15:40 on 21 June 1993 in the Shangri-La Hotel, by the Honourable Encik Abdul Ghafar bin Baba, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, in the presence of the Honourable Datuk Amar Dr Sulaiman bin Haji Daud, Minister of Education of Malaysia, and Mr Federico Mayor, Director-General of UNESCO.

8. Speaking first, the Honourable Minister of Education underlined, in his address of welcome, the importance of the Conference and emphasized Malaysia’s commitment to the cause of UNESCO’s mission. He particularly stressed the special place of values and morals education in the overall curriculum: the destruction of property, he said, was traceable to a failure in the education system and suggested the presence of a ‘crisis of the mind’. For him, the only viable antidote was an increased emphasis on moral standards in the instructional cursus.

9. The second speaker, Mr Federico Mayor, Director-General of UNESCO, commenced his address with an expression of gratitude to the Honourable Encik Abdul Ghafar bin Baba, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, and to the Government of Malaysia for its generous hospitality in hosting the Conference. He paid particular tribute to the host country’s socioeconomic accomplishments in recent years. Conference delegates, he remarked, were ‘gathered in one of the world’s leading development laboratories to observe the growth effects of a diet rich in education’.

10. The Director-General pointed out UNESCO’s mandate in the changing socio-political conditions of the world, and the challenge confronting the education of the Member States at the threshold of the twenty-first century. The newly-created Delors Commission was expected to do much to illuminate these challenges. The greatest problem confronting all countries, he remarked, is the one which generated UNESCO’s original mandate, that of ‘building the defences of peace’. Failure to do so will compromise two inter-dependent goals - development and environmental protection.

11. The world’s ‘unpreparedness for peace’ and for ‘conflict prevention’; the prevalence of passive spectators in a world crying out for a global commitment to replacing the rule of force with that of reason - these obstacles loom large and must be overcome if mankind is to bring the realities of today onto a course which converges and becomes one with the hopes of tomorrow. Peace-building, fostered by international co-operation, can only endure if it commences at home. Poverty eradication and human resource development are pre-conditions of peace and the ineluctable means to a seemingly elusive end: values education and the recognition that freedom and responsibility, inseparable, are the certain vehicle by which it will, at last, be won.
12. Reiterating UNESCO’s overarching sectoral goal, Education for All, the Director-General welcomed the opportunity to review progress since Jomtien. He singled out the education of women and girls as a vital area requiring redoubled commitment, and went on to speak of the special problems of the nine largest countries, of island states, of the status of teachers, and technical and vocational education and of higher education. On this last subject, he drew the attention of delegates to the UNITWIN and UNESCO Chairs initiatives. After expressing optimism that today, at long last, UNESCO could address its ethical mission, he wished participants well in their deliberations.

13. Finally, the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister, elaborating on the Director-General’s comments in respect to the Asia-Pacific region’s size and dramatic economic growth and strength, emphasized the place of education in the overall development paradigm if the region was to achieve its legitimate aspirations in respect to the exercise of leadership on a global scale. At the same time, he cautioned that, inasmuch as serious dysfunctions were common features on the social landscape of many western countries, values and in particular an emphasis on morals and discipline had to constitute the firm foundation on which all regional education targets - modest and grand - should be constructed. A preoccupation with the presumed benefits of science and technology untempered by an equivalent concern for values would ultimately undo the best laid plans.

14. In this context, the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister saw a prominent place for continuing education as the most promising means of combating the negative effects of socioeconomic evolution. Further efforts are required from all to promote regional co-operation to this end. He ended his address with a renewed warm welcome to Conference Delegates and officially declared the Conference open.

Work of the Conference

15. Proposed by the head of the delegation of Thailand, and seconded by the delegations of India and Turkey, the Honourable Datuk Amar Dr Sulaiman bin Haji Daud, Minister of Education of Malaysia, was elected President of the Conference by acclamation and assumed office.

16. The Conference then adopted its Rules of Procedures and elected by acclamation the following as Vice-Presidents and Rapporteur-General:

Vice-Presidents

H.E. Mr Kim BEAZLEY (Australia)
H.E. Mr WANG Mingda (China)
H.E. Dr Mohammad Ali NAJAFI (Iran)
H.E. Ms Sunethra RANASINGHE (Sri Lanka)

Rapporteur-General

Mr Michael DEAKER (New Zealand)
17. The Conference then adopted the Provisional Agenda (ED-93/MINE-DAP/1 Rev. (Annex I), and agreed to the organizational procedures pro-posed in document ED93/MINEDAP/INF.2.

18. The Conference decided to establish two Commissions, one to deal with ‘Education for all - renewal of commitments’ [Agenda item 8(1)], the other with ‘Changing demands on education - meeting the challenges of the present and the future’ [Agenda item 8(2)].

19. Under the terms of Rule 5.1 to the Rules of Procedure, the Steering Committee of the Conference comprised the President, four Vice-Presidents, the Rapporteur-General and the Chairpersons of the two Commissions.

20. The President of the Conference invited Dato’Mohd. Noordin bin Hassan, secretary-general of Education of Malaysia and Chairman of the Seventh Session of the Advisory Committee, to present the Committee’s Report and Recommendations on Regional Cooperation in Education in Asia and the Pacific.

21. From 21 to 23 June, the Conference, meeting in plenary session, considered Agenda Item 7 - Overview of Educational Development in Asia and the Pacific; Agenda Item 8 Enhancing the Role of Education as a Dynamic Force for the 21st century; and Agenda Item 9 - Promoting Regional and International Co-operation in Education Including the Mobilization of Resources.

22. The draft recommendations on Agenda Items 8(1) and 8(2) were first discussed and approved by Commissions I and II respectively. The draft recommendations were then adopted by the Conference in plenary session. The Recommendations are presented in Part IV of this report in the form approved and adopted by the Conference.

23. Parallel to the work of the Conference, three Round Tables were held on 23 and 24 June. UNESCO and UNICEF jointly organized a Round Table on the subject of the ‘Roles and Responsibilities of the Donor Community in Supporting Basic Education”; Australia, on the subject of ‘Vocational Education”; and the host country, Malaysia, on the subject of ‘Values as an Integral Force in the Development of Education to Meet Challenges of the 21st Century’. The chairman of each Round Table conveyed to the Conference at the concluding plenary session a summary of the views and conclusions reached. The Rapporteur-General pre-sented the Draft Final Report as a whole and without amendments. The Report and Recommendations were approved by the Conference.

Closure

24. Addressing the closing session, Mr Colin N. Power, Assistant Director-General for Education, paid tribute to the Honourable Encik Abdul Ghafar bin Baba, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, who honou-red the inaugural meeting with his presence and delivered his thought-provoking address, and extended warm thanks to the Honourable Datuk Amar Dr Sulaiman bin Haji Daud, Minister of Education of Malaysia, for having guided the Conference discussions in the most courteous and efficient manner. He also thanked the Rapporteur-General and all other officers of the Conference for the speed and efficiency with which they carried out the work of the Conference.
Vote of Thanks

25. A vote of thanks was proposed by H.E. Mr Eunus Khan, Head of the Delegation of Bangladesh. Mr Khan, on behalf of all the participants, expressed his sincere gratitude to the Government of Malaysia for its generous hospitality and for hosting this Conference in Kuala Lumpur, and to Honourable Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, for his personal attendance to inaugurate the Conference. Mr Khan also expressed his deep appreciation to the Director-General of UNESCO and its Secretariat for convening and preparing this Conference, and to the Conference officers, in particular, to the President and Rapporteur-General for the excellent stewardship and preparation of the draft report.
I. GENERAL REPORT

Introduction

26. The Conference reviewed the progress of education in the region since its Fifth Conference, held in Bangkok eight years ago. Discussions were facilitated by a working document entitled ‘Education for Development: Responding to New Challenges’ (ED93/MINEDAP/3) and two reference documents entitled ‘Development of Education in Asia and the Pacific: A Statistical Review’ (ED-93/MINEDAP/REF.2) and ‘Report on UNESCO’s Regional Programmes in Education in Asia and the Pacific since the Bangkok Conference (1985)’ (ED-93/MINEDAP/REF.3).

27. In addition, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) contributed an overview of the economic and social situation in a document entitled ‘Major Development Themes for Asia and the Pacific’ (ED-93/MINEDAP/REF.1). 28. The report which follows reflects the decision to treat the discussions of the two subheadings under Agenda Item 8, both at the substantive and policy levels. While some repetition is unavoidable, especially as the line between policy and programme must sometimes be arbitrarily drawn, an attempt has been made to group the points made according to whether they refer, essentially, to programme (Reports of Commissions I and II) or to policy (Summary of the Plenary Debate).

Agenda Item 7: Overview of Educational Development in Asia and the Pacific

Basic Education

29. Countries well on the way to meeting the Jomtien targets have progressively extended the length of basic education from six to eight and even nine years of primary schooling. EFA programme financing continues, however, to be a major hurdle in some countries. Two strategies are being pursued which are reported to show promise in overcoming it: increasing management efficiency and new financing strategies.

30. While some countries reported a major reduction in the rate of illiteracy (from 80% to 15% in 15 years), the problem persists in the more populous nations and has triggered national interdepartmental initiatives in support of a concerted attack on the problem. A partnership between NGOs and the community is proving to be a good means of achieving EFA goals at reduced cost.

Values Education

31. An interest in the area of values and morals education, which was the theme of the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister’s address of welcome, and in education for promoting peace and international understanding, resounded throughout the three days of the Conference. Traditional values such as co-operation and a respect for the welfare of the community are
increasingly ceding ground to those which give a privileged position to individualism and competition as vehicles of success in a technology-oriented society. Delegates were accordingly at pains to emphasize that efforts were necessary to transform the content of education and of the broadcast media to counterbalance these negative effects.

32. In a related vein, the Conference voiced a similar concern for the growth in the number of conflicts between and within countries resulting from the inability or refusal to seek a resolution to differences by peaceful means. As a consequence, most speakers mentioned their countries’ efforts to include subjects related to conflict-resolution through non-violent means in their core curricula.

**Technical and Vocational Education (TVE)**

33. It is common knowledge that some countries of the region have enjoyed extraordinarily high economic growth. To sustain this growth at current levels, a highly literate and capable workforce is necessary along with national educational training institutions which are sensitive to the human resource development demands of the constantly changing technology of the modern sector. Twin dilemmas are posed, however: the high per capita cost of TVE and productivity. The capital costs of TVE, known to be high already, are forced to still higher levels as public institutions struggle to keep pace with changes in technology. The productivity of the system - i.e. its articulation with the demands of the labour market - is a perennial problem since retooling training strategies requires far more time than modifying industrial production strategies. The result is that some institutions produce skilled workers for jobs which no longer exist.

**Life-long Learning**

34. Countries have been stressing life-long education as a way of coping with change and as a means of ensuring that evolving labor force requirements are adequately met. In addition, for occupational groups (e.g. teachers and medical practitioners and those in high-tech industries) where the development of new knowledge has been particularly rapid, lifelong education has become a pre-condition of their career-long professional development.

