

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Lapus: 'DepEd officials in UNESCO a boost to EFA goals'

The General Conference of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on its 34th session has recognized the Department of Education (DepEd) in its efforts to implement the Education for All or EFA goals by appointing Undersecretary for Programs and Projects Vilma Labrador as member of the Conciliation and Good Offices Commission.

It may be recalled that DepEd Secretary Jesli Lapus himself was elected to the Executive Board, UNESCO's highest policy-making body last October 2007.

"This recognizes our efforts in our country to further promote equality of educational opportunities as mandated by the Education for All or EFA goals," Lapus said. "Labrador's appointment to the commission motivates us at the department to work hard for our modest gains to benefit as many learners," he added.

Labrador and Mr. Antonio Homem of Portugal were appointed last November 2006. This commission is responsible for settling disputes that may arise between States Parties to the Convention against Discrimination in Education. Labrador's six year term will end in 2013.

UNESCO's General Conference adopted the Convention against Discrimination in Education on December 14, 1960. The mandate of this convention is provided by the Universal Declaration for Human Rights or UDHR that asserts the principle of non-discrimination and proclaims that every person has the right to education.

Lapus explained that his election in the Executive Board and Labrador's appointment will "help DepEd in meeting its EFA goals and, on a bigger scale, will put apt focus on the concerns faced by education ministers in the third world." He also added that he will make good use of his position in UNESCO to "call on all governments to give the highest budgetary priority to education in theory and practice."

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