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Model UN students hope to focus global attention on crucial issues



Global Model UN conference opening ceremony in Geneva in 2009

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An upcoming model United Nations meeting in Incheon, Republic of Korea, can help contribute to the debate on key world issues, one of the student leaders at the event told a news conference today at UN Headquarters.

Oliver Pase of Australia, who will assume the role of Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information for the meeting on 10-14 August, said the 600 student delegates – drawn from 53 UN Member States – will “actually contribute to the broader debate around the world on crucial issues.”

The theme of this year’s meeting, the third in a series that were held previously in Geneva and Kuala Lumpur, will be *Sustainable Development: Advancing Human Progress in Harmony with Nature*. It will also include consideration of a wide variety of the same issues that face actual UN committees.

Dongyeop Lee of the Republic of Korea, who will serve as the Model UN’s General Assembly President, said “as students our capabilities are small,” but that public attention to the focus of the debate could make “a huge difference.”

Underlining the sustainable development theme for the meeting, [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon told the student delegates in a message to be delivered at the opening day: “The ecosystems and

resources you will inherit have been subjected to unprecedented stress and exploitation. Different countries and societies have made very different contributions to this state of affairs, but all should be able to agree that it is unsustainable – and we need to find a more balanced and sustainable approach.”

The actual Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information Kiyoko Akasaka, who presided over the press conference today, said: “It is our hope that participation in the Global Model UN conference will inspire young people to become ambassadors, to work for the UN or become the experts and leaders that we in the UN look to...”

This year’s conference is organized by the UN Department of Public Information (DPI), and supported by World Federation of UN Associations (WFUNA), the UN Foundation (UNF) and the UN Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP).

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