35. Life-long learning was also thought to have a non-economic dimension since it is known to contribute to enriching people’s lives through leisure time activities and promoting an awareness of issues of public concern such as the destruction of the environment, excessive population growth, and health/drug-related problems.

**Higher Education**

36. Specialized professional training institutes serving various manpower, management and substantive employment requirements have multiplied enormously in the past few years as have the number of tertiary institutions in the region. In some cases, national and regional universities have catered for increases of 600% in the student body over a ten-year period.
AgendaItem8: Enhancing the Role of Education as a Dynamic Force for the 21st Century

Cultural and Social Dimensions

37. Education for sustained economic development has, for over thirty years, been a major sectoral goal. Delegates expressed the growing concern of their countries that the needs of the individual have been sub-sumed into those of the whole society. To reverse this trend, the goals of education must be modified so that less emphasis is placed on memory development which often stresses convergent thinking, in favour of a concern for developing creativity and divergent thinking. Technology and the information explosion require a labor force which is intelligent, flexible and creative.

Life Quality

38. Many of the region’s problems are the accidental by-products of development. An education system cannot, by itself, shoulder the burden of correcting the blunders of the citizens it was created to serve but it can do much to prepare individuals to identify them correctly, to assess their relative severity, and to take action individually and collectively to minimize their impact.

39. Delegates indicated that programmes developed in the areas of environment, population and preventive education should not be limited to promoting cognitive skill development, nor indeed should they over-simplify by dichotomizing or reducing the problem to one of a conflict of ethics. Instead, they should promulgate a sense of social responsibility defined in the form of appropriate attitudes and especially behaviours. Studies in these areas should be interdisciplinary and involve both the natural and social sciences.

Education and Work

40. Looking towards the 21st century, delegates recalled once again that, with the rapidly changing labour force and the influence of technology on society, the initial acquisition of technical and life skills would no longer sustain individuals throughout their full working lives. A different perspective to a long-posed problem was introduced by one delegate who remarked that ‘the difficulty we face today is that we are preparing children to cope with technologies not yet invented to enter jobs which do not yet exist’.

41. Interventions targeted the problem of finding the appropriate balance between ‘general’ and ‘specialized’ components in the secondary and TVE curriculum and the contribution of industry to developing both basic and ‘high level’ skills.

Rural Education

42. The question of education for rural development, raised in Commission I, was discussed by delegates in plenary at considerable length. In their view, education has expanded so much that the existing infrastructure can neither support the additional burden nor be expanded cost-effectively. Moreover, it has been amply demonstrated that, in the same way that centralized management is counterproductive, so too is an education system which
is designed to function out of a single urban complex in the expectation that it will meet the needs of the rural areas. Infrastructural decentralization is an imperative both from the perspective of the user and of those responsible for establishing and monitoring Education Ministry expenditure.

43. The importance of rural development as a major variable in national development plans requires, in the opinion of speakers, a far greater concentration on skill building for rural occupations. In this connection, the delegate of China reiterated his Government’s request for the creation of an International Centre for Research and Training in Rural Education and recalled the offer of his Government to make available existing national facilities and staff which could be expanded as appropriate to satisfy the requirements of an evolving mandate.

Delivery Systems

44. Some discussions centred on the still-largely untapped potential to harness educational technology at affordable prices. Advances made recently in the field of distance education suggest that this intervention strategy holds great promise for accessing insufficiently-serviced rural and isolated areas. One example is the use of computer modems which are already being used with success to promote literacy in some countries.

45. Countries with large numbers of languages and dialects experience enormous difficulties in producing mother-tongue readers and core curriculum texts. The use of modems linked to E-Mail technology make possible the immediate sending of common core material to provincial centres. There, with their local language specialists, translations into the vernacular and computer-assisted publishing are an entirely feasible undertaking.

46. One delegate foresaw, in the near future, the extensive use of computer-assisted instruction throughout the length and breadth of education. This development should, if it materializes, free up the teacher to carry out the interpersonal functions of the educational process which only human contact can provide.

Women, Girls and the Disadvantaged

47. Widespread dissatisfaction was expressed with progress made to date in assuring equity in education for women and girls, in finding affordable strategies for accessing isolated populations, and for assembling relevant education and training programmes for minorities, the disabled and refugees. Delegates considered that, for all intents and purposes, the major part of the journey lay before them. The discussion of many subject areas covered elsewhere in the present report have relevance to the subject at hand. Among them are values education, TVE, delivery systems, and life quality. Suggestions in respect to each, if applied, can be expected to promote the education of women and girls and of the various disadvantaged groups.

Teacher Education

48. The quality of any education system correlates to a high degree with the knowledge and skills of its teaching personnel. In view of the constantly evolving nature of the field of
education which should reflect socio-economic and technological changes in society, delegates shared the view that teacher education should be regarded as a career-long process with possibilities for accessing further training at any time and any level. Distance education was cited as one cost-effective way for upgrading in-service teachers. Another example is the Pacific States regional Basic Education and Life Skills (BELS) programme which is based on the principle of the maximum decentralization of school management and skill development functions to the primary head teacher.

Values Education

49. The price of economic growth in the region has frequently been at the expense of sacrificing certain cherished ideals and values or their dilution by imported values. The Conference emphasized the need for incorporating K to 12 instructional content into the core curriculum. It also noted the need to assist curriculum writers who are attempting to introduce these concepts into their texts by providing them with suitable indicators and descriptors which are indispensable for the teaching and assessing of values education.

Secondary Education Reform

50. With the significant progress noted in respect to the achievement of the Jomtien goals and bearing in mind that the Conference renewed its commitment to the World Declaration, a concern was expressed for the need for the region’s educators to turn their attention to shortcomings in secondary education in Asia and the Pacific.

51. The discussion centred on the issue of secondary education including technical and vocational education and training. As basic education goals are increasingly met, so the demand for access to secondary education can be expected to rise. The countries of the region will, therefore, have increasing pressure placed on their education budgets to satisfy a corresponding increased demand for quantitative and qualitative improvements at this level.

52. Privatization, debated at some length by the Seventh Session of the Advisory Committee, was discussed by delegates who drew attention to the difficulty of establishing a clear position on the subject since it has implications in respect to authority over the content and delivery systems of education. Most, however, were of the view that private sector involvement was, to a certain degree, desirable, very probably inevitable, and should be planned.

Higher Education

53. A literate population is known to be a precondition for development, but as growing numbers of countries are achieving UPE, they are increasingly turning to the formal education process and in particular to higher education. No society today which aspires to ensuring even the minimum levels of the human rights outlined in the ‘Universal Declaration’ can do without the skilled personnel of the kind which only tertiary education can provide.

54. If countries are unable to provide higher education through national institutions, they must import them: doctors, engineers, bankers, chemists, managers, teacher trainers and
curriculum writers. Even the smallest states in the region aspire to having their own poly-

technics and universities.

55. Tertiary institutions are, as was noted, expensive undertakings and thus require constant 
monitoring to ensure the maintenance of interna-tionally- accepted standards (an efficiency mea-
sure) and market place relevance (a productivity measure). Any slippage translates directly into 
higher costs.

56. Many delegates reported the growth in open universities and dis-tance education facilities 
as a means of accessing more of their citizens and thereby improving the quality of their labour 
force, of bringing down per capita costs, and of strengthening their financial base.

Education for the 21st Century

57. The Chairman invited the Special Adviser to the Chairman of the International 
Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century to give a brief overview of the purpose, 
organization and progress to date of the Commission. In her statement, she recalled that the 
Commission had begun its work by examining a number of turning points in world deve-lopment 
with the intention of placing its reflection on education in the context of these changes. Three 
main challenges were noted: those rela-ted to demographic growth, to the globalization of world 
society, and to the apparent conflict between economic aims and environmental preser-vation. 
Each had articular bearing on education and particularly on the role of education in contributing 
to responsibility, solidarity, equality, tolerance of diversity and respect for the future of the pla-
net. The task of the Commission was to chart the path by which these roles could be ful-
filled. She concluded by sharing with participants some of the questions that the Commission intended 
to examine and expressed the hope that the involvement and interest of educators and policy-
makers from the region would be unstinting.

Agenda Item 9: Promoting Regional and International Co-ope ration in Education 
Including Mobilization of Resources

58. Continuing co-operation at both the regional and international levels received strong sup-
port by the delegates. Indeed, recent successful ini-tiatives combined with an emergent optimism 
for an improved climate of international co-operation provide the basis for a more dynamic 
approa-ch to joint efforts and networking in the future.

59. Of the many areas touched upon in the plenary, the following were emphasized in many 
interventions:

a) The strengthening of PROAP, UNESCO’s principal mechanism for regional 
co-operation;

b) National centres for sub-regional and regional activities;

c) Regional and sub-regional bodies as centres of co-operation;
d) UNESCO and inter-and non-governmental organizations;

e) Bi-lateral contributions to regional activities.

60. In referring to the APEID and APPEAL programmes, several spokes-kers commended the various activities undertaken under these pro-grammes while calling for a further redefinition of the terms of referen-ce of the two networks to enable them to design and implement activities with greater efficiency and complementarity.

61. Noting that APEID had been functioning for some 20 years and was in its fifth program-ming cycle, one speaker suggested that it enter a new phase of operation by increasing its empha-sis on international exchange and co-operation. A further suggestion was that APEID be the vehicle for creating a medium or long-term programme for the promotion of educa-tional development for the 21st century. Contributions to both networks from voluntary funds are important and Japan was acknowledged as a major contributor.

62. Commenting on the issue of creating a more viable and cost-effecti-ve consultative mecha-nism to cover all programme areas in education administered by UNESCO/PROAP, many dele-gates endorsed Recommendation No. 36 adopted by the Seventh Session of the Advisory Committee to establish a Regional Committee on Education with a broad-based participation which included representatives of the various funding agencies. Concern was expressed about the composition, funding requirements and frequency of consultations of this body. These ques-tions deserved careful study before decisions were taken which might prove costly in financial and pro-gramme terms.

63. Another suggestion was made that a regional ministerial conferen-ce be convened once every six years in order to coincide with the timing of the preparation of the Medium-Term Plan of UNESCO. All other plan- ning meetings including the Advisory Committee could usefully be sub-sumed under this meeting.

64. Several Member States offered existing or proposed new institu-tions to become centres of sub-regional and/or regional activities. Such centres had the potential to make significant contributions to the devo-lopment and enrichment of education in the region though the budgeta-ry and administrative implications of these proposals would require care-ful study before being acted upon.

65. The delegate from Bangladesh suggested the establishment of a ‘Regional Centre for Non-formal Education’ and offered to host such a Centre in Bangladesh. In addition, China, reiterating its offer both to the Advisory Committee and in Plenary in the discussion on Agenda Item 8, announced that it was developing an international research and training centre for rural education and offered it as an institution for regional co-operation.

66. The delegate from Iran expressed his country’s appreciation of efforts being made by UNESCO to promote co-operation between Member States as part of a policy of administrative decentralization and the expansion of higher education for development. In addition, he sugges-ted that a Regional Centre for Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific be established in the near future, and reconfirmed the offer of his Government, already made to the Director-General, to host such a Centre in Iran.
67. One delegation stressed the need for a high standard of education which utilizes a curriculum geared to meeting individual, local and broader societal needs. An experimental project for regional co-operation on the promotion of ‘Education for Life’ could usefully be established on an experimental basis. Its purpose would be to provide support for educational programmes which combine learning and work experience into a common curriculum to enable students to earn a living, while acquiring knowledge and skills of a more classroom-orientated nature.

