



Dear Friends,

Greetings of Peace!

The Ecumenical Asia Pacific Students and Youth Network (EASYNet) is glad to inform you that we are holding the 4th Asia Pacific Students and Youth Gathering (ASYG) this coming August 25-31,2008 in Korea under the theme of **“Youth Across Boundaries, Redefining the Culture of Peace”**.

The Asia Pacific Students and Youth Gathering (ASYG) is taunted as the biggest regional ecumenical youth gathering in the region. It will gather more than a hundred youth and students coming from different mainline Protestant and Roman Catholic churches in Asia Pacific..

The first ASYG was organized in 1993 in India, as a pre event to the Ecumenical Global Gathering of Youth and Students (EGGYS). It tackles on several social themes such as environmental crisis, and sustainable development among other things. The 2nd ASYG was convened under the theme “Review, Reflect, Renew: Building Sustainable Communities”.in Chiangmai,Thailand in 2000. In 2004, the 3rd ASYG was convened under the theme “Together in Action for Peace and Reconciliation” in Cipayung Indonesia. ASYG provides a regional platform for common reflection, understanding and collective action on social concerns and issues that greatly affects the lives of the youth and students.

Should you be interested to participate in the coming ASYG 2008, kindly contact your regional offices and the ASYG Coordinating Office. Attached herewith is the Basic ASYG 2008 Information Paper -1.

Thank you and we look forward to your participation in this meaningful gathering of youth and students.

In Christ,

Glenda C.Rocas
ASYG 2008 Coordinating Secretary



**Asia Pacific Students and Youth Gathering 2008
Youth Across Boundaries, Redefining the Culture of Peace
25-31 August 2008, Korea**

Basic Information Paper -1

Rationale

Youth Redefining the Culture of Peace

The Culture of Peace as defined by UN is a set of values, attitudes and forms of behavior that reflect respect for life, human beings and their dignity and for all human rights, the rejection of violence in all its forms and commitment to the principles of freedom, justice, solidarity, tolerance and understanding among peoples and between groups and individuals.

Biblical and ancient Christian tradition, teaches us, that the culture of peace is embedded on the promised fullness of life, healing and justice. For Christians Culture of Peace is a reality springing from a transformed world where everyone is fed, housed, clothed, have access to medical services and fear of armed attack or aggression from other groups or nation is non-existent.

However, the present dominant economic system, which is pillared on unfair trade, privatization of basic social services, liberalization and deregulation of economy naturally, breeds global massive unemployment, poverty and hunger. It causes the displacement of indigenous people and farmers from their land and homes. It destroys the environment. It is behind the build up of military complexes and industry, to protect and pursue economic interests. Religions are used by power wielders to maintain and pursue their material wealth which cause further division and conflict among people.

Building the Culture of Peace necessitates creating conditions for peace to flourish. It entails eradicating conditions that brings unpeace. It is an arduous task and is a long process .It needs the cooperation of every sector of the society. The Youth and Student Sector who represents the “**morning**” of each generation has the capacity to inspire the other sectors of the society to act to put an end to conditions that breeds unpeace .

The youth cuts across race, class and faith backgrounds making them a big potential force towards achieving justice and laying down the foundation for a culture of peace. The youth through organizing themselves can break the boundaries that separates them. The youth must unite with other marginalized sectors of society to unleash their potential in transforming the structures that breeds injustices.

Unleashing the Youth and Students Potential

In unleashing the youth and students power, foremost the youth should be **aware** of what is happening around them. The youth should **study** the interconnection and relationship of issues.

It is through studying the situation of our societies that youth could discern the complexities and interrelatedness of issues.

Studying and knowing the conditions of our communities and societies is more than just reading and relying on news provided by the media. It entails going out from the confines and luxuries of our home, churches and universities. It entails living with the marginalized sectors of our society, because they constitute the majority of our society.

Living with the underprivileged people will enlighten the youth and students. Experiencing the real hunger and homelessness will lead the youth to question why such situation exist, at the same time there exist a reality of abundance for some people. The youth's curiosity will lead them to seek for answers, which will lead them to forge solidarity with the marginalized sectors and to participate in resolving situations of inequality as condition for building a culture of peace.

Being aware of the situations, the youth and students could offer their time, strength, talent and intellect in service of the marginalized people. The youth are effective in creating a counter culture, in exposing the real situations of our society, thus they are called as "catalyst of social change". This capacity of the youth has been tested down in history i.e. in China, in Thailand, in Myanmar, South Korea, and Philippines and in many other countries.

Through ASYG 2008, EASY Net hopes to provide a platform for youth and students across Asia Pacific to collectively discuss issues of peace and strategize collective action towards redefining a culture of peace.

