Nusa Dua, Bali, Aug 28 (Antara) - The Youth Event of the 6th United Nations Alliance of Civilization (UNAOC) Global Forum was held in Bali on Thursday to promote the role of the younger generation as agents of change in the society.

The UNAOC Youth Event was inaugurated by High Representative of the UNAOC Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser and Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs Marty Natalegawa on Thursday at the Bali Nusa Dua Convention Center (BNDCC) here on Thursday.

As many as 100 youth aged between 18 and 30 years from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds were selected from around three thousand applicants from across the world. Of the total, 40 are international participants and 60 are Indonesians.

During his opening remark, Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser noted that although the youth were in majority, yet their contributions had yet to be fully recognized.

"You are what the world needs. But, the world sometimes does not recognize the role you are playing in the society," Al-Nasser affirmed.

The topic of the Youth Event focused on "The Role of Youth in Promoting Unity in Diversity through Education, Media, and Migration."

The Youth Event will be output-oriented and will focus on collective reflection rather than on presentations of individual projects implemented by youth organizations at the event. In addition, it will help youth establish contacts and actively exchange and explore how they can collaborate together, before and after the forum.

Moreover, Al-Nasser stressed that the youth have an important role in advancing the mission of UNAOC such as preventing conflicts and maintaining peace in the society.

"We invest on them, so that they can become the agents of change in the society," Al-Nasser stated.

Meanwhile, Foreign Affairs Minister Marty Natalegawa remarked that unity is of key importance to Indonesia as its national motto is "Unity in Diversity."

Natalegawa emphasized that the youth will serve as strong proponents to provide an alternative vision not merely to maintain the cycle of balancing the tensions but also helping to develop a cycle of trust and belief in the community.
"I often noted and admired the sense of solidarity and communality that is prevalent among the youth, and I sometimes feel despondent at how such a spirit somehow dissipates as we progress in our lives," Natalegawa stated.

The young generation needs to capture such a spirit and to ensure that it becomes the norm rather than an exception, Natalegawa noted.

"You need to maintain honesty among the leaders by ensuring the spirit of togetherness that you are displaying are actually demonstrated and similarly imbued by the leaders of our nations," Natalegawa remarked.

During the event, the youth participants will also learn how diverse Indonesia is through some on-site activities.

The participants selected for the Youth Event will join other participants during the 6th UNAOC Forum on August 29-30, 2014.

Alliance of Civilization (AoC) was established by the United Nations on July 14, 2005, at the political initiative of Kofi Anan, former UN secretary general and co-sponsored by former prime minister of Spain Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero and Prime Minister of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan with an aim to promote "Harmony among Civilization."

The alliance maintains a global network of partners including states, international and regional organizations, civil society groups, foundations, and the private sector to improve cross-cultural relations between diverse nations and communities.

The UNAOC project activities are centered on four areas: Education, Youth, Migration, and Media, which can play a critical role in helping to reduce cross-cultural tensions and to build bridges between communities.

******

(T.A059/INE)

EDITED BY INE

(T.A059/A/KR-BSR/F001) 28-08-2014 12:18:06