WUJA
WORLD UNION OF JESUIT ALUMNI

FRANCISCO GUARNER

Opening Speech

XI World Congress of the World Union of Jesuit Alumni

Yogyakarta · 30 July 2026

Good morning to all of you gathered here today.

Your Majesty Sri Sultan Hamengku Buwono X, Governor of the Special Region of Yogyakarta,

Your presence among us is a tremendous honour for the global community of alumni of Jesuit institutions. We are profoundly grateful for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to us by Yogyakarta and its people.

Very Reverend Father Arturo Sosa, S.J., Superior General of the Society of Jesus,
Your guidance helps us remain rooted in our Ignatian identity and attentive to the mission we are called to serve. Thank you for walking with us, accompanying our discernment, and continually challenging us to live our faith, education and values in our families, communities and professional lives. Muchas gracias, Father General.

Distinguished guests, Jesuit leaders, partners in mission, members of the WUJA Council, delegates and friends, welcome.

To the entire Indonesian organising team: thank you. For many months, you have worked with extraordinary dedication, generosity and attention to every detail—from the pre-Congress consultations and surveys to the programme, logistics and hospitality. On behalf of the WUJA Council and everyone gathered here, thank you for bringing the world to Yogyakarta.

And to all of you—dear alumni of Jesuit institutions, Jesuits, friends and companions in mission from every continent—welcome to the XI World Congress of the World Union of Jesuit Alumni.

For years, we have looked forward to this moment. Today, WUJA makes history by gathering in Indonesia, a nation that so beautifully embodies its national motto, Bhinneka Tunggal Ika—"Unity in Diversity."

There could be no more meaningful place for our global community to meet. Yogyakarta—a crossroads of cultures, faiths, knowledge and ancient traditions—reminds us of the world we are called to help build: a world founded on harmony, mutual respect, dialogue and peace.

As I look around this room, I do not simply see former classmates or professional contacts. I see a powerful global force for good: a community united by a shared Ignatian identity and a common commitment to serve.

The theme of this Congress, "United in Spirit, Leading with Purpose," expresses both who we are and what we are called to become. We were formed to be men and women for and with others. We were educated not merely to occupy a place in society, but to help transform it.

The world in which we live today is profoundly wounded. We see geopolitical divisions widening. We hear the cry of the Earth through environmental destruction and climate disruption. We hear the cry of the poor through deepening inequality, exclusion and forced displacement. We see people—young and old alike—experiencing loneliness, isolation and a loss of meaning.

The presence of Father Arturo Sosa among us reminds us of the Universal Apostolic Preferences. We must therefore ask ourselves: How do we deepen our spiritual lives through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment? How do we walk with the poor and excluded? How do we accompany young people in creating a hope-filled future? How do we collaborate in caring for our common home?

And how can our immense worldwide alumni network collaborate more closely with the Society of Jesus and its partners in mission? How can we place our education, influence, resources and voices at the service of reconciliation and justice?

WUJA is not merely an organisation that preserves memories and maintains friendships. It must activate a global network capable of responding to the challenges of our time. Our deliberations on the Jesuit Alumni Identity Manifesto should help us articulate how we will answer this call.

Our collective voice will have meaning only when we use it in solidarity with those whose voices too often go unheard. Our global community will be truly united only when we overcome indifference and exclusion.

I challenge every participant to turn the conversations of these coming days into strong, lasting and mutually beneficial partnerships. Let business leaders, social entrepreneurs, educators and innovators collaborate across borders and sectors. This is the true power of the global Jesuit family—across Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania.

This Congress also holds special historical significance. WUJA was founded in Bilbao, Spain, in 1956, to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the death of Saint Ignatius of Loyola. We remember with gratitude all those who came before us: the founders, Jesuits, volunteers, alumni associations and generations of alumni who believed that the bonds created through Jesuit education should continue long after graduation.

This Congress therefore marks WUJA's 70th anniversary—an opportunity not only to honour our past, but also to discern and shape our future.

In the words associated with the early companions, Saint Ignatius noted : *Ite, inflammate omnia*—go forth and set the world on fire.

Let the spirit of Yogyakarta, the Jesuit education and Ignatian formation we have received, and the passion of our global fellowship rekindle that fire within us. Let us leave Yogyakarta not merely inspired, but mobilized, united in spirit and leading with purpose.

Thank you once again to our Indonesian hosts, to Your Majesty, to Father General, and to all you for being here and sharing together these days.

I wish you all a blessed, fruitful and transformative Congress.

Thank you very much. Terima kasih.