68. In recognizing UNESCO’s role as a focal point for regional cooperation, delegates generally agreed that sub-regional co-operation with groupings such as the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), South Asian Association for Regional cooperation (SAARC) and Action Programme Economic Co-operation (APEC) should be further strengthened. Opportunities for the exchange of information, materials, experiences and expertise between UNESCO and other organizations such as the Commonwealth Secretariat, SEAPREAMS, and NGOs, should be similarly actively pursued. One NGO, Education International, was also thought to be a valuable partner in improving the quality of education by an increased attention to reinforcing the status of teachers and their conditions of service.

69. Funding agencies and other partners in development attending MINEDAP VI in an observer capacity were invited to highlight their policies and priorities when providing assistance to education, in general, and the EFA initiative, in particular. The representative from UNDP, Mr Sebastian Zacharia, Chief, Regional Programme Division, Asia and the Pacific, explained UNDP’s current policy priorities with regard to education, schooling and human development and conveyed the Administrator’s wish to collaborate with UNESCO in exploring effective modalities for achieving greater regional co-operation in the field of basic education. He confirmed UNDP’s support for a ‘Co-operative Action Strategy to Basic Education’ (CASE) in Asia and the Pacific region which will be implemented by PROAP. Mr Charles Currin, UNICEF Regional Adviser for Education/Bangkok, also provided information on his Organization’s policies and programmes, particularly with regard to support for the promotion of basic education in the Asia and Pacific region.

70. A concept paper on Regional Co-operation in Basic Education, prepared jointly by UNDP and UNESCO, was circulated to delegates prior to the commencement of the meeting. The paper suggested new approaches of exchanging information, sharing experiences, capacity building, and strengthening national and regional institutions to encourage their active participation in the implementation of the suggested programme on basic education. The concept paper was endorsed by the Seventh Session of the Advisory Committee which recommended its favourable consideration by the Conference. Similarly the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank expressed their willingness to support policies of regional co-operation for educational development.

71. The Director-General’s policy to further decentralize the Organization’s staff programmes and budget to sub-regional and regional offices was warmly welcomed. Pacific States delegates expressed satisfaction with Recommendation No. 46 adopted by the Seventh Session of the Advisory Committee which calls for the further decentralization of funding to the sub-region.
72. With the current reduction in funding available for UNESCO activities from multi-lateral donors, voluntary funds from Member States are becoming an increasingly important source to sustain UNESCO’s regional activities in the area of education. The delegate from Japan, in conveying his country’s support for self-reliance in education within the region, confirmed the intention of his Government to continue providing support for overseas fellowships for advanced study. In a related vein, the Australian and New Zealand delegates likewise confirmed the intention of their Governments to continue their support for regional educational development, especially in the Pacific Islands, both through their contribution to national development efforts and through their respective scholarship schemes.

73. In view of the reduced levels of funding coming from multi-lateral donors, delegates indicated that UNESCO should actively pursue alternative funding sources from member countries.
II. REPORT OF COMMISSION I

Agenda Item 8(1): Education for All - Renewal of Commitments

74. The Commission elected Deputy Minister Selja of the Department of Education of India as Chairperson, and Prof. Dr Soedijarto, Director General of Out-of-School Education, Youth and Sports of Indonesia, as Rapporteur. The delegates from the seventeen countries who participated in the deliberations of Commission I, renewed their commitment to achieving basic education for all.

75. Countries with successful experiences in achieving universal primary education shared their experiences; the early achievers spoke of national will and decades of effort to achieve universal literacy, while those with recent success spoke of enabling legislation and national literacy campaigns within shorter time frames. Other countries spoke of problems encountered in ensuring access and quality in basic education.

76. As regards access, many noted the need to redouble the commitment to meet the fundamental human right of education for all, especially the hundreds of millions in the region as yet unserved, the largest number of whom are girls and women. While a few countries reported gender parity in enrolment and literacy, several others reported disparities which indicate the need for the highest priority attention. Since equity in education is the absolute right of all, access must be expanded and quality and relevance improved to meet their needs having due regard for the changing roles of women and girls in society.

77. An investment in the education of women and girls arguably impacts positively on families, communities and nations. Measures discussed which have been tried with effect included special scholarships for girls, programmes for the provision of free uniforms and books to lighten the burden of school fees for low-income families who might be tempted to keep their daughters at home as a means of freeing up funds for their sons, increasing the number of women teachers, targeted vocational skills training, and girls’ hostels.

78. Others requiring special attention include the disabled. Sometimes culturally ostracized, this group may require special schools, but in any case an orientation of in-service teachers and a redefinition of conventional schools to enable them to pursue their schooling in a standard environment to the extent possible. Other groups such as minority populations, the rural poor, those living in island and other remote areas, nomads and other disadvantaged children, must also be given special attention if education for all is to be achieved.

79. ‘Education for All’ progress must be measured by more than simply enrolment levels and participation rates. The aim must be the completion of a cycle at which satisfactory levels of achievement are reached through a curriculum geared to meeting individual, family, village and country needs. Many countries observed that as societies evolve, so too does the very nature of basic education. The goals of functional literacy must be clearly defined in each context and indicators for its measurement established. Basic education must equip individuals with both life skills for work, productivity and quality of life, and basic
instrumental skills, including reasoning skills (‘the fourth R’) and those needed for self-initiated learning. With technological change considerably reducing the half-life of knowledge, estimated by one delegate to be only five years, individuals must continue learning throughout their lifetimes.

80. The evolution of societies in the region is accompanied by a widely shared concern about values and a possible moral crisis; basic education will have to address this ethical concern. More concretely, teachers and curriculum writers will have to resolve the intractable problem of introducing values education into the core curriculum as a subject or sequence of lessons that can be taught and assessed.

81. The large rural areas of the region, and the gap between them and the urban areas, require the collaboration of several ministries to address their needs, as well as a special focus on rural education which combines basic education, agricultural and scientific education, and adult education.

82. While basic education is sometimes equated with primary education, some countries report a prolongation of the primary cycle or an extension of compulsory education to include the lower secondary cycle. This trend reflects the increased time it takes to meet people’s basic learning needs in a more complex society. Moreover, basic education also increasingly incorporates early childhood care and education (ECCE) in the total package. ECCE was found to be the subject of increased attention in the region and is expanding to include rural-based and home-based programmes for the majority of children who cannot afford private formal pre-schooling.

83. In further reference to the issue of quality, several countries shared their experiences on curricular improvement and reform, including the strengthening of science, values, life-skills, and open-learning components therein; various training and compensation/motivation schemes for teachers; the role of learning assessment measures and systems based on clearly established learning objectives; and the potential value of increasing the role and commitment of parents and the local community in the educational process, e.g. making public the education performance of schools and ‘pastoral care’ programmes.

84. In speaking of the enormous resource requirements to achieve education for all, many speakers emphasized that financial resources alone were not sufficient for success. Greater attention is required to ensure the efficient and effective use of available resources. Competent planning and decentralized management involving community resources were cited as proven cost-effective measures to raise programme impact levels. Some countries, however, have such enormous needs relative to their resources that a response from the international community is the only alternative. Having been determined as a global responsibility, the world community can be expected to respond sympathetically.

85. Regional co-operation should encompass a sharing of experience and expertise for which the UNESCO networks of APPEAL and APEID have already been and continue to be appreciated. Optimism for still greater effectiveness was expected in light of the efforts already under way to redefine their mandates to achieve a clearer programme focus. Among areas identified for attention through these networks are management efficiency in EFA systems, reference libraries for literacy, improving and expanding the scope of primary
education (for APPEAL), values education, education for girls and women, and rural education.
III. REPORT OF COMMISSION II

Agenda Item 8(2): Changing Demands on Education - Meeting the Challenges of the Present and the Future

86. Commission II elected Dr Vichai Tunsiri, secretary-general of the Office of the National Education Commission of Thailand, as Chairperson, and Dr Kim Ransoo, President of the Kwangju University of the Republic of Korea, as Rapporteur.

87. Reflecting on the report of the Seventh Session of the Advisory Committee and on the growing need to give an operational definition of the now widely-accepted belief that education is a life long undertaking, the Commission endorsed the view of one delegate in affirming that programmes must be devised which free young people for jobs that do not yet exist, to use technologies not yet invented. In this environment, the task is less a problem of technical skill transfer than it is one of developing the capacity to think critically, to ‘learn to learn’, to undertake self-study, to take initiatives and to adapt to constantly changing job market.

88. Educational services were reported to be creating comprehensive, multifaceted systems designed so that citizens may apply for study at any point in life in order to obtain the skills needed at any particular moment. In one country, universities are opening their doors to enable even those with no secondary leaving certificate to enroll in special pro-grammes.

89. At the same time, the Commission was unanimous in calling for education to contribute to maintaining cultural identities by giving high priority to values education. In view of the effects of the region’s rapid economic development on lifestyles and value systems, the education system must play a more vigorous role in reinforcing humanistic, ethical and cultural values while helping society adapt to the unstoppable advance of technology. One delegate commented, however, that some traditional values will need to change.

90. It was suggested that a forum for the exchange of experiences on how to develop and implement values education be established and that a comparative study on values education methodologies be undertaken. Indeed, Asia and the Pacific could, in the view of one member, become a world leader in this still uncharted sphere.

91. Values shape many aspects of collective life. One area of concern is that of international understanding as an avenue for peace building. The study of different cultures was encouraged as a way to understand better their points of interface and potential conflict. Insights on these issues could be expected to encourage an increased recourse to the resolution of differences by peaceful means.

92. The issues of environmental degradation, population growth and drug abuse, all of which adversely affect life quality, were recognized as the negative consequences of the unbridled working of some value sub-systems.
93. Noting that some of the Member States have already initiated some programmes such as environment education/population education covering anyone or a combination of the elements of the new EPPE programme, the Commission, therefore, endorsed the interdisciplinary Environment, Population and Preventive Education (EPPE) programme proposed by the Advisory Committee. Much remains to be done and other UN agencies such as UNFPA and UNEP can be expected to collaborate.

94. With increasing success in the region on achieving the Jomtien goals, countries are now turning their attention to improving the articulation between education and work. The need for a vast expansion in skills training through technical and vocational education (TVE) was repeatedly mentioned with, however, greater attention paid to reducing the per capita cost through a collaborative approach to the problem involving industry and the private sector generally.

95. Strategies mentioned by delegates include the introduction of a ‘non-equipment intensive’ vocational stream at the secondary level, three-year post-secondary programmes whereby the students undergo two years of theoretical studies followed by one year attachment with industry, and establishing comprehensive TVE schools catering for in-and out-of-school youth and adults of both sexes.

96. The essential foundation for any meaningful education in such areas as environment or skills training is a sound knowledge of science and mathematics - these being the very subject areas which currently have the highest failure rates. Expansion of science, mathematics and technology education to a broader school population base and the raising of achievement levels is a key challenge to be addressed.

