



The U.S. Association for the  
University for Peace

## UPEACE ALUMNI ADVOCACY PROJECT AT THE UN PRELIMINARY REPORT

TO: UPEACE Council and UPEACE community  
FROM: Nicholas C. Martin, Co-Director, UPEACE/US  
DATE: 3 July 2007

---

### OVERVIEW

In order to raise awareness and financial support for UPEACE among UN Permanent Missions, UN agencies, and NGOs, a small team of UPEACE alumni assembled at the United Nations headquarters in New York from June 17<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup>, 2007. The alumni are uniquely suited to share the UPEACE story, supported by their experience and enthusiasm for the University.

The Advocacy Team met with 30 UN missions, 10 UN agencies, and 7 NGOs. The project was highlighted by two evening events, each with over 100 individuals in attendance. One event was for prospective students and the other for the diplomatic community, NGOs, business leaders, and academics. Both events were highly successful and well received by the participants.

In preparation for the Advocacy project, we produced an alumni testimonial booklet to support our efforts, a copy is included in your packet. Additionally, we setup an informational booth at UN headquarters for one day to distribute marketing materials and answer questions.

### OBJECTIVES

- Explore possibilities for establishing scholarships to study at the UPEACE headquarters campus in Costa Rica.
- Raise awareness for UPEACE and the cause of higher education for peace at the United Nations and other relevant organizations
- Explore opportunities for UPEACE students and alumni to do internships and find employment in the UN system or in NGOs

### THE PROCESS (listed in Chronological Order)

1. Initial Discussions. Discussions between UPEACE and UPEACE/US to plan and implement the project were held and an agreement was formalized in January 2007.

2. Financing. UPEACE agreed to give \$4,000 to support the project and UPEACE/US contributed the remaining \$10,740. A summary of costs is included in Annex 2 of this report.

3. Team Selection. Dates and a timeline for implementing the project were established in February. A formal application process was instituted by UPEACE/US where alumni and current students were informed of the opportunity and encouraged to apply. Thirty two alumni applied, all with very strong applications. The applications were reviewed by a panel of UPEACE and UPEACE/US representatives who selected a team of ten alumni. The evaluation criteria were based upon demonstrated commitment to the project, high quality advocacy skills, and regional diversity.

4. Generation of List of Missions, Agencies and NGOs to be Visited. After finalization of the team selection, the team generated a list of countries to visit based upon (1) countries where UPEACE alumni and current students are from, (2) countries that donate to UPEACE, (3) countries that signed the UPEACE charter, (4) countries that support the “culture of peace” concept, and (5) countries that team members or other UPEACE staff and affiliates had knowledge of that country’s interest in UPEACE. We also compiled a list of UN agencies and NGOs selected by their alignment with the mission of UPEACE. Team members were assigned eight countries to research, based upon the members’ background and experience. Team members individually chose NGOs and UN agencies to research.

5. Research. Five weeks before the project began, the team conducted research on the countries, corporations, and UN agencies that they were assigned (i.e. how many students from Country X have enrolled at UPEACE, does the government have a fund established to sponsor students abroad and how does it work? What are the critical issues facing this country and how might UPEACE programs be used to address them? Are there other areas where UPEACE and Country X might be able to collaborate?). Based on this research, each team member focused on three to four countries that he or she believed would be most interested in meeting with us.

As part of the preparation, team members were asked to contact students and alumni from their assigned countries to have them write letters of support for the UPEACE in their own languages. Team members were also assigned to project groups: Public Relations, Event planning, and NGO visits to ensure that these other aspects of the project received adequate attention.

6. Faxing Letters to Missions. One week prior to our arrival in New York we drafted a standard letter from the Chairman of the UPEACE Council (with his approval) requesting meetings with representatives from the missions. Each of these letters included a personalized paragraph with country specific details. We then faxed all of the letters and called as many offices as possible to ensure that they received the fax, at which point we arranged meeting times.

