



Opening Address by

H.E. Mr. Chinnaworn Boonyakiat, Minister of Education of Thailand,

on the theme, "On the Move for Equality"

at the Education International's First World Women's Conference

Thursday, 20 January, 2011

Ambassador Hotel, Bangkok

Ms. Susan Hopgood, President of Education International,

Mr. Fred van Leeuwen, General Secretary of Education International,

Members of the Private School Teachers' Association of Thailand and

the National Thai Teacher Union,

Fellow Teachers, Educators and Distinguished Guests,

On behalf of the Royal Thai Government, let me start by expressing my sincere thanks and appreciation to Education International and the Private School Teachers' Association of Thailand for inviting me to open Education International's First World Women's Conference. The theme of this Conference, "On the Move for Equality", reflects Education International's goals to combat racism and discrimination in education and society; unite teachers and educators worldwide; and support their rights and networks.

Thai government policy promotes gender equality, human security and equality for all. It is inclusive of all ethnic and religious groups in all segments of Thai society. Provisions have been made for stateless children, aimed at generating equality in education and combating discrimination in education in accordance with the "Education for All" goals. The promotion of gender equality is also recognized as



an essential mechanism for improving overall quality of life and in particular the economic and social status of women.

For many years now, over 20% of total public expenditure has been allocated to education. Further commitment has come in the form of two emergency economic stimulus packages, SP1 and SP2, as a response to the recent global financial crisis. Among the social protection measures introduced in 2009 was the 15 year free quality education project. This was designed to help maintain achievements made during the past decade of education reform with regard to educational access and participation of all students, especially those most at risk.

As Minister of Education and with personal experience in teaching, I believe that building and expanding networks among teachers and educators is essential. It not only helps to protect teachers' rights but also creates a platform for them to exchange ideas for the development of teaching and learning and to participate in building a knowledge society.

In many countries, including Thailand, most of the teachers and educators are women. This is one profession in which women outnumber men. By educating young people to embrace gender equality, we hope to broaden thinking and widen the employment or career options and opportunities available to them.

On behalf of Thailand, a member of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to Education International and the Private School Teachers' Association of Thailand as co-hosts of this event. I would also like to thank all participants presenting here for sharing their ideas and experiences, recognizing the essential role of women and the importance of gender equality.



on the move for equality

Education International's First World Women's Conference

May I now declare the Education International's First World Women's Conference focusing "On the Move for Equality" officially open and wish this Conference every success in its deliberations.

Thank you for your attention.

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