

Civil Society and Social Media for Youth : Opening Speech

Honorable Minister, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Since the turn of the millennium, the world has entered a new era of globalization where the information can be interchanged freely across the globe. The world is on the verge of information whirlpool where everyone is exposed to multimedia such as internet radio, satellite television and online social networking. International monetary transaction can now be done 24/7 from our fingertips at any place around the world. Media and the flow of information are now in every aspect of our lives.

Media influences, as we already know, can essentially affect human behavior, ideology, values norms, fashion and lifestyle. We have all witnessed the effect of propaganda in human behavior during the cold war. Media is now also used as one of psychological weapons during the war. There is no room for us to escape from our exposure to media.

In accordance with the development of information technology, consumerism also develops at the same pace with the expansion of globalization. The world has turned into an arena of capitalism and materialism including the world of media and information technology. For the last four years, Google is the world's strongest brand and 6 out of top ten are brands related to computer and communication. A social networking website like Facebook is now valued at 11 billion dollars. Media becomes the fastest and easiest way to pursue wealth especially now that we can access the internet via our mobile phone.

However, it is not a matter of how we consume media but what we are consuming. According to a major new study of sex on TV, 56 percent or over half of all programming contains sexual content. In prime time, over two-thirds or 67 percent of all shows deal with sex. It is the fact that 12 percent of the websites on the internet are pornographic whereas 28,258 internet users are viewing porn every second. The story of sex and violence is what we believe to make the most profit in the world of media.

As the contents on the internet and other media are very controversial, the age group of people who access the internet the most are children and teenagers. 93 percent of 12-17 year old teens are internet users while comparing to 81 percent of adults at the age of 30-49 years old. 92.27 % of students aged between 12-16 years old have a cellphone and kids of 11 and 12 years old said they began using computer at the average of 8.1 years old. The access to dangerous media is becoming easier each day than what control measure we have in place to ensure that our youth will not be exposed to the wrong kind of media and information.

People have false belief that profit from producing media can only come from sexual or violence related issues. Many people seek wealth and profit without any regard for moral and ethics. If the world continues as it is, how we can be proud of what we do or who we are especially from what we have done because it will significantly affect the lives of people in many generations to come. So we meet here today to set standard for the right cause.

Children and youth still lack judgment and experience. It is the duty of the adults to step up first and start the revolution of clean media. It is time to stop making profit from the affliction and adversity of others.

This problem is not with equipment or machines because they are simply tools for us to present our thoughts. The problem is not with media because it is only a tool for us to present our ideology. The true cause of everything is thus human factors. This is not a problem for one person or organization to solve. Human share the same conditions of suffering, sickness and death. We all share this planet as a member of the world. We are family, friends, brothers and sisters. So we all need to share the responsibility to do the right thing and be the right example.

There has already been a lot of media which are non-productive, sexually and violence related in the cyberspace. They will cause more never-ending social problems than what we have already seen on the news channels everyday. So these media should no longer be presented to the viewers. Now it is time for us to make the most benefit out of the tools we have to make this world a better place.

It is time for us to look back into the past to a time when the world is full of morality. Let us restore the decency and integrity that our ancestors have set for us to be applied in the modern world of globalization. It is time for us to revive world morality.

We are what we are exposed to. Whatever we produce must profitable and beneficial. Profit seeking and moral benefit can coexist in the world of media. As long as you benefit from what you produce, the world will benefit from what they view. If we seek only profit, what we give to this world in return is calamity and catastrophe.

I stand here before this meeting of scholars and experts who believe that it is time for media education to be instilled in the consumers. It is my humblest honor to be here with all of you. I only hope that we shall receive the outcomes which will direct the world to be a more loveable and livable place. I also hope that those outcomes will be put into action for the future of our children. I believe that if we believe in positivity then possibility is not unreal. The future of the world rests our hands. It is time for a revolution for peace and morality. Thank you ladies and gentlemen.