97. Achievement levels are generally acknowledged to correlate closely with educational quality. The Commission reiterated the Advisory Committee recommendation that improvement of educational personnel through training is fundamental along with the continuous upgrading and improvement of learning materials, based on the regular assessment of results.

98. The convergence of various technologies (i.e. information, communication and telecommunications by satellite) is rendering feasible certain innovative equipment proposals for distance education which, only a few years ago, were beyond financial reach and, at the time of MINE-DAP V, barely even imagined.

99. Several members of the Commission argued that the accountability of education systems is more likely to be reinforced when local bodies are given control. Experiences in decentralization including school-based management and provincial based school boards were cited. Both succeeded in increasing public participation in education reforms even though costs increased. At the same time there is a distinctly growing role for the private sector in the management of education in this region. The effective management of decentralized approaches is being facilitated by new technology and development of educational management information systems.

100. A draft resolution requesting UNESCO-PROAP to assist Member States in the implementation of education information systems was introduced.
IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Education for All

A. The Conference recommends that Member States renew their commitment to EFA goals and further strengthen EFA programmes and continue to make use of the Asia Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL), with an emphasis on:

1. more effective programme monitoring and assessment as a means of improving learning achievement with a view to reporting in 1995 on the progress towards EFA 2000 goals;

2. strengthening staff support and professional development for decentralized planning and management of EFA programmes;

3. improving the data base on which EFA-related decisions are made and its reliability;

4. reinforced community and parental support for basic education by means of a strengthened partnership with the media, NGOs, and other relevant Ministries; and

5. greater involvement of women as experts and resource persons in EFA programmes.

B. The Conference recommends to UNESCO that:

6. APPEAL be strengthened in order to better fulfil the objectives of the programme, giving due consideration to the specific needs and expectations of the Member States and field offices of the region, and serving as a vehicle for expanding the provision of quality basic education for all in the region;

7. further decentralization of EFA funds to PROAP, APIA and other field offices be foreseen in 27C/5 with particular reference to target countries in the region (large countries, small island States and least developed countries);

8. efforts to obtain multi- and bilateral financial support for EFA programmes be strengthened for the forthcoming biennium and through the remainder of the decade;

9. partnerships with UNESCO National Commissions as well as national mechanisms and institutions of relevance to EFA’s goals be promoted;
10. programmes to support the involvement of the media and other social service sectors in parental and community support for basic education be foreseen in the approved work plan of the Organization for 1994-1995;

11. continued vigorous support be given to reinforce national efforts on behalf of girls and women as well as to minorities, refugees, the disabled, children of the border areas where there is a mingling of cultures, languages and traditions, the urban poor and other disadvantaged groups;

12. APPEAL’s efforts for the improvement of curriculum, learning materials and training of personnel of EFA including literacy and continuing education be strengthened; and

13. support be given to the priority efforts of the government of Bangladesh in the eradication of illiteracy and in their establishment of a Centre for Non-Formal Education, which would promote exchange of experiences among countries of the region.

II. Education for Women and Girls

The Conference recommends that Member States commit themselves to the:

14. development of targeted action plans to increase access of girls and women to education at all levels;

15. development of educational contents, materials, and methods in both formal and non-formal systems, that take into account the unique needs and problems of women and girl learners and introduce changes which will contribute to their equal participation in all aspects of learning;

16. priority placement of education programmes for girls and women, as well as training on gender issues for those in education, within the framework of national development plans which reflect an adequate analysis of the social and educational situation of girls and women; and


III. Quality and Relevance of Education

A. Educational Research and Innovation for Development

The Conference recommends that, in order to strengthen its recognized mandate, the programmes and activities of the Asia and Pacific Programme of Education Innovation for Development (APEID):
continue to focus on multi-disciplinarity and educational innovation and research in curriculum, educational management, delivery systems, evaluation, teaching materials and methodologies, with emphasis on development materials for the teaching of thinking skills, educational technology, distance education and teacher education;

focus on the problem of developing normative and culture-specific life quality indicators with special attention being paid to the environment, population health/nutrition, AIDS and drugs education; and

support programmes for the development of entrepreneurial and leadership skills in children with due regard for the need for a balance with promoting attitudes which reflect a concern for the environment, the community and international understanding.

Further recommends that UNESCO encourage Member States:

21. to support the 1974 Recommendation on International Understanding and Peace and the Associated Schools project, in order to foster humanistic, ethical/moral and cultural values and international education for peace;

22. to make more systematic reviews and evaluations of the APEID-related programmes of National Development Groups (NDGs) and Associated Centres (ACs);

23. to increase technical support and voluntary financial contributions to APEID to enable it to respond to Member States requests for assistance in educational innovation and research for development.

B. **Education for the World of Work**

The Conference recommends that UNESCO encourage Member States to:

24. promote stronger links between general education and technical vocational education, and between technical vocational education and industry, agriculture and other fields, both within each country and across the Region in application of the Revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education and the Convention on Technical and Vocational Education;

25. promote the mutual recognition of qualifications in co-operation with industry;

26. support the co-operative development of curricula and learning materials in technical and vocational education subjects;

27. support the cooperative development of curricula which link science, humanities, and cultural and traditional values to the world of work in *each Member State*;
28. develop appropriate credit transfer, twinning arrangements, articulation and recognition, procedures within and outside the Region; and

29. exploit open learning approaches to deliver TVE programmes to areas for which access is currently difficult.

Further recommends that Major Programme Area I continue to accord a high priority and appropriate resources to education for the world of work and technical and vocational education in general, and to UNEVOC in particular, with a view to:

30. effectively mobilizing APEID, its associated centres, and the technical and vocational unit at PROAP for programme coordination to assist institutions, organizations and statutory bodies involved in technical and vocational education; and

31. supporting cooperative regional projects to develop technical and vocational educational programmes that integrate school and work experiences in the curriculum; and

32. developing cooperative regional projects to promote learning for the workplace, and in conjunction with the Associated Centres network, support the UNEVOC project within the region.

C. Teacher Education

The Conference recommends to the Director-General that UNESCO provide technical advice and other forms of assistance to member countries to:

33. strengthen and upgrade their systems of teacher education at both the pre service and in-service levels;

34. assist with the development of teaching and learning materials and appropriate delivery systems to improve the professional development of teacher educators; and

35. provide opportunities for key teacher educators in member countries to study abroad in order that they can develop improved knowledge, skills and understandings to upgrade their own countries’ systems of teacher education.

D. Higher Education

The Conference recommends that the Director-General:

36. transmit to the forthcoming session of the General Conference the Iranian proposal to establish a Centre for Higher Education for Asia, paying special attention to the principle of programme concentration and
administrative decentralization, together with the feasibility study undertaken by UNESCO;

37. support regional and national programmes for monitoring the quality of education in private universities; and

38. increase the level of resources required to render the UNITWIN and UNESCO chair programmes more effective in the region and to suggest other forms of university network;

39. support regional and national programmes for providing the recognition of learning acquired via different pathways in university and distance education and technical training and to ensure that there is a linkage between higher education and the world of work, especially in those nations in a state of economic transition.

IV. International and Regional Co-operation in Education

A. APEID and APPEAL

The Conference recommends that the Director-General:

40. give further clarification and an operational definition of the APEID and APPEAL mandates;

41. establish a Regional Committee on Education with a broad-based participation and including representatives of funding agencies and NGOs in order to plan, monitor and assess all of PROAP’s activities in the area of education, it being understood that this Committee would replace the Advisory Committee and the separate Regional Consultation Meetings currently held to monitor the work of APEID and APPEAL; and

42. the full name of the APEID Secretariat be expanded to the ‘Asia and Pacific Centre of Educational Innovation for Development’, while retaining the abbreviated form ACEID, since the acronym is widely known.

B. Policy and Management

The Conference recommends that, through the Director-General:

43. assistance be given to Member States to establish or strengthen education management information systems;

44. needs assessments, policy analyses and sector reviews be carried out in the context of national reform and reconstruction initiatives in response to Member
States requests and in partnership with National Commissions as well as other United Nations Agencies;

45. the educational authorities of each member state of the region be urged to designate one internal department as the liaison organ for exchange of educational legislature and policy information, this organ providing information upon request about educational legislation and innovation of its own country to other Member States;

46. special attention be paid to the needs of countries with major educational needs such as those with large populations, those with high illiteracy Rates, small island States, least developed countries, or those with a rapidly evolving socio economic environment;

47. assistance be given to Member States to develop physical environments suitable for life-long learning by making use of existing schools, religious centres and parks and stimulating community participation in construction, maintenance and ecological landscaping;

48. in welcoming the proposed new UNDP-UNESCO initiative, UNESCO PROAP be asked to work out the details necessary to launch and coordinate this plan, particularly the regional project on Basic Education in close consultation with UNDP, bearing in mind the guidelines presented by Members attending the Seventh Session of the Advisory Committee;

49. UNESCO convey to the Asian Development Bank the appreciation of the six regional Member States concerned for its assistance in formulating national EFA plans of action which are worthy of emulation;

50. UNESCO take initiative to mobilize all partners of the Jomtien Conference and other donor agencies to provide additional resources, mostly in grant form, so as not to overburden those who are already suffering from debt burdens;

51. agencies such as UNESCO, UNDP, UNICEF and the World Bank concentrate their efforts on Basic Education for All, working together so that in least developed countries and countries with high population and high illiteracy rates EFA goals are achieved according to their national policies;

52. support be given for developing a system of effective indicators for monitoring the performance and quality of education which reflects the specificity of the countries of the region;

53. considering that UNESCO field offices in the Asia Pacific region have grown under the conflicting stresses of needs and demands, with some offices working as integrated units and others as single discipline units, and keeping in view the large distances and vast area of the region, UNESCO be urged to undertake a complete review of all the field offices to make them more efficient and functional;
54. To provide PROAP with the requisite facilities including reinforced staff, budget and decentralized authorities to enable it to efficiently implement major regional programmes such as APEID and APPEAL, working in co-operation with sub-regional education advisers;

55. adequate emphasis be placed on twining and research activities in rural education within the UNESCO Programme and Budget for 1994-1995;

56. support be given to the priority efforts of China for the establishment of an International Centre for Research and Training in RUMS Education in China considering that the majority of the population in developing countries live in these areas and that the International Symposium on Rural Education reaffirmed the need to reform, strengthen, and integrate rural education programmes;

57. the allocation in the 1994-95 Draft Programme and Budget for the Pacific Member States be increased to at least the current levels, in view of the Basic Education and Life Skills (BELS) programme and other emerging education activities in the region, and that this recommendation be presented to the General Conference;

58. realizing that illiteracy is a most outstanding problem of the region, UNESCO be urged to consider the most populous countries with high illiteracy Rates as a separate priority target group, with specific focus, resources, and priority attention in the design and implementation UNESCO’s education programme and budget, and to present such to the General Conference; and

59. recognizing the specific nature and difficulties of the land-locked newly independent Central Asian Republics, UNESCO be likewise urged to consider the countries in these categories as a separate priority target group, to be given specific focus, resources, and priority attention in the design and implementation UNESCO’s education programme and budget, and to present such to the General Conference.
V. THE 1993 KUALA LUMPUR DECLARATION ON EDUCATION

60. The Sixth Conference of Ministers of Education and Those Responsible for Economic Planning in Asia and the Pacific, meeting in Kuala Lumpur from 21 to 24 June 1993, examined a broad range of educational challenges facing the countries of the region today. The size and complexity of this region, which accounts for nearly two-thirds of the world’s people and is predicted soon to become the largest force in the global economy, would suggest that a consensus on educational priorities would be difficult to achieve.