7. Training (New York). After the team convened in New York, we spent the first two days preparing to begin the advocacy project. We met with Narinder Kakar, Executive Director, UPEACE NY Office, Dr. David Adams, former Director, UNESCO Culture of Peace Program, Ambassador Gudmundur Eiriksson, UPEACE Legal Advisor and Head of Department of International Law, and Ambassador Jorge Urbina, Permanent Representative

to the UN from Costa Rica. In these meetings we discussed the formalities of the UN system and other forms of protocol as well as our approach and expectations for the project. We simulated how to approach officials and what sorts of things to say and do. At the end of the training, we delegated responsibilities and developed a clear, collective and comprehensive strategy.

8. Meetings. Once the training was complete, we held meetings with representatives from the missions, agencies, and NGOs. At least two, and in most cases three, team members attended each meeting where we learned more about the mission, agency or NGO we were visiting, and then we told the 'UPEACE story', distributed the UPEACE prospectus, and the UPEACE Alumni Testimonials Booklet. We discussed how the mission, agency, or NGO could become involved in UPEACE's work as well as how Missions could establish scholarships if their country's are interested.

9. Events. We held two events during the course of the project, each detailed as follows:

- Prospective Student Event: Friday June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 5:30-7:30 at the UN Church Center. This event featured a question and answer session for people interested in studying at UPEACE. Several UPEACE alumni, admitted students, prospective students, and UN interns were present. In total we had around 110 people in attendance.
- UPEACE Diplomatic Reception: Thursday, June 28<sup>th</sup> 5:30-7:30pm, at the Institute for International Education. This event convened representatives from UN missions, UN secretariat staff, UPEACE Council members, UPEACE/US board members, leaders in the NGO and business communities, university professors and presidents, and UPEACE alumni. It featured short speeches by Carolyn McAskie, Ambassador Urbina, and UPEACE alumni, Adib Samara. In total we had around 80 people in attendance.

10. Evaluation and Feedback. Currently we are compiling a detailed report of the projects, with each meeting summarized and follow-up measures outlined. The success of the project thus far is that many more Missions, UN Agencies, and NGOs are not informed and inspired about UPEACE. The final report will assist future similar activities and other communication between UPEACE and the UN.

11. Sustainability. We would like to maintain the momentum that we built as we pursue more concrete financial and work-opportunity commitments as well as cultivate further relationships. We are sharing our experience with UPEACE management and faculty so that they can help with the follow-up efforts created by this project. We will look to them for more support and to maintain the relationships that we have started.

## RESULTS OVERVIEW

- 30 Meetings with Permanent Missions to the United Nations (Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Ecuador, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, India, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Panama,

Philippines, Romania, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Tajikistan, Turkey, Uruguay)

- 10 Meetings with United Nations Agencies (Alliance of Civilizations, Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), Disarmament Affairs, General Assembly Affairs, Global Compact, Human Rights Watch, Peacebuilding Support Office, Peacekeeping Best Practices, World Youth Peace Summit)
- 7 Meetings with local NGOs and Universities (Columbia Human Rights Centre, Conflict Prevention Forum, CUNY Graduate Centre, Open Society Institute, Rotary International, Social Science Research Council, World Prayer Society)
- 120 Attendees at the Prospective Student Event (Guest Lists Attached)
- 100 Attendees at the Diplomatic Reception (Guest Lists Attached)
- 250 visitors to UPEACE informational booth at UN headquarters

## RESULTS HIGHLIGHTS

### Missions:

- The Permanent Representative from Spain requested a list of donor countries and immediately sent a letter to the Spanish Foreign Ministry to encourage the government to financially support UPEACE.
- The Permanent Representative from Finland came to the June 28<sup>th</sup> event and was thrilled by everything she saw. She will follow up with the Ministry in Finland and encourage the government to renew funding the Gender and Peacebuilding program.
- The Permanent Representative of Panama said he would like to make UPEACE one of two accredited institutions in Panama to provide the masters degree that is a requirement for their foreign service.
- Thailand, Ecuador, and Sri Lanka were very interested in sending and financing their diplomats to study at UPEACE.
- Turkey, Iran, Tajikistan, Nigeria were all very excited about their initial exposure UPEACE and want to explore ways to set up scholarships.
- The Permanent Representative from the Netherlands was very excited to hear about all the progress that had been made and would follow up with his government regarding continued funding.

