



## International Youth Day: Youth Delegates run actions around the world

*The international Youth Day (IYD) is celebrated by young people around the world yearly since 2000 on August 12<sup>th</sup> and aims to raise awareness toward youth issues. The theme in 2009 was 'Sustainability: Our Challenge. Our Future'. Read below about Chris Varney's (Australian Youth Delegate) activities.*

IYD Day was widely celebrated across Australia. My focus for the day was promoting the principles of youth participation and empowerment to members of Australia's Parliament through a Youth Representative Parliamentary Briefing.

The Briefing brought together parliamentarians from both the Government and the Opposition, members of the public service, NGO representatives, UNIFEM and youth volunteers from the United Nations Youth Association (UNYA). The Youth Delegate position in Australia is a formal program within UNYA's operations.

During the event I was able to share my experiences so far as Australian Youth Representative, which have included a tour throughout all Australian States and Territories and developing a book, *Dear Kevin*, for Prime Minister Kevin Rudd that collects the voices of young Australians through storytelling, letters and artwork.

The key youth concerns that were discussed during the Briefing were Climate Change, Indigenous equality, Youth Homelessness and Youth Detention. On each of these topics letters from *Dear Kevin* were read out which inspired parliamentarians to explore ways they could each listen to their young constituents more. Action points such as supporting UNYA's Youth Representative Program and campaigns like 'Youth Decide', a youth vote pressuring the Government to adopt bold climate policies, were also promoted.

The day marked the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary that UNYA and the Australian Delegation to the UN have sent a Youth Delegate to the General Assembly

Questions? Contact Chris at [youthrep09@unya.asn.au](mailto:youthrep09@unya.asn.au)



International Youth Day 2009, Berlin – Answering “What has to be changed for achieving a sustainable world?”

## A unique opportunity

– but will the youth of the world grasp it?

For the first time in the process of drafting a resolution from the UN General Assembly (UNGA) a world-wide consultation of youth organisation is taking place. Will the Regional Youth Platforms have the necessary outreach?

- This is the better opportunity youth organisations have had to influence a UNGA resolution on youth – at least in this decade, says Christoffer Grønstad, vice-president of the European Youth Forum – who is surprised that not more organisations have responded to the invitation to take part in the consultation.

**Read more and find out how you can contribute on page 2**





## What does it mean to be a Youth Delegate? In the focus: Korea

(SuHi Choi, 22)

### How were you selected?

Each of the candidates had gone through a series of competition in written application, English essay and interviews. It was a tough competition. Ms. Shim (another Korean youth delegate) and I are honored that we had the privilege to stand in the UN general assembly, as the first “female” youth delegates representing South Korea.



### How did you prepare?

I am currently, a senior in KyungPook National University. Most of my extracurricular activities were focused on broadening my point of view, by challenging myself to face various circumstances inside and outside Korea, and these naturally exposed me meet people with various backgrounds, culture, age, race and so on. Also, along the way I got in touch with a broad range of topics and started to concern more about the world as a whole.

As a youth delegate, during the general assembly, I hope to speak for all the youth in Korea rather than just my personal perspective. So, I started to volunteer for several youth activities at home in Korea, to meet and share ideas face to face with the Korean youth. I wanted to capture the energy from each one of the youth that I met through the activities, hoping to speak up for those who wish and desire a better future, domestically and internationally.

### What is your role in the delegation of Korea?

Since I was chosen as the first female youth delegate to attend the 64<sup>th</sup> general assembly, it feels that I have the responsibility of setting the right module for representing all the Korean youth back home. I hope that I would be able to efficiently deliver the positive energy and vision of the Korean youth to all of the representatives worldwide. Also, I am hoping to take this chance to foster Korean youth involvement domestically and internationally.

## Will the youth grasp the opportunity? (continued from page 1)

After a request from Moldova, Portugal and Senegal (co-sponsoring the resolution) the UN Program on Youth (UNPY) is consulting Youth NGOs world-wide in cooperation with regional youth platforms in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin-America, the Pacific and the Caribbean – and with the UN Associations in Canada and USA.

The European Youth Forum has invited all its 99 member organisations to participate in the consultation. But one week before the consultation ends only 25 Europeans had joined the network. At the same time the network had 23 members from the Pacific and 19 members from Latin America.

### Disappointed...

- We know that some organisations are preparing their input but given how much youth NGOs have been stressing that the UN must open up for consultations with young people we expected more traffic on the platform, says Grønstad.

On the positive side, he notes, is the recognition from previous Youth Delegates to the UNGA.

- I think they know how hard it is to get something useful into the resolution when we are working in New York – and therefore they are feeding in the demands from their speeches - that were already thoroughly worked on in cooperation with the organisations they represent.

### – but still hoping...

The countries behind the resolution have promised to take the input from the youth organisations seriously – so the vice president of the European Youth Forum “strongly encourages” – as we say it in the UN – youth organisations from around the world to contact their national youth councils and regional youth platforms to contribute. You have until August 31<sup>st</sup> to do so.

### Questions?

Please get in touch with Christoffer on [christoffer.gronstad@youthforum.org](mailto:christoffer.gronstad@youthforum.org)



## Youth Delegates demand Climate Justice – updates related to our Side-Event

The international Youth Delegates to the 64th General Assembly of the United Nations are very glad to announce that like in previous years they will again organize a side event. With the upcoming negotiations in Copenhagen in December the issue of climate justice is one that dominates international debates this year. Therefore, the topic of the side event will be **“It’s Getting Hot in Here - Youth Delegates Demand Climate Justice”**. Thereby we want to underline that youth is a key factor in the debate on climate justice, being at the same time especially affected by it’s consequences and playing an important role in the battle for climate justice. At the side event we will present a video message from Dr. Rajendra K. Pachauri the chair of the IPCC. Furthermore, several positions on the issue of climate justice and youth, such as the question of climate refugees and the fair deal both from a European and an African perspective will be put forward in a panel discussion. The side event will take place on

**Tuesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009**  
**from 1.15 to 2.45 pm** in the Auditorium of the  
 Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations,  
 German House (1<sup>st</sup> Avenue/49<sup>th</sup> Street).

We are very thankful for the kind support of the Federal Republic of Germany as well as the assistance of the European Youth Forum and the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.

We are looking forward to a lively discussion and will report extensively afterwards.



### Guide for Youth NGOs at UN Meetings

Do you want to know more about drafting a UN Resolution or influencing the UN?

In 2008 the European Youth Forum launched a guide for Youth NGOs wanting to strengthen their work with and towards the United Nations.

Download the guide here:  
[www.youthforum.org/en/node/849](http://www.youthforum.org/en/node/849)

## Who are the 2009 Youth Delegates?

**More and more countries have decided to send Youth Delegates to the UNGA in 2009 – list of the countries that will have Youth Delegate(s):**

Australia	Belgium (tbc)	Bulgaria	D. R Congo	Croatia
Finland	Ghana	Germany	Jamaica	Korea
Netherlands	Norway	Portugal (tbc)	Romania	Rwanda
Slovakia	Sweden	Switzerland	Thailand	

Will your country have a Youth Delegate too? Tell us about it: [falko@germanyouthdelegate.de](mailto:falko@germanyouthdelegate.de)

**We’d love to hear from you!** Please contact the editors Christoffer Grønstad (European Youth Forum) and Falko Mohrs (Germany) on [youngnews09@googlemail.com](mailto:youngnews09@googlemail.com).

**Keep in touch with your Youth Delegates!** Visit [www.unyouthdelegates.org](http://www.unyouthdelegates.org), learn more and subscribe for the electronic version of our newsletter!