61. The Conference agreed, however, that two overarching concerns stood apart from all others. The first was the importance of values, ethics and culture in education; the second, the need to improve the situation of women and girls within the education systems of the region. These two imperatives are integral parts of education as the foundation of socio-economic development.

62. The Conference expressed the profound conviction that the only path to the restoration of a balance in its value system in a world increasingly shaped by materialism was to assign a significant place for the teaching of ethics, values and culture in the school curriculum. On the subject of women and children, consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in particular with the spirit and letter of paragraph 26 relating to the right to education, equity, that is the quality of fairness or justice, must lie at the centre of national and regional educational plans. Since women and girls constitute half the population of the region and, in many parts of the region, are deprived of equity in education and employment, they must receive special emphasis in the preparation of national educational plans.

63. Bearing the foregoing in mind, the Conference called upon the countries of the region, on UNESCO and on the international community to:

- review their existing education systems with a view to formulating appropriate values education within the curriculum at all levels of the education system;

- promote the use of effective pedagogical strategies and curriculum to inculcate ethical, cultural, and moral values;

- ensure their education systems play a positive interventionist role in the promotion of women’s status by developing targeted action plans, removing both women’s illiteracy and barriers inhibiting their access to and retention in, education;

- emphasize women’s participation in scientific, vocational, technical, and professional education;

- foster development of new values through gender-appropriate curricula, learning measures, and the enhanced awareness of gender issues amongst teachers, planners, and administrators;

- continuously monitor the progress of education for women and girls.
64. The Conference further called upon international agencies and non-governmental organizations to give top priority in their developmental programmes to the education of women and girls; and upon the United Nations to place on the agenda of the forthcoming World Conference on Women, the issue of women and girls’ education, with emphasis on access and equity.
ANNEXES

I. Agenda

II. Opening speeches

III. Closing speeches

IV. List of documents

V. List of participants
ANNEX I

AGENDA

1. Opening of the Conference
2. Election of the President
3. Adoption of the Rules of Procedure
4. Election of the other members of the Bureau
5. Adoption of the Agenda
6. Organization of the work of the Conference
7. Overview of educational development in Asia and the Pacific
8. Enhancing the role of education as a dynamic force for the twenty-first century:
   (1) Education for all - renewal of commitments
   (2) Changing demands on education -meeting the challenges of the present and the future
9. Promoting regional and international co-operation in education including the mobilization of resources
10. Adoption of the report and recommendations of the Conference
11. Closure of the Conference
ANNEX II

OPENING SPEECHES

Address by the Minister of Education, Malaysia
The Honourable Datuk Amar Dr Sulaiman Bin Haji Daud

Address by the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,
Mr Federico Mayor

Address by the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia,
The Honourable Encik Ghafar Baba
Address by The Honourable Datuk Amar Dr Sulaiman Bin Haji Daud,
Minister of Education, Malaysia

The Honourable Encik Ghafar Baba,
Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia,
His Excellency Mr Federico Mayor,
the Director-General of UNESCO,
Honourable Ministers of Education and Heads of
Delegation of UNESCO Member States of the
Asia and the Pacific Region,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to take this opportunity to express my most sincere thanks and deepest apprecia-
tion to the Honourable Encik Ghafar Baba, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia for graciously
consenting to officially declare open the Sixth Regional Conference of Ministers of Education
and Those Responsible for Economic Planning in Asia and the Pacific, this afternoon. We highly
value and appreciate your presence in spite of your very busy schedule.

It is indeed a pleasure and my pleasant duty to welcome His Excellency, Mr Federico
Mayor, the Director-General of UNESCO, your Excellencies Ministers of Education and Heads
of Delegation from UNESCO member countries in Asia and the Pacific region to this Sixth
Regional Conference of Ministers of Education and Those Responsible for Economic Planning in
Asia and the Pacific, or MINEDAP V I . I would also like to extend an equally warm welcome to
all delegates and representatives of the non-member states, as well as the numerous representa-
tives of inter-national organizations under the United Nation system, non governmental organi-
zations, institutions and foundations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are indeed honoured that Kuala Lumpur has been chosen as the venue for this
Conference -the sixth in this series organized by UNESCO. The support that the Malaysian
Government has given in hosting this Conference shows Malaysia’s continuing commitment to
UNESCO’s cultural, educational and scientific mission in the promotion of international understand-
ing, peace, progress and well-being.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is our hope that this Conference will give us the opportunity to share and exchange ideas
and experiences of common interest in the field of education which will help advance the de-
velopment of education in our region.
The Fifth MINEDAP Conference was held in Bangkok in 1985 and it was the recommen-
dations made at that Conference which paved the way for the World Declaration of Education for
All, in Jomtien, in March 1990.

As is well known, the twin goals of the Jomtien Declaration is to ensure the provision of
basic education for all, and the eradication of illi-teracy the world over by the year 2000. This has
led us to do some serious rethinking of our national educational policies, programmes and bud-
get allocations for education. We have all initiated Plans of Action to achieve the goals of the
Jomtien Declaration but our strategies vary, according to our unique situation, the magnitude of
the tasks ahead and problems faced. This forum, I believe, will give us the opportunity to dis-cuss
these common problems in greater detail, enable us to share our experiences and expertise and
hopefully find common patterns that will lead to greater bilateral and multilateral co-operation in
our efforts to achieve our goals.

The Fifth MINEDAP Conference has been instrumental in identifying priorities in educa-
tion for the 20th Century. As planned, the Sixth MINE-DAP Conference will review commit-
ments made in the past as well as prepare us to meet the challenges of the present and the future,
in the context of regional and international co-operation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I believe that this is an important Conference, especially since it is going to address the
needs and problems of our region. The Asia-Pacific is a complex, but not necessarily a complic-
ated, region. Indeed, it is the seat of some of the oldest and major civilizations of the world. What
we see in the region today is the product of a tremendous process of cultu-ral exchanges, encoun-
ters and assimilation, evolving through history.

The Asia-Pacific today is a region of great heterogeneity.- The dimension of its cultural
diversity and variety is almost endless. Besides this, it also represents a mixture of nations dis-
tinguished by their diffe-rent stages of political and economic development. It is against this rich,
diverse and naturally complex background, that the agenda of this forum is set for us to debate.

Judging from our varied cultural, political, social and economic backgrounds, the debate
can be, and should be, very enriching and sti-mulating. We have a gamut of cultural and non-cul-
tural resources and experiences to draw upon in our discussion on matters of mutual interest and
concern to the region. I truly hope that through our deliberations we will be able to identify some
common aspirations and goals in education for use in this region. We must endeavour to make
education a force to achieve international peace and security; to promote social and economic
advancement of all peoples, and to reaffirm our faith in fundamental human rights.

Malaysia is fully aware of the need to incorporate ethics, cultural values and morals
in its educational system. This is an important factor in a nation’s development. It needs the
human resilience, which means good moral standards and discipline on the part of the popu-
lation, and not just ‘objective’ scientific and technical know-how, to make it a lasting ven-
ture. Much of the human crisis erupting in the world today, as it has been in the past -
the violence, the killings, and destruction of properties - is often due to a failure in the education system to **fully develop human beings**. Of course, there are other factors that come into play in this crisis, such as economic injustice and political repression, but invariably it is a crisis of the human mind, and a value-oriented education culture is the proper area in which and through which this perennial human problem can effectively be addressed. It is partly for this reason that we have proposed that a Round Table Meeting be organized during the Conference to discuss and exchange ideas on ethical education. Of course, in a region as diverse and heterogenous as ours, there cannot be any standard values to follow; they can best be defined and formulated on the basis of each nation’s particular cultural and historical background. But we hope that at least a general concept on the subject could be evolved and a common understanding of the problem developed during the dialogue session.

I have full confidence that we, who are here this afternoon for the Sixth MINEDAP Conference, with collective wisdom and ingenuity, will be able to grapple with the issues at hand and realize our aspirations for education in the 21st Century.

I hope this Sixth MINEDAP Conference will prove meaningful in further enhancing cooperation amongst countries in Asia and the Pacific. Let us take the opportunity here to discuss strategies utilized and to hopefully-find solutions to some of the common problems faced. Let us take the opportunity also for co-operation among us for the betterment of education in our region.

On this optimistic note, I would like to again extend a very warm welcome to all participants and observers to this Conference, and invite you to take the opportunity to enjoy some of the sights and sounds of our country, Malaysia, and sample our varied culture. I wish you a fruitful and meaningful Conference.

Thank you.
Address by Mr Federico Mayor,
Director-General of UNESCO

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the eight years which have elapsed since MINEDAP V, a mere second in history, the old world order has died and a new one - as yet, neither orderly nor well defined - has begun to emerge. That the world is changing in ways that are both numerous and profound is self-evident. Whether the accumulative effect of these changes will be for the better or for the worse is yet to be determined. That will depend, in very large measure, upon the breadth of our understanding and vision and the strength of our convictions and principles. To a greater degree than ever before, our fate is in our own hands. Through our actions today, we shall shape the world in which we will live tomorrow. These are, accordingly, times of hope and opportunity, but also times of anxiety and doubt. But above all else, these are times for thought and reflection and times for initiative and action. In a fundamental sense, that is why we are gathered here. Our purpose is to examine the enormous potential of education in meeting the challenges and opportunities of today and tomorrow in this vast and varied mega-region which is fast becoming the pivot of global change and development. That is the subject of our meeting, a subject as vast and vital as it is timely and topical.

Right Honourable Deputy Prime Minister,
Honourable Ministers,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to this Conference and to express on your behalf, as well as that of UNESCO, our profound gratitude to our host, the Government of Malaysia, for the excellent arrangements and, more especially, the warm spirit of friendship and hospitality with which we have been received. It is especially fitting, Mr Deputy Prime Minister, that this meeting takes place in your nation that, through both word and deed, has demonstrated its faith and commitment to education and has, as its reward, led to economic and social return. The progress of education in Malaysia over the past two decades has, indeed, transformed the very parameters of development. Where once Malaysia’s survival and prosperity depended upon its natural resources and low labour costs, today -and even more so tomorrow -Malaysia’s future will be built upon the competencies and talents of an educated citizenship. Our venue, thus, well suits the purposes of our meeting. The potential of education is not merely a promising idea in Malaysia; it is the faith and concept upon which the nation’s progress and prosperity has been built. We are, one might say, gathered in one of the world’s leading development laboratories to observe the growth effects of a diet rich in education. I should not fail to hail those who have been the architects of Malaysia’s educational advance, first among them, its Right Honourable Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir Mohammed. In this enormous undertaking, the Prime Minister has been ably assisted by you, Mr Deputy Prime Minister, by the Honourable Finance Minister, Mr Anwar Ibrahim, and by our host, the Honourable Minister of Education, Dr Sulaiman Daud. UNESCO, I
should add with gratitude, has also benefited from the exemplary ser-vices of Mr Anwar Ibrahim who, as many of you recall, was unanimous-ly elected President of the 25th session of the UNES-
CO General Conference.

