

UN proclaims International Year of Youth in 2010



18 December 2009 – In an effort to harness the energy, imagination and initiative of the world's youth in overcoming the challenges facing humankind, from enhancing peace to boosting economic development, the United Nations today proclaimed an International Year of Youth starting on 12 August 2010.

"The International Year is about advancing the full and effective participation of youth in all aspects of society," UN Focal Point on **Youth** Nicola Shepherd said. "We encourage all sectors of society to work in partnership with youth and youth organizations to better understand their needs and concerns and to recognize the contributions that they can make to society."

In its resolution proclaiming the Year, the General Assembly called on governments, civil society, individuals and communities worldwide to support activities at local and international levels to mark the event.

Under the theme 'Dialogue and Mutual Understanding,' the Year aims to encourage dialogue and understanding across generations and promote the ideals of peace, respect for human rights and freedoms, and solidarity.

It also encourages young people to dedicate themselves to fostering progress, including the attainment of the UN Millennium Development Goals (**MDGs**), which seek to slash a host of social ills, ranging from extreme poverty and hunger to maternal and infant mortality to lack of access to education and health care, all by 2015.

Several international events are already scheduled throughout the year, including the Fifth World Youth Congress from 31 July to 13 August in Istanbul, and the World Conference for Youth in Mexico City from 24 to 27 August. Both gatherings will focus on youth and sustainable development in the context of the MDGs.

The inaugural Youth Olympic Games in Singapore from 14 to 26 August will seek to inspire youth around the world to embrace, embody and express the Olympic values of excellence, friendship and respect.

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