M E S S A G E

This special issue of the WCCI Journal on Dialogue among Civilizations was conceptualized in response to one of the central themes of the mission of the United Nations in 2001 as the "Year of Dialogue among Civilizations." The advent of globalization resulted to new challenges as well as threats to humankind which spurred the need for dialogue among civilizations.

The WCCI Journal provides an array of qualifiers for a deeper and insightful understanding of key terms like dialogue and civilizations and the rationale for the need for such actions. Viewing it from the context of education, the readings provide a platform for dialogues among all peoples and cultures in the world across physical, cultural and social boundaries. It also offers initiatives as well as actions on how to grapple with diversity, conflict, injustice, human rights and other issues. It also cites key personalities across countries who have deeply involved themselves in programs on these areas. Illustrations of human courage are exemplified. It likewise presents possibilities on how we can bring light to the world through an aggressive development and promotion of a culture of peace.

It is hoped that this special issue will make it easier for people across the globe to see a way through the confusions and sufferings of our time. Finally, I would like to think that the ideas and thoughts in the Journal would be useful to those responsible for the governance of our society at all levels. They have the awesome responsibility of evolving a structure for a society where most of the ground rules have changed but where the need for justice begins; where respect, love and peace abide; and where stability and progress prevail.

We need a new perspective in life. Thus, this serves as a challenge to the World Council for Curriculum and Instruction (WCCI) leaders and members and other sectors to be able to spearhead and rally behind the development of a culture of peace.

While the articles in the Journal provide us with the overall framework on how to approach the attainment of goals, as an

organization, it behooves upon us to develop our own paradigm shifts specific to our individual conditions, and to operationalize and put in place mechanisms to carry out the conceptual dimensions of the dialogue among civilizations. It is very important that our feet be on the ground, if we have to be successful in achieving our objectives. This means that we start with achievable projects as we build on increasing opportunities for achieving bigger projects.

Through it all, I would like to congratulate Prof. Toh Swee Hin, the guest editor of this special issue of the Journal, for having selected a very timely and sensible theme of the time considering the current realities and problems besetting humankind at this point of our history. Thank you, Professor Toh for this significant contribution of yours to the WCCI publications. I would also like to extend my heartfelt and sincere appreciation to the contributors as well as to Dr. Estela Matriano, WCCI Executive Director, Ms. Carole C. Caparros, WCCI Executive Assistant, and Dr. Virginia Cawagas, Associate Professor, University for Peace, for their untiring support and cooperation in the completion of this publication.

Dalisay G. Brawner
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World Council for Curriculum and Instruction