

**WELCOME SPEECH BY
THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF WAY,
MR DONALD CHARUMBIRA,
MALACCA INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DIALOGUE, JUNE 25-27 2001**

In August 1949, young youth leaders from around the globe gathered in London, with the intention of forming an international coordinating body for national youth councils and organisations. This was the formation of the World Assembly of Youth. By 1950, it had member organisations from every continent. Today, more than fifty years later, the World Assembly of Youth has member organisations in 94 nations.

WAY works for the promotion of youth and youth organisations in programme areas such as democracy, environment, human rights, population, health, drugs, community development and leadership training.

In this new millennium, young people are faced with unprecedented and rapid changes in the world economic and social order. We are witnessing increasing deregulation, cultural pluralism, global communication and intercontinental travel. We are witnessing rising levels of foreign direct investment, mergers between transnational corporations and the development of global brand names. We are witnessing the emergence of a Global Community.

The Malacca International Youth Dialogue is an idea borne out of the need for a platform for young people to have a say in the shaping of the Global Community. The Malacca International Youth Dialogue seeks to enable young people to identify with Globalisation not as an unstoppable, bulldozing monster, but as a changeable concept that can be shaped into the model that best represents the aspirations of young people.

Young people have a responsibility, to themselves and to their children, for molding a world that is equitable, that is just and that is peaceful. Many of you here have taken this challenge and this responsibility, by being participants in this inaugural Malacca International Youth Dialogue.

We are the navigators and pilots of the ship to a better future;
We are the pioneer citizens of the Global Community;
It is we that shall shape Globalisation into a force that benefits all mankind; It is we that can make this world peaceful, just and equitable.

May we therefore remember in our deliberations that our ultimate aim is to touch the lives of the world's poorest peoples; our ultimate aim is to

touch the lives of the most remote villages; our ultimate aim is to guarantee an acceptable standard of living for every citizen of the Global Community.

We would like to recognize the presence of youth from over countries and territories.

Our Guest Speakers at this Dialogue include:

Gerry de Kort, Youth Sociologist from Bangkok
Lee Yoke Ling, from the Third World Network, Malaysia
Abbey Steel from Free the Slaves in New York
Isa Loo from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
Girma Mulugetta from the United Nations Youth Unit
Zorigtbaatar from the Asian Youth Council
Nichol Gabriel, Head of Commonwealth at the United Nations
Taj Hamad from the United Nations
Andrea Sieren from the Asia-Europe Foundation
Natalie Fisher from the World YWCA
Nicola Bullard from Focus on the Global South
Marianne Mommsen from Blu Magazine

The World Assembly of Youth is sincerely grateful to the State Government of Malacca for its support towards youth and youth activities. An interesting paradigm is that we are here to plan the future, in the historic city of Malacca, which was once the hub of world trade. With inspiration from these environs, we shall chart the course of the future.

To the Right Honourable Chief Minister of Malacca, Yang Amat Berhormat Datuk Wira Haji Mohd Ali Rustam, the World Assembly of Youth is thankful for your contributions towards world peace, towards economic equity and towards social justice. May your work be an example to all of us, an example that sets the precedent for a better world order.

To all speakers, participants and volunteers that have made this event possible, thank you for your hard work. May you use these three days to produce firm resolutions for action. May these three days bring about change to yourselves, and change to the world. May these three days be the beginning of a harmonious Global Community.