### UN Agencies:

- The Gender Advisory Team for Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs was very interested in partnering with UPEACE and said that they would like to find out how to commission a joint study program with UPEACE. If UPEACE could do the research, she could immediately think of 3 to 4 topics of critical interest that Gender students could write their theses on.
- The UN Works Program, in the Department of Public Information, is interested in working with UPEACE to connect UPEACE to media outlets and celebrity spokespeople. They are interested in having UPEACE be the first project of their Peace PR program.
- The U.N. Department of Economic and Social Affairs mentioned that the social inclusion pillar also badly needs partners. They mentioned that countries emerging from conflicts need plans tailored for them on how they can integrate into the world market and UPEACE could conduct research and provide policy briefs to this end. DESA is very interested in collaborating with UPEACE and they are chairing the departmental task force on peacebuilding which holds much potential for a UPEACE partnership.

#### NGOs:

- Rotary International would like to make UPEACE one of 7 universities where rotary scholars can study as world peace scholars. This would provide 5-10 scholarships a year.
- Open Society Institute wants to better understand how UPEACE is accredited but is willing to consider giving scholarships to students coming from Asia.
- Bawa Jain of the World Council of Religious Leaders was thrilled to meet UPEACE alumni and said that if we submitted a proposal to have the World Youth Peace Summit on campus in Costa Rica he would fund it. He is also interested in giving internships to UPEACE graduates.
- Columbia Human Rights Centre would like to create two fully-financed fellowships for UPEACE graduates to spend 6 months in a developing country for a human rights organization and 6 months in a developed country for a human rights organization.
- US department of Justice Community Affairs Program and UN intelligence want to hire UPEACE graduates.

## Appendix 1: List of Alumni Team Members

- Idowu Ajibade (Nigeria) '06: Intern at the International Human Rights and Policy Council, Geneva, Switzerland; Development Analyst for African Regional Youth Initiative (ARYI) and representative to the Nigerian Chapter of African Women of Distinction Project (AWOD).
- Natalia Riveros (Ecuador/Columbia) '04: Executive Coordinator of the UPEACE Human Rights Centre at UPEACE headquarters campus in Costa Rica.
- Ajit Singh (Canada/India) '06: Director of Research for the Canadian International Peace Project; recently completed research consultancy at La Fundacion Arias para La Paz y Progreso Humano in San Jose, Costa Rica.
- Paul Rushton (Canada) '06: EarthRights International Professor of Human Rights Law to Burmese Refugees Chang Mai, Thailand.
- Ruxandra Tanese (Romania) '05: Director of the International Peace and Development Training Center within PATRIR (Peace Action and Training Institute of Romania), Bucharest, Romania; International Secretary for TRANSCEND (A Peace and Development Network).
- Adib Samara (Lebanon) '05: Co-Founder of the Center for Conflict Resolution and Peace-Building, Beirut, Lebanon; human resources manager at Consolidated Contractors International Company (CICC) Doha, Qatar.
- Junghoon Choi (South Korea) '05: Research Officer at the United Nations Governance Centre (UNGC) in Seoul, Korea.
- Zahid Ahmed (Pakistan) '06: Program Officer on Conflict Transformation for the South Asian region for Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung (FES), Islamabad, Pakistan.
- Jeffrey Lais (United States) '07: recent UPEACE graduate seeking employment as a corporate social responsibility consultant.
- Silvia Auger (Chile/South Africa) '06: Manager for IGS Compliance in the Financial Markets Operation Division for Standard Bank in Johannesburg, South Africa; recently completed legal internship program at the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, in Hamburg, Germany.
- Rebecca Harned (United States) '05: Government Relations Associate, Sparber and Associates, Washington, DC, USA; Director of Communications for UPEACE/US.
- Lisa Reyna (United States) '05: Academic Advisor for Saudi Arabian Exchange Students, SABIC Americas, Houston, Texas, USA

- Nicholas Martin (United States) '06: Co-Director of UPEACE/US, Washington, DC, USA; former Visiting Fellow, UPEACE Peace Education Program
- Stephanie Gliege (United States) '04: Founder and Co-Director UPEACE/US; Fulbright Scholar, Almaty, Kazakhstan; Senior Fellow, UPEACE Faculty