Objectives

1. To further strengthen existing ecumenical cooperation at the local, national and regional level.
2. To initiate interfaith conversation and create space for collaboration amongst Christian youth groups and neighboring faiths in the region towards creating conditions for a culture of peace.
3. To enhance the National Ecumenical Teams participation in cultivating conditions for the culture of peace at the local level.
4. To provide opportunity among youth and students of neighboring faiths and denominations in forging national and regional solidarity towards peace building, social justice and environmental protection.
5. To challenge the youth to participate in promoting the culture of peace in a pluralistic perspective.

Components of the Gathering

Worship, Cultural Exchange and Celebration

ASYG is a celebration of our youthfulness, the richness and diversity of Asia and Pacific culture, tradition, struggles and spirituality. This part of the Gathering hopes to reclaim and promote the unique and indigenous traditions of our region, in response to the growing homogenous culture brought by Western globalization.

Exposure

This is a 1 day and 1 overnight immersion or living with families and communities struggling to establish cultures of peace in South Korea. This part of the program hopes to provide a common experience and grounding to all participants.

National Presentation of Peace Stories

This is the opportunity for each national delegation to share the stories of conflicts and peace building that they witness from their home countries through the NSYG.

The presentation will include the national delegations learning's, common understanding on the issue and their plans towards contributing in resolving the conflict and building the culture of peace.

This part of the program provides space for national peace issues to be exposed at the regional level. It hopes to provide a realization to the participants that their situations are either similar or connected with the other countries situation.

The national presentation will be in 2 forms, one is through theatrical/cultural or mixed media presentation and a written document.

Open Space

This is an opportunity for individual delegates to share issues, which their own national organizations have been addressing at the local and national level to initiate a regional solidarity. It can also include current response and actions of national organizations on issues of peace, which can be a source of inspiration for other participants.

Likewise, it is also an opportunity to showcase your national and local movements activities and products.

This is organized by the participants and the resource persons and facilitators are the participants themselves. This can be in the form of photo exhibit, power point presentations, documentary films and a verbal presentation of the participant

Thematic Conferences/Workshop

Thematic Conferences are organized by the ASYG organizers. This will be the climax of the Thematic Component of the Regional Gathering as it hopes to shed interconnection on the issues shared in the National Presentation, Exposures and Thematic Workshops. These conferences hopes to provide a regional perspective and analysis on the issues

It has an invited Resource Person who will discuss one of the following thematic issues and will run simultaneously with the other Thematic Conferences.

- Towards Renewing our InterConnectedness with Nature (Ecological Crisis and Sustainable Development)
- Globalization, Poverty and Unequal Access to Wealth and Resources
- Ecumenism and Interfaith Conversation as Pillars in Building Peace in Asia Pacific
- War, Militarism and Armament

Movement Presentation (Movement Night)

This is the formal and specific time for the participants to share about their organization's history, orientation and current thrusts to the whole ASYG participant's through creative forms. This part of the program enhances the individual participants and member organizations to have an understanding of the other organization present in the Gathering. It is most useful, in introducing our organization to EASY Net's non-members who are participating in the Gathering and likewise it would be of big help to learn about the other organization who are not members of EASY Net.

To further enrich the participant's knowledge on the participating organization in the Gathering, there will be booths that will be available for all participating organizations where they can display and exhibit materials, photos and documents of their organizations. The booths will be on display after the Movement Presentation until the end of the Gathering.

Gender Sensitivity Exercise

This is to going to be a basic gender sensitivity exercise and a process to introduce Sexual Harassment Policy that will be in place during the Gathering. This will be done through Women, Men or Mixed Caucus.

Dates : 25-31 August 2008 (Arrival on August 25/ Departure on August 31)

Venue: Cheorwon Culture & Welfare Center (CCWC), Gangwon-du, Korea

Registration Fee

A Registration Fee of **US\$50** will be collected from all the participants (*includes board and lodging and programme expenses excludes international travel*).

Medium of Deliberations : English

Participants:

Participants, ages 16-36, need to be nominated by their national movements and as much as possible had participated in the National Ecumenical Team's activities and undertakings.

Pre Registration Forms

Kindly see the attached Pre Registration Forms and send them back not later than **20 July 2008** through email, fax or by post to ASYG 2008 Coordinator and a copy to your regional offices. (*see contact details below*)

Visa Purposes

The following countries need visa to enter South Korea:
Philippines, Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka

The Local Organizing Committee in South Korea will issue Letters of Invitation to all the participants.

If you will need any assistance for visas, kindly get in touch with

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