It is, Ladies and Gentlemen, deeply gratifying to observe the very high level of participa-
tion in this Conference. This testifies to the impor-tance your governments attach to the role of
UNESCO and to your own commitment to the cause of education. I wish to extend, on behalf of
all of us, a very special word of welcome to the Member States that are par-ticipating in this
Conference for the first time: the Cook Islands, Kiribati and Tuvalu. We look forward to your acti-
ve participation both in this Conference and in UNESCO’s activities within this region. UNES-
CO is also joined by newly independent states that formerly constituted part of the USSR; their
membership in a regional group will be decided upon at the forthcoming UNESCO General
Conference.

I wish also to warmly welcome observers from sister agencies of the United Nations System. As you know, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific ESCAP - has, as in the past, collaborated with UNESCO in organizing MINEDAP VI. Wherever appro-
priate, UNESCO seeks to co-operate with other Agencies of the United Nations system. As an
Organization whose unique mission within the United Nations system is intellectual co-operation,
it is imperative that we be open and responsi- ve to possibilities of collaboration and partnership.
Within the Asian and Pacific region we co-operate with ESCAP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, the
World Bank and the Asian Development Bank to mention but our main partners. New and pro-
mising areas of interaction with FAO and WHO have recently opened. The underlying purpose of
all such co-operation is, of course, to enable UNESCO and the other institutions to better serve
Member States. UNESCO is an organization which operates not only in Paris but particularly in
each country, and it is at each country level that it can be helpful in providing its experience (this
means the successes and failures of all its Member States in the matters of its fields of competen-
ce) in the formulation of strategies in UNESCO’s fields of competence, in the preparation of pro-
jects to be submitted to funding institutions such as UNDP, World Bank, GEF, ADB, etc, in the
designing of reforms, in providing Parliaments with elements for debate.... It’s at this national
upstream level, working close to the ministers, that UNESCO has its main place and role.

Mr President,

What are the main challenges that confront education in Asia and the Pacific on the thre-
shold of the 21st century? They are, in my view, the same issues that face the world as a whole:
building peace in freedom, justice and equity; achieving development; and, protecting our envi-
ron-ment. This identity of issues is only to be expected. Asia and the Pacific, after all, includes
nearly two-thirds of humanity. Its problems are thus the world’s and vice versa. Yours is a vast
and varied region defined not only by geography and culture, but even more so by the desire and
will of its diverse Member States to work together to seek solutions to the common problems
which confront them and, indeed, all of mankind.

Of these, the most important and essential is that assigned to UNESCO by its
founders, in the wake of a great and terrible war: building the defenses of peace in the minds
of men. For if we fail to accomplish this, we cannot hope either to achieve development or to preserve the environment. In recent years, the world has vacillated between euphoria and dismay. We eagerly welcomed the end of the cold war, the toning down of ideological conflicts, the major initiatives on disarmament and the renewed commitment of the world community to international co-operation through the United Nations. Yet, at the same time, we witnessed the difficulties inherent in the apprenticeship of freedom and democracy, the resurgence of nationalisms and the rise of religious and ethnic strife. Having lived our adult lives in dread of war between nation states, we now read dismal predictions that the future will witness bitter and brutal conflicts between civilizations and cultures. It is this which we must avoid, at all costs, and we can do so only through a peace which, in the words of the UNESCO Constitution, is based upon the ‘intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind’.

We were prepared for war. We are unprepared for peace. We were unprepared for conflict prevention, and so, having invested enormous amounts in conventional warfare we have been unable to react as we should to the collapse of communism or to the awakening of dormant hatred and violence. All the available mechanisms were designed to face aggression, not democracy nor peaceful coexistence. And, as a consequence, we have been spectators instead of being actors. I like to repeat that the transition from the reason of force to the force of reason is the crucial one at the eve of the next millennium. And you, Ministers of Education, you are the protagonists. Because only the teachers, the educators, the journalists, the scientists, only they can mobilize the necessary spiritual strength.

We realize that peace, development and democracy cannot come from outside but from endogenous and persevering efforts, which can be assisted and facilitated by international co-operation. Economic growth is the result of human resource development. Human resource development and the eradication of poverty are the two pillars of the International Development Strategy (IDS) and of peace and non-violence. In a world in which our destiny is increasingly a collective and planetary one, no task can be more vital than promoting, through education and culture, an active sense of tolerance and mutual understanding. For this, in the final analysis, is the only basis on which an enduring and just peace can be established and maintained between nations and peoples.

I am extremely pleased to observe that a special round table has been organized by the host country on Values as an integral force in the development of Education. As the concerns I have just expressed indicate, I feel very strongly that our educational systems have often failed to teach appropriate values or indeed, in certain cases, any values at all. This is a grave omission for it is values that give meaning and purpose to life. Curiously, it is sometimes asserted that an absence of values makes for tolerance. Nothing, of course, could be further from the truth. True understanding of others cannot be based upon ignorance, but only upon knowledge which begins with an understanding of the self and progressively extends to the understanding of others. Without knowledge of our own culture, and the values it enshrines, we cannot understand the culture and values of others. This is why a strong sense of cultural identity is not in contradiction to, but, on the contrary, is the very basis of tolerance and mutual understanding. It may seem contradictory that tolerance of others should be founded upon the Socratic precept, ‘Know thyself’, but this, I think, is also what the famous Bengali poet, Tagore, implies when he insists that we must ‘never lose touch of the one in the play of the many’.
Education, at the threshold of the 21st century, is unquestionably faced with many real and urgent problems, particularly in its interrela-tionship with society, economy and culture. Yet, at the same time, we are also beset by false dichotomies and dilemmas, dubious solutions to diffi-
culties real and imagined, and a tendency to complicate the dialogue bet-
ween cultures by stressing extreme view-points rather than searching for common good. One notes, for example, a ten-
dency to juxtapose freedom and responsibility whereas any serious analysis of the matter would quickly reveal that one presupposes the other; they are complementary, not contradictory,
concepts. Similarly, democracy is juxtaposed to disci-
pline, as if a choice had to be made between
them whereas, in truth, as Mahatma Gandhi rightly pointed out: ‘A born democrat is a born dis-
cipli-narian’.

Acceptance of democracy implies a willing obedience to law. Still others seek to oppose
technology to tradition. We must be able to take the best of the past to better share and shape the
future, with the help of a well-guided application of knowledge.

In sum, there is, I am convinced, a need for greater intellectual cla-
ritiy and dispassionate
analysis of present circumstances and future trends. This, as you are aware, is the task assigned
to the Commission on Education and Learning for the Twenty-First Century that Mr Jacques
Delors, the President of the Commission of the European Community, has agreed to chair. The
Commission Secretariat, I might note, will be follo-
ing your deliberations with great care during
the coming days.

As you are aware, UNESCO has also established a Commission on Culture and
Development under the distinguished chairmanship of Mr Javier Perez de Cuellar, former
Secretary General of the United Nations. The work of these Commissions, I am certain, will prove
complementary. Each will illuminate, from a different angle, the present and future chal-lenges
and problems of humanity, and recommend solutions.

Mr President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The greatest educational challenge confronting the region and, indeed, the world as a
whole, is that of making EDUCATION FOR ALL a reality. Forty months ago, the world
community met in Jomtien and pled-
ed itself to renewed efforts to achieve EDUCATION FOR ALL by the year 2000. Now, only eight years remain before the end of the century.
This Conference represents a welcome and needed opportunity to review our progress, to
identify our strengths and weaknesses and, above all, to renew our commitment and efforts. The
need is great. In 1990, Asia and the Pacific counted nearly three-quarters of the world’s
illiterate adults and over half of its out-of-school children. But the promise is far greater than
are the problems. Those countries which have been at the forefront in promoting education
have, in most cases, been rewarded by the most rapid economic and social progress. In
truth, many of the ‘economic miracles’ of this region, to which the media love to point, upon
closer exa-
mination, are seen to be the happy and expected returns that result from investing
in people. What the experience of the New Industrialized Economies demonstrates is that
education is a potent economic input. As I have already underlined, what is ultimately
decisive in development is human competence and creativity. Education and training, as the
principal means for transforming human potential into knowledge, competen-
cies and skills,
is the force that will shape the world economies of the future. Hence, EDUCATION FOR ALL is not only an ethical imperative; it is also an essential condition for development.

There is one vital area in the overall quest to achieve EDUCATION FOR ALL that requires special attention: it is the education of women and girls. To be certain, the situation is slowly improving and for the region as a whole girls constitute about 45% of enrolment at the primary level. Disparities, however, continue to exist, particularly in secondary and higher education. Education of girls is especially critical for development because, as their education increases, their future family size tends to decrease. Seeking to develop in a situation of rapid demographic growth, a plight which many countries in the region share, can be compared to attempting to run up a down-escalator: it takes a major effort to simply stay where you are and an enormous exertion to advance, however slowly. In short, there are no better or more needed investments than those in education of women and girls.

UNESCO’s efforts to promote EDUCATION FOR ALL in the region take a number of forms. APPEAL, the Asian and Pacific Programme of Education for All, is, of course, the main thrust. In this line, in cooperation with UNICEF and UNFPA, UNESCO has launched an EDUCATION FOR ALL initiative among the Nine largest Populous Developing Countries in which the five corresponding countries of the Asian and Pacific Region are actively participating. The Government of India has generously offered to host a Summit meeting of Heads of State and Government of the Nine Populous Developing Countries in New Delhi in December of this year. The purposes of this initiative are: (i) to achieve strong political commitment to EFA through the personal involvement of Heads of States or Governments; (ii) to develop and apply strategies for mobilizing resources with a greater sense of urgency in countries of enormous scale, and (iii) to promote south-to-south cooperation among large countries seeking solutions to common problems. UNESCO, of course, also has a programme for island states which face problems of scale of an opposite sort. We also work with Member States in the region to improve the status of teachers, who are and will remain the essential agents of education, in developing new curricula, in the training of key staff and in scores of other ways. The purpose which unites all these diverse efforts is the quest to make EDUCATION FOR ALL a reality in all Member States of the region in the shortest possible period of time.

Implicit in the notion of an educational system is the idea of inter-relatedness and, hence, a need for systematic planning and co-ordination. Basic education for all is our first, not our final goal. It provides the foundation for a diversified educational system designed to meet the particular needs of each society. There is, for example, rapid growth of technical and vocational education in most of the countries of the region. This, accordingly, would seem to be an area where an exchange of experience could be especially fruitful. While the growing need for technical and vocational education is recognized, its cost tends to be high and the record of past experience has been controversial, particularly when efforts have been undertaken without the indispensable partnership of the productive and service sectors. Education, at all levels, is not the responsibility of the State alone. The family, the civil society at large, the media, all must contribute to provide the necessary services and materials, as well as a propitious climate. I am, therefore, delighted to observe that Australia will be organizing a special round table on this topic later this week. It is imperative that we
expand technical and vocational education but essential that we do so in ways which are, at once, effective and affordable.

