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للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
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Item 5.4 of the provisional agenda

RECOGNITION OF BAHASA INDONESIA AS AN OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF UNESCO

OUTLINE

Source: Through 217 EX/Decision 22.II, the Executive Board recommended that the General Conference consider agenda item 5.4. without prior debate.

Background: Per Rule 52 (2) of the Rules of Procedures of the UNESCO General Conference, Member States are entitled to request the recognition of one language as an official language of the General Conference.

Purpose: In light of this, the Government of the Republic of Indonesia hereby submits a proposal for the formal recognition of Bahasa Indonesia as an official language of the UNESCO General Conference.

Proposed draft resolutions with the corresponding explanatory note are included in this document.

Decision required: paragraph 11.



Job: 202304085

EXPLANATORY NOTE

1. Bahasa Indonesia has long served as a unifying force in Indonesia, particularly since the pre-independence period. Its prominence is underscored by the 1928 Youth Oath, which emphasized the language's role in fostering national unity amidst the country's rich linguistic diversity.
2. Since its designation as the official language of the Republic of Indonesia in 1945, as stipulated in Article 36 of the 1945 Constitution, Bahasa Indonesia has demonstrated its efficacy as a lingua franca, serving as a bridge language, facilitating seamless interethnic communication among Indonesia's 1,340 ethnic groups and 718 local languages spread across 17,500 islands.
3. Presently, Bahasa Indonesia, with a substantial speaker base of over 275 million, has embraced modern linguistic standards evident in its well-established lexicon, grammar, and spelling systems, that serve as the primary medium for academic, governmental, business, cultural, and daily communication nationwide.
4. Given Indonesia's status as the world's fourth most populous nation, Bahasa Indonesia is spoken by approximately 3.52 % of the global population. The global outreach of Bahasa Indonesia is exemplified by its incorporation into educational programs in 52 countries, supporting approximately 150,000 active foreign learners worldwide since the Indonesian Government's initiatives to promote the language globally in 2015.
5. Ranked as the fourteenth largest country globally and the seventh largest economy by purchasing power parity, Indonesia's rich cultural diversity positions it as a dynamic living laboratory for observing and managing socio-cultural differences. Furthermore, Indonesia's steadfast commitment to multiculturalism has solidified its status as a cultural melting pot, inviting exploration and the mastery of Bahasa Indonesia for a deeper understanding of the country's heritage.
6. Indonesia has been an active member of UNESCO since 1950, demonstrating a strong dedication to multiculturalism and firm commitment to various UNESCO conventions and recommendations. The country has utilized UNESCO's valuable insights and contributions in the fields of education, culture, sciences, as well as information and communication, aligning its policy-making accordingly.
7. In the pursuit of international engagement, Indonesia aims to foster global people-to-people connections and promote international and intercultural understanding, with a particular focus on elevating the recognition of Bahasa Indonesia at the international level.
8. With active participation and leadership roles in various international forums and organizations, including the G20 Presidency in 2022 and ASEAN Chairmanship in 2023, Indonesia has played a pivotal role in addressing global challenges, fostering collaboration, and advocating for solutions in peacekeeping, climate change, economic development, and cultural exchanges.
9. The recognition of Bahasa Indonesia as the official language of the General Conference of UNESCO would not only ensure equitable information dissemination, promote inclusivity, nurture a deeper understanding and appreciation of its language and literature, but also strengthen collaboration with UNESCO, and reinforce its commitment to advancing global cultures, peace and sustainable development. Moreover, it is expected to elevate Indonesia's international prominence, fostering greater cooperation and benefitting both the country and UNESCO's mission worldwide.
10. The recognition of Bahasa Indonesia as the official language of the General Conference of UNESCO will not have any financial implication for UNESCO. The Government of the Republic of Indonesia is fully committed to covering all expenses related to the translation of UNESCO Constitution texts, decisions of the General Conference, especially those concerning the Constitution and the legal status of UNESCO, as well as other essential documents.

Proposed draft resolution

11. In light of the above, the General Conference may wish to adopt a resolution along the following lines:

The General Conference,

Having examined document 42 C/28,

Recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution 56/262 regarding multilingualism as a means of promoting, protecting and preserving the diversity of all languages and cultures globally,

Recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution 61/266, which endorsed the proclamation of 2008 International Year of Languages, pursuant to the resolution adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its 33rd session,

Recalling Resolution 12 adopted by the UNESCO General Conference at its 30th session on 17 November 1999, proclaiming International Mother Language Day and calling upon Member States and the Secretariat to promote the preservation and protection of all languages,

Also recalling the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity adopted on 2 November 2001 highlighting the importance of encouraging linguistic diversity,

Further recalling the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions of 20 October 2005, adopted by UNESCO, which states that linguistic diversity is a fundamental element of cultural diversity,

Taking into account that multilingualism contributes to achieving the attainment of the objectives set out in the Charter of the United Nations and the Constitution of UNESCO, fostering dialogue and mutual understanding, the spirit of tolerance, respect for identities and cultures, and cooperation among nations,

Recognizing the significant role of Bahasa Indonesia in promoting universal values of solidarity and peace, fostering national unity, serving as an auxiliary language, and facilitating smooth interethnic communication within Indonesia's diverse linguistic milieu,

Pursuant to Rule 52 (2) of the Rules of Procedures of the UNESCO General Conference, in which Member States are entitled to request the recognition of one language as an official language of the General Conference,

Decides to add Bahasa Indonesia to the list of official languages of the General Conference of UNESCO.