



**Press Release**  
For Immediate Release

22 OCTOBER 2009

**Lao students create a world stage in Vientiane to debate one of the  
great challenges of our time**

**Model UN Security Council Simulation on Climate Change**

As part of the commemorations of UN Day, and in order to promote understanding of the United Nations System and its relationship with the Lao PDR among young people, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the United Nations Office of the Resident Coordinator organised a United Nations Security Council Simulation event on Thursday 22 October at ICTC. Participating delegations representing the current member countries of the Security Council consisted of 45 students in their fourth year at the National University of Laos: Faculty of Law and Political Sciences, Department of International Relations. The topic of the Security Council debate was one of the great challenges of our time – climate change as an issue of peace and security.

This one day event was opened by Ms Sonam Yangchen Rana, UN Resident Coordinator on Lao PDR, and Mr Saleumxay Kommasith, Director-General, Department of International Organisations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the event was chaired by Mr Maythong Thammavongsa, Deputy Director, Political and Security Affairs Division.

The UN Security Council is one of the principal organs of the United Nations and is responsible for maintaining international peace and security. Its powers, outlined in the United Nations Charter, include the establishment of peacekeeping operations, the establishment of international sanctions, and the authorization of military action. Its powers are exercised through United Nations Security Council Resolutions. There are 15 members of the Security Council, consisting of permanent members and elected members.

As UN Resident Coordinator said in her opening address for the Simulation event, “The issue of climate change holds great importance for the Secretary General, and is immediately topical with the approach of the critical Copenhagen Summit in December - where major decisions affecting the future of our world will have to be made.”

The delegates, supported by 15 staff from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and three students from last year’s Simulation acting as mentors, prepared for this event over many weeks. They took part in a series of lectures on the UN, Lao-UN relations, climate change issues and Security Council protocol and proceedings, which were facilitated by the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs and the Office of the Resident Coordinator. Following this intense learning, they researched the positions of “their” countries, preparing position papers and speeches and developing their debating skills.

The members of the delegation who are judged to have best represented their country’s position will each receive a prize of 4 semesters of English lessons sponsored by Vientiane College, as well as a presentation book from the Embassy of the United States of America, whose ‘delegation’ were judged to be the winners in the first ever such event, held last year. The prizes will be presented at the annual UN Day celebration at UN House in Vientiane on Friday 23 October.

**Notes:**

The United Nations Country Team in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic is committed to supporting the efforts of the Government to improve the life of all citizens, especially those most vulnerable. We shall continue to work closely with the Government and all development partners for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Our collective endeavour is to assist the people of Lao PDR to achieve progress and better standards of living for all.

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