In no area is the disparity among countries of the region more striking than in higher education. In one rapidly growing state, for example, one person in every 25 is enrolled in an institution of higher education against fewer than one person in 200 in most other countries. Overall, however, enrolment has more than doubled during the past 20 years, rising from 11 to 26 million. In most countries, this has had a very positive impact upon the adaptability and productivity of the labour force and, indeed, is an important factor in explaining the exceptional dynamism of the economies of many countries in the region. As many of you are aware, the UNITWIN Programme and the Institution of UNESCO Chairs are the two new modalities I have introduced to strengthen international co-operation aimed at the reform and adaptation of higher education systems and at facilitating the transfer of knowledge. It is proposed to establish at least ten additional UNESCO Chairs in the Asia and Pacific region during the 1994-1995 biennium.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I look forward to following your deliberations in the days ahead. This Conference has always been a source of enormous enrichment to UNESCO. If past experience is any guide, the ideas discussed and debated here will find their way into the future programmes of our Organization, both at the regional and global levels.

MINEDAP VI will, I believe, prove especially important as it is taking place at a turning point in history and in UNESCO as well. With the end of the ideological rift between East and West, UNESCO has, at long last, been accorded the chance to accomplish its ethical mission. But it is also more evident each day that the solution to the problems of our times lies at the very heart of its fields of competence: education, science, culture and communication. Only through a sharing of knowledge can we reduce the gap between the rich and the poor, only through education and culture can we learn to live in harmony with one another and only through education and science can we make our peace with nature, without which we cannot long survive.

The notion that extension and sharing of knowledge is the basis of peace is a venerable one in this region. In the Chinese classic, The Great Learning, which dates from 2500 years ago, it is noted that:

‘The extension of knowledge consists in the investigation of things. When things are investigated, knowledge is extended. When knowledge is extended, ... the mind is elevated; when the mind is elevated, the personal life is deepened, when the personal life is deepened, the family will be regulated; when the family is regulated the State will be in order, when the State is in order, there will be peace on earth’.

Thank you.
Keynote Address by The Honourable Encik Ghafar Baba,
Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia

His Excellency,
Mr Federico Mayor,
Director-General of UNESCO

Y.B. Datuk Amar Dr Sulaimai Bin Daud,
Minister of Education Malaysia

Distinguished Ministers of Education,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour and pleasure for me, on behalf of the Government of Malaysia, to address and officially declare open this Conference.

May I take this opportunity to extend a very warm ‘Selamat Datang’ to the Director-General of UNESCO, Mr Federico Mayor, all eminent Ministers of Education and Heads of Delegations from UNESCO Member States in the Asia and the Pacific region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There’s a heavy task ahead of us. Our task will be made heavier because of the great heterogeneity, diversity and the vastness of Asia and the Pacific region. Today, Asia alone has half of the world’s population while by the year 2000 it will have two thirds, while Europe will have only 6 per cent.

I believe that we should lead and not be led, so that Asia and the Pacific will become a power to be reckoned with. I think, Ladies and Gentlemen, in this context, education has a profound role to play.

As technological advances and new production methods transform the economies of the world more than ever before, the future of a nation’s place in the world hinges on the capacity to acquire, adapt, innovate and then to advance knowledge. This capacity depends largely upon the extent to which a country’s population has attained literacy, numeracy, communication, thinking and problem solving skills. Increasing the level of education and training in order to facilitate human resource development is thus a challenge for all countries.

Although I firmly believe that education is one of the keys to unlocking the doors to social and economic development, and a dynamic force for our future growth and survival, for education to fulfill its intended function it must not lose sight of the importance of the values dimension in education. That is, it must also engender a vital sense of the importance
of values and morals for the development and well being of human society as a whole. It is through these values that the individual and society find their identity and worth.

As you are aware, in several so-called ‘developed nations’ concern over this cultural or value problem has led to various attempts to reform existing materialistic education systems to make them more human and cultural and to restore ‘the good old values’. We should avoid the pitfalls which the developed nations are facing in their systems.

Malaysia is fully aware of the need to incorporate ethics, cultural values and morals in its educational system. This is an important factor in a nation’s development. It needs the human resilience, which means good moral standards and discipline of the population, and not just ‘objective’ scientific and technical know-how, to make it a lasting venture.

We, the Asia-Pacific community, should be alert to the overriding problem of values. The implication at the regional level is that these values, if properly identified, and based on our common heritage, can have a far-reaching impact on the promotion of human and cultural understanding across national boundaries. This is especially necessary in the present time of rapid economic growth in this region. One of the key problems is the breakdown of the traditional extended family. The extended family system of the Asia and Pacific region had always acted as a cushion against some of the negative aspects of modernization.

The extended family which has traditionally provided economic and social security to its members is slowly being replaced by independent households. This implies that over the coming decades, there would be an increase in the obligations of Governments of countries in this region to help families to fulfill their traditional functions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The problems of education are generally the same everywhere, education being a universal necessity of mankind. Provision of education for all remains a basic problem in many developing countries.

For us in this region, illiteracy is still a challenge and one of the main problems we have to strive to eradicate. Eradication of illiteracy, Ladies and Gentlemen, is not something impossible as there are already countries which have dramatically succeeded in achieving this.

Today, in many countries in this region, as the learning force grows and the workplace environment receives the impact of rapid development, social and cultural changes; the demand for continuing education is growing in demand. This is especially so in skills training which augurs well with the ever increasing need for better trained manpower to meet the industrial needs of the nations. Current demands for such trained manpower has prompted Governments and the private sectors to provide skills training through formal and non-formal means and through in-plant and in-services trainings.

Conventionally, demand in education has been met by pumping in more funds, but in the future it will be necessary to look into other avenues to meet these needs. One avenue is the cost-efficient aspect of education. This relates to how well goals are achieved relative
to the expansion of resources. The challenge thus lies in setting the right educational goals. It is critical therefore for Governments to concentrate resources on those improvements that are known to enhance student learning.

It is only through developing a strong managerial and institutional capacity that countries will achieve a quality education system that is sustainable. For us in this region, this is, I think, another challenge for the present and the future.

Apart from financial aid and assistance, there is also the need for more inter-country, inter-regional co-operation in the field of education, especially in terms of joint projects, exchange of experience and insights, joint deliberations and thinking. Co-operation is also needed in the form of specialized training, attachments and exchange programmes, research and development, co-operative studies and twinning programmes. Co-operation of this kind among countries in this region can contribute significantly to each participating country’s efforts both present and future. Clearly, in these areas, regional and international communities can provide invaluable support and active co-operation which is as important for the integrity of their intellectual mission as it is for the support of the countries involved.

For us in Asia and the Pacific, Regional co-operation can bring more benefits than we can ever imagine. The dimension of its cultural diversity is almost endless. There is also a mixture of nations distinguished by their different stages or states of political and economic development. This varied and diverse cultural, political and economic background could be an asset and a source of strength for members of the region. We should be able to tap this diversity in order to enrich our common experience and to facilitate more regional cooperation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We as Ministers of Education, Educational Planners and Policy Makers, are invested with the authority and influence to shape and set directions in our respective countries. We are also in a position to bring about change that will ensure our common and noble aim of providing accessibility to education.

Let us remind ourselves of one thing - that we are accountable to the people we work for, to the country we belong to and to ourselves. As members of UNESCO, we would be able to share our expertise, share our problems and enable mutual co-operation. Let us thus work towards ensuring that the existing mechanism facilitated by UNESCO within the cooperative inter-agency arrangement continues as an important vehicle for improving education in this region.

I hope you will have a pleasant stay. ‘Terima Kasih’. On this note, I declare open this Conference.
ANNEX III

CLOSING SPEECHES

Closing Address by Mr Colin N. Power
Assistant Director-General for Education,
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Closing Address by the Minister of Education, Malaysia
The Honourable Datuk Amar Dr Sulaiman Bin Haji Daud
Mr President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me, on behalf of the Director-General who was here with you at the opening of this distinguished assembly, a rare honour and privilege to address you on this occasion when we will have to take leave of each other and return to our occupations in our own countries and organizations. During these past few days - first with ADCOM VII and since then with MINEDAP VI - I think that our exchanges, discussions, debates, persuasions and even intellectual confrontations, if any, has been a most illuminating and enriching experience. Further, the deliberations of both ADCOM VII and MINEDAP VI are such that it is only when a clear stock-taking is made in retrospect (perhaps a week or so from now) that it will dawn upon us that we have, indeed, achieved so much in such a short space of time!

Mr President,

If it is agreed amongst ourselves that much has been achieved, then I am sure that much of that achievement is not only due to the excellence of the debates on so many contemporary issues, and those that are likely to emerge in the near and distant future, but also due to the hospitality, material and logistical support that has been showered on us so generously by the Government and peoples of this country.

More than that, Mr President, is the fact that your Acting Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Mr Ghafar Baba, before declaring open this Conference, stirred us all with his deep conviction that Education can indeed constitute a major force in meeting the rather imposing demands of the two thirds of humanity who are projected to occupy the surface of this region by the year 2000. And you, our distinguished President, in your capacity as Minister of Education and Head of Malaysia’s Delegation, did suggest inter alia that despite the great heterogeneity and cultural diversity of this same region that the Conference would identify some common aspirations and goals in Education that could bring a greater measure of regional solidarity and make a contribution to international peace and solidarity.

In this respect, Professor Federico Mayor echoed precisely the same message when he declared:

‘Yours is a vast and varied region defined not only by geography and culture, but ever more so by the desire and will of its diverse Member States to work together to seek solutions to the common problems which confront them, and indeed, all of mankind’.
Mr President,

I am sure you will agree that much of the work of this Conference has been facilitated by serious professional work undertaken by members of ADCOM VII. The issues that have been brought to the attention of this conference as recommendations and which have been adopted by this august assembly following further debates at the Commissions established by this Conference is evidence, I like to think, that there is indeed a near complete identity of views between professional educators and policy-makers. This near identity is perhaps due to the fact that as education is more than the concern of educationists alone and that inter-disciplinarity is rapidly becoming the hallmark we are obliged to reckon with in solving or even coming to grips with the explosion of knowledge surrounding this generation and successive ones, there is little doubt that the policy-makers (Ministers and Parliaments) are equally alert and concerned with contemporary issues, particularly when these concern the training ground of the young generations. I have already pointed out to ADCOM that its own composition should also be drawn from the non-educational world so that the issues can also be treated by expertise from other walks of life.

Mr Chairman,

It is not my intention to summarize the findings and recommendations of this Conference. These are clearly reflected in the Report which you have just adopted. But let me share with you here and now, one or two ‘after-thoughts’ which you may yourselves think about when this Conference is behind all of us.

The three Round Tables - the reports of which have just been presented to you - may, I predict, invariably become the trend in our future conferences in almost every single region. These may also become a practice in the future sessions of our General Conferences, though I like to believe that the effectiveness of Round Table discussions depends on prior agreement on the topics to be discussed, advance distribution of lead papers, as well as the adoption of means to enable participants to represent various disciplines. At this particular session, all three Round Tables are of direct relevance to the Agenda items under discussion and your decision to annex the summaries and findings to your Report is a judicious one; these will supplement the richness of your debates.

