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UN NEWS CENTRE



Second Global Model UN of young people to be held in Malaysia in July



Global Model UN conference opening ceremony in Geneva in 2009

4 February 2010 – Some 1,000 of the best university-level students worldwide are expected to take part in a Global Model United Nations Conference in Malaysia in July as the world body seeks to harness the energy and intellect of Earth's younger citizens in achieving peace and development.

"It is crucial to engage young people," Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information Kiyoo Akasaka told a news briefing in New York today, announcing the upcoming meeting, which builds on the success of the inaugural **Global Model UN Conference** in Geneva last August.

"Student leaders are already coming up with solutions to global issues. We want to tap into this synergy... I have no doubt the United Nations will have much to learn from this year's model United Nations," he added saying the goal was to have 1,000 participants this year, compared with 350 in Geneva.

Organized by the UN Department of Public Information (DPI) together with the Malaysian Government, the **UN Alliance of Civilizations** and the Commonwealth Secretariat, the forum will be held in Kuala Lumpur, the Malaysian capital, from 28 to 30 July under the theme *Towards an Alliance of Civilizations – Bridging Cultures to Achieve Peace and Development*.

"In response to the continuous and growing number of incidents and conflicts reflecting the clash of cultures around the world, the Global Model UN Summit aims to deliver a road map developed by youth that will move the world closer to a peaceful Alliance of Civilizations, DPI said in a **news release**.

"The annual global Conference aims to serve as an exemplar of best practices for other Model UN meetings, to raise awareness of the Organization's role in world affairs and to inspire involvement in global issues by the next generation of leaders."

Participants will be chosen in transparent, inclusive and gender-balanced process that provides an equal chance for students from a range of socio-economic backgrounds, and a quota system has been established for each region (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Western Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America) to ensure wide geographic representation.

They will take on the roles of diplomats, debating international crises, negotiating difficult global issues and drafting and adopting resolutions.

"It will not only be an opportunity for the young people, for the students taking part to reflect through simulation exercises to these challenging issues but also to get an input from them," UN Alliance of Civilizations Director Marc Scheuer told the briefing.

Model UN student conferences are well established around the world, with an estimated half million or more students from primary school to university in more than 70 countries participating in national versions every year, simulating UN forums such as the General Assembly, Security Council and the Economic and Social Council (**ECOSOC**), as well as UN agencies, funds and programmes and regional economic commissions.

"Over the years, many ambassadors to the United Nations and UN officials have told me that they too took part in Model UNs in their cities and towns," Mr. Akasaka said.

"It is our hope that participation in the Global Model UN Conference will inspire young people to become ambassadors, to work for the United Nations or become the experts and leaders that we in the United Nations look to as our partners in the global effort to support peace, development and human rights in countries around the world."

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