

PRESS RELEASE**Briones shares PH action to ensure inclusiveness, promote cultural diversity in Global Education Forum**

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, December 15, 2018 – Department of Education (DepEd) Secretary Leonor Magtolis Briones presented the Philippines’ policies and development plans to ensure inclusiveness and promote respect for cultural diversity during the Global Education Meeting (GEM) held in Brussels, Belgium from December 3 to 5, 2018.

“The Philippines has always been a tolerant and inclusive society with various races and faiths living in harmony,” the Education chief stated as the head of the Philippine delegation. She also served as a panelist in the workshop entitled, Teaching and Learning Respect for Diversity, and in the ministerial debate entitled, Empowering People: Ensuring Inclusiveness and Gender Equality.

She discussed the Department’s programs for inclusion such as the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE), Flexible Learning Options (FLO), and inclusive education, especially for indigenous peoples (IP) and Muslim communities. She further emphasized that the Philippines and DepEd fully support the rights and rich heritage of IPs within the context of peace and sustainable development, and expressed the Department’s unwavering commitment to the best interest of IP learners.

Briones likewise reported to the over 60 delegations, headed by Ministers of the GEM 2018, that the Philippines under the administration of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte regards education as its topmost priority. She cited the Department’s efforts such as the nationwide school building and School-Based Feeding programs, reproductive health and gender equality campaigns, and intensified teacher recruitment, among many others.

Finally, Briones mentioned that while the siege of Marawi was an example of external factors which affected the learners in Mindanao, it also offered a model of cooperation – “of people supporting unity in diversity by their outpouring of assistance to displaced communities.”

Convened by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the GEM 2018 took stock of the progress and challenges in the implementation of global education goals and targets, and set strategic direction towards the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Philippines will be attending the GEM as member of the Steering Committee until 2020.

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