Mr President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Director-General told us that:

‘We were prepared for war. We are unprepared for peace. . .’.

These words remain fresh in my mind because I think that there has been no other period in recent history when we, as educators, have had the opportunity to lay firmly the foundations of peace. The world in which we are to find ourselves is shrinking as the day passes. The rapidity with which all forms of communication technology is moving means that we who are concerned with Education are lagging behind in making ourselves adept with this technology.
so that it could be put to the use of Education. Can anyone justifiably say that Education has mastered this technology so that its message can unravel the mysteries of learning to the teeming millions of illiterates - of whom 75% are women and girls - in this region? There is certainly that capacity in helping this region in eradicating one of the age-long scourges of humanity, which is illiteracy.

Much has already been said on basic education and at some point we should try to distance it from the way we treat universal primary education and literacy which, as you know, gives a major focus to economic development. Basic education, as part of mainline national programmes for which international assistance is only sometimes available, should be conceived as a learning process which could assist children and adults in reducing their vulnerability to crisis. In some unfortunate and poverty stricken countries of the region, the repercussions of the economic crisis and consequent re-adjustment policies on the poor and down-trodden are such that people who are in that position no longer receive any education. Here, perhaps, we could have gone further in conceiving basic education in terms of a short-term emergency relief leading to a gradual rehabilitation of the programme’s activities. The rehabilitation process could in turn lead to a stage where both sustainability and self-reliance can be put at the door-steps of children so that they could ultimately move from a state of mere survival to that stage where they can be useful to themselves and their communities.

Mr President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Conference has reiterated the importance of consolidating the existing structures of APEID and APPEAL. Technical and Vocational Education, Ethics and Moral Education, and International Understanding and Peace are aspects with which these regional frameworks could well give attention to in light of your interventions in the debates at ADCOM VII and MINEDAP VI.

You will agree with me that the problem is not so much one of the creation of new structures each time a problem surfaces but rather the capacity of existing structures to deal adequately with changing requirements and, in this case, where structures are flexible enough, there are possibilities of meeting the new demands. APEID has been established with the view of promoting educational innovations for development. Perhaps, the discussions at both instances have convinced me that much like strategies adopted by other instances, there is this conviction that Education should anticipate socio-economic changes so that when these do take place, it does not lag too far behind others. In that sense, I would like you to reflect on whether we should think aloud about ‘Anticipatory Education’.

Mr Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In concluding, I wish to express, on behalf of the Director-General of UNESCO, our profound thanks and admiration for the support which you, your Government, the Malaysian Permanent Delegate to UNESCO, your Ministry’s Secretary-General and Director-General
respectively, the Secretary-General of the Malaysian National Commission to UNESCO who amongst countless others have so much helped for the successful organization of both ADCOM VII and MINEDAP VI. It is difficult for me to single out the names of all those other Malaysians, including the management and staff of hotels Concorde and Shangri-la, who have contributed in one way or other to these events. May I, through you, Mr Chairman, thank all the distinguished delegates and observers for their solid contributions to the work of this epoch-making Conference. Thank you.
Mr Power, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO
Dato’ Mohd Noordin bin Hassan, Secretary General, Ministry of Education, Malaysia
Dato’ Dr Wan Mohd Zahid, Director-General, Ministry of Education, Malaysia
Mr Hedayat Ahmed, Director, UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok,
Distinguished scholars and guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have come to the very last moments of the Regional Conference of Ministers of Education and Those Responsible for Economic Planning in Asia and the Pacific.

During the last three days we have deliberated and discussed in great depth many issues and problems pertaining to education in all our countries.

We sat together and took stock of what we have so far achieved, and seriously examined what remains to be done in the future. We noted that, after careful assessment of the status of education in our countries, the most fundamental agenda for the 20th century, that every child be given the rights and the opportunity to have basic education which is suited to his or her needs, is still unachieved. Clearly, much more work has to be done before this fundamental objective can be attained.

We deliberated also on how to minimize and overcome the constraints facing our paths namely political, social, economic and physical problems. The four papers presented were background information for these discussions.

We had concentrated also on the future, that is we realized the urgency to plan for the agenda of the 21st century and our discussions included setting directions for the improvement of education in the Asia and the Pacific region. Details of the next course of action to be taken by each member country were discussed and outlined.

It is my firm belief that this conference has greatly contributed towards the global solution to our current problems in education. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the Advisory Committee who had done an excellent job in making a critical study of the conference papers and giving a consolidated report and highlighting important issues to be tabled for deliberation at the Regional Conference of the Minister of Education.

I would like to congratulate all participants of the conference who had tirelessly worked for days to produce resolutions and recommendations. Then participating countries proceeded to make concrete plans to be carried out in their own countries.

Without doubt this conference is immensely important. It is the last such conference in the 20th century. The next conference will be in several years time, in the 21st century.
We therefore mend this conference with our united and renewed commitment to ensure that there is education for all our children in the future.

Lastly, I would like to say that it was indeed an honour and pleasure for Malaysia to be host to this Conference. Until we meet again, ‘au revoir’ and thank you.
ANNEX IV

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

I. Working Documents

ED-93/MINEDAP/ 1 Provisional Agenda
ED-93/MINEDAP/2 Provisional Rules of Procedure
ED-93/MINEDAP/3 Education for Development: Responding to New Challenges

II. Information Documents

ED-93/MINEDAP/INF. 1 General Information
ED-93/MINEDAP/INF.2 Suggestions concerning the Organization of the Work of the Conference
ED-93/MINEDAP/INF.3 List of Documents
ED-93/MINEDAP/INF.4 Provisional List of Participants

III. Reference Documents

ED-93/MINEDAP/REF. 1 Major Development Themes for Asia and the Pacific
ED-93/MINEDAP/REF.2 Development of Education in Asia and the Pacific: A Statistical Review
ED-93/MINEDAP/REF.3 Report on UNESCO’s Regional Programmes in Education in Asia and the Pacific since the Bangkok Conference (1985)

IV. Background Document

ED/M/ Report on the Fifth Regional Conference of Ministers of Education and Those Responsible for Economic Planning in Asia and the Pacific (MINEDAP V) 1985
ANNEX V/ANNEXE V

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS/
LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS

Names and titles in the following lists are reproduced as handed to the Secretariat by the delegations concerned. Countries are shown in the English alphabetical order.

Les noms et titres qui figurent dans les listes ci-après sont reproduits dans la forme ou ils ont été communiqués au Secretariat par les déléguations intéressées. Les pays sont mentionnés dans l’ordre alphabétique anglais.

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(Organized by the Malaysian authorities)

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Mdm. Nuraizah binti Abdul Hamid
Deputy Secretary-General I
Ministry of Education

Secretary: Mr Mohamed bin Omar
External Affairs Division
Ministry of Education
Members:

Dato’ Asiah binti Abu Samah
Director-General of Education Malaysia
Ministry of Education
(Until 28.2.1993)

Datuk Dr Wan Mohd. Zahid bin Mohd. Noordin
Director-General of Education Malaysia
Ministry of Education

Dato’ Hamzah bin Ahmad
Road Transport Department

Dato’ Mohd. Ghazali @ Fauzi bin Yacub
Royal Malaysia Police Department

Haji Osman bin Jaafar
Deputy Director-General of Education I
Ministry of Education

Dato’ Haji Jumaat bin Mohd. Noor
Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka

Haji Shamsuddin bin Dahlan
Deputy Secretary-General II
Ministry of Education

Mr Matnor bin Daim
Deputy Director-General of Education II
Ministry of Education

Dato’ Haji Mahpor bin Baba
Educational Planning and Research Division
Ministry of Education

Mr Goh Keat Seng
Teacher Education Division
Ministry of Education

Dato’ Omardin bin Dato’ Seri Abdul Wahab
Protocol Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr Sulaiman Khan
Finance Division
Ministry of Education
Dato’ Dr Abdul Shukor bin Abdullah  
Technical and Vocational Division  
Ministry of Education  

Dr Hanafi bin Mohamad Kamal  
Federal School Inspectorate  
Ministry of Education  

Mr V.V. George  
Curriculum Development Centre  
Ministry of Education  

Dr Arfah binti Abdul Aziz  
Educational Technology Division  
Ministry of Education  

Mr Aziz bin Deraman  
Development and Supply Division  
Ministry of Education  

Dr Mohd. Yahya bin Nordin  
Higher Education Division  
Ministry of Education  

Mr David C.H. Ong  
International Convention Secretariat  
Prime Minister’s Department  

Haji Mohd. Ariff bin Yusof  
Ceremonial Division  
Prime Minister’s Department  

Mr Dahri bin Ibrahim  
Government Buildings Management Division  
Prime Minister’s Department  

Mr Chik Omar bin Chik Lim  
Royal Malaysian Custom and Excise Department  

Mr Saadon bin Othman  
Department of Immigration Malaysia  

Haji Said Ali bin Silik  
Government Security Department  

Mr Mohd. Hashim bin Mohd. Ali  
City Council of Kuala Lumpur
Ms Siti Fatimah binti A. Nordin  
Department of Civil Aviation

Ms Meggy Stewart  
Malaysian Airport Bhd.

Mr Ismail bin Wadin  
Administration Division  
Ministry of Education

Mr Abdul Rahman bin Mohd. Yunus  
External Affairs Division  
Ministry of Education

Mr Alex Rajakumar  
External Affairs Division  
Ministry of Education

2. Organizing Committee

(i) Secretariat, Administration and Printing

Mr Mohamad bin Omar  
Mr Abdul Rahman bin Mohd. Yunus  
Mr Alex Rajakumar  
Ms Wahidah Wong binti Abdullah  
Ms Jayamalar a/p Jaganathan  
Ms Sabarina binti Abu Hassan

(ii) Conference Facilities

Mr Abdul Latif bin Buang  
Mr Tay Yoke Wing  
Mr Saffie bin Abdul Hassan

(iii) Public Relation and Information

Mr Hamzah bin Abdul Rashid  
HaJi Mizuar bin Nasarudin

(iv) Reception and Protocol

Haji Ahmad bin Lisut  
Mr Zainal bin Abdul Majid  
Mr Bakar bin Amin  
Haji Abdul Rafie bin Mahat  
Mr Zainal bin Salleh
(v) Accommodation

Mr Dahri bin Ibrahim
Mr Wan Ahmad Sapwan bin Haji Wan Abd. Rahman

(vi) Transport

Mr Tan Kooi Ming
Ms Azizah binti Ramli

(vii) Social

Mr Sri Nusa Ahmad bin Thaharuddin
Datin Hajjah Aishah bintin Mohd. Zahir
Mr Syed Mustafa bin Syed Mahmud
Mr Jamaluddin bin Ahmad

(viii) Security

Tunku Muszafar Shah bin Tunku Ibrahim
Mr Ahmad Fuad bin Mansor

(ix) Finance

Ms Raziah binti Hussin
Mr Lee Chian Chong