



**WELCOME ADDRESS
OF THE
STATE MINISTER FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT
AND CHILD PROTECTION OF THE REPUBLIC INDONESIA
AT THE CONFERENCE ON
CHILD POVERTY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION
JAKARTA, 10 SEPTEMBER 2013**

**The Distinguished Minister of National Development Planning/Head of Bappenas
The Distinguished Minister for Social Affairs
The Distinguished Head Representative of UNICEF Indonesia
The Distinguished Director of the SMERU Research Institute
Distinguished Participants and Dear Guests**

***Assalamu 'alaikum wr.wb,*
Peace and Greetings to us all,**

Let us praise the Almighty God for the abundance of grace bestowed upon us so that we can all attend the Conference of Child Poverty and Social Protection in good health.

In this opportunity, allow me to extend my highest appreciation to the minister of National Development Planning/head of Bappenas, the head of Unicef, and the director of the SMERU Research Institute who had initiated the International Conference on “**Child Poverty and Social Protection**”. I think this conference has a strategic purpose to support and promote the quality of life and protection for the children of Indonesia.

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests,

In accordance with Law No. 23 Year 2002 on the Protection of the Child, the child is defined as a person who has not reached the age of 18 (eighteen) years, which includes the fetus. Child protection comprises all activities conducted to ensure and protect the child and her/his rights to live, grow, develop, and participate at an optimum level in



accordance with human dignity and value, and to be protected from violence and discrimination.

As an individual, a child, poor or rich, is vulnerable to various aspects in the environment surrounding her/him which can affect the child's physical, psychological, and intellectual development. The child phase involves rapid physical, emotional, and intellectual development. However, it is also the most vulnerable phase in the life cycle.

A child cannot be separated from her/his family and caregiver. Therefore, a child who is facing poverty will not obtain access to physical, social, and psychological well-being. The cause of child poverty can be viewed from the economic aspect as well as from the psychological aspect. From the economic aspect, it implies that there is a lack of family income and ability to acquire adequate clothing, food, and shelter. From the psychological aspect, child poverty implies that the child is deprived of love, attention, comfort, safety, appropriate care, healthy communication with family members, and role models. In other words, there is a lack of love and moral values in the family and environment.

Incidence of child poverty can happen in well-to do families as well as in poor families. In families that are better-off, child poverty is dominated by psychological factors while in poor families child poverty can be caused by both economic and psychological factors. Nevertheless, the two factors can affect the development process of the child where the child becomes unable to participate, experiences fear, has no future aspirations, and does not have a positive self-concept. Considering that child poverty is multidimensional, the solution must be holistic and cross-sectorally integrated.

In general, the method that is usually applied when measuring poverty is by examining the level of expenditure or consumption. A person is considered poor if her/his level of expenditure and consumption in fulfilling basic necessities is below the minimum level or poverty line.

To date, poverty measurements only provide understanding of poverty at the macro level based on consumption and income and fail to provide a profile of poverty from a psychological or non-economic perspective. In connection to this, in 2010, the World Bank has defined poverty as people's inability to fulfill basic needs for their well-being in various dimensions. If the incidence of poverty continues, it will have a long-term effect on the economic, social, and cultural development of a nation.

The slowing down of global economic development can be addressed with the improvement of social protection programs so that it will not affect the poor. The improvement in social protection programs does not mean that there is a need for additional budget allocations, but on the other hand, the need for better targeting, which will at the end reduce the impact of the decrease in economic growth. One example is through the improvement of the distribution of social assistances that ensures food, educational, and health services for children and women. In the long term, this will generate a leveraging impact for the investment of good quality human resources and be able to support economic growth. Moreover, in the short term, it will reduce social insurgence.



Dear guests,

The number of children in Indonesia is proportionally large. According to the 2010 Population Census, 34.6 percent of Indonesia's population comprises children 0-17 years old or 81.4 million of 237.6 million people. The 2009 census shows that about 28 percent of children live in the poorest households, 23 percent live in the second poorest, while only 13 percent live in the richest group. This means that 51 percent of children were in a vulnerable condition because of poverty (Susenas 2009, SMERU's calculation).

Data shows that children are suffering from various multidimensional crises which put a lot of pressure on children and cause anxiety in children. On the one hand, poverty and ignorance is a threat to our children, on the other hand, poor care from family members as well as a macro economic system that tends to overlook social protection for children will promote an environment that is inappropriate and unsafe for children's development.

To overcome such a complex problem, a holistic and integrated policy is needed, one that is children-friendly, which ensures basic services for children, including children with special needs, comprising services for health, nutritional, educational, early education, clean water, and sanitation. The policy should also ensure assistance for reducing the impact of unemployment of parents having children with special needs.

A children-friendly social protection policy is expected to provide support for the investment of

- a) education with no discrimination on the basis of gender, age, status of children in the family (the culture of giving priority to the eldest child);
- b) the prevention of the impediment of the development and protection of the child due to violence, exploitation, abandonment, mistreatment (such as child labor, child beggar, child prostitution), and no access to nutritional food, school and learning, as well as health care;
- c) the support of alternative care provision, in addition to the orphanage system, for children who are in absence of a caregiver or parent.

Dear honorable guests,

The success of the development of children cannot be separated from the success of the development of women's empowerment and the achievement of gender equality in the family. Children of good quality are developed by parents of good quality, because their development starts since the fetal stage. Therefore, the role of the father and the mother is very important in the care of the child, in providing love and being a role model in implementing moral values. In this regard, the implementation of all development and child protection policies, programs, and activities must always be **integrated with the development of gender equality, and women's empowerment and protection.**



The aforementioned issues are issues I feel important to convey in this conference. I hope we will all be able to build a World Fit for Children, especially with the commitment and enthusiasm of various stakeholders present at the International Conference of Child Poverty and Social Protection today. May our efforts to eliminate child poverty and provide optimal and children-friendly social protection programs obtain God's blessing.

Thank you,
Wabillahi taufik wal hidayah,
Wassalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb.

The State Minister for Women
Empowerment and Child Protection of
the Republic Indonesia

Linda Amalia